

BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION

STATE OF NEW MEXICO

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL HEARINGS
DAY ONE

December 9, 2024

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2	<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 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 PED STAFF:</p> <p>11 CORINA CHAVEZ Director</p> <p>12 Charter School/Options for</p> <p>13 Parents and Families Division</p> <p>14 BRIGETTE RUSSELL Deputy Director</p> <p>15 Charter School/Options for</p> <p>16 Parents and Families Division</p> <p>17 LUCY VALENZUELA Technical Assistance and</p> <p>18 Training Specialist</p> <p>19 Charter School/Options for Parents</p> <p>20 and Families Division</p> <p>21 CHERYL ROWE Authorizing Practices</p> <p>22 Administrator</p> <p>23 Charter School/Options for Parents</p> <p>24 and Families Division</p> <p>25 MISSY BROWN Technical Assistance and Support</p> <p>and Training Administrator</p> <p>Charter School/Options for</p> <p>Parents and Families Division</p> <p>NICOLA DAVIS Technical Assistance and</p> <p>Training Coordinator</p> <p>Charter School/Options for</p> <p>Parents and Families Division</p> <p>CONSUELO CONSTANTINE Liaison to the PEC</p>	4
3	<p>1 APPEARANCES, Continued</p> <p>2 COUNSEL TO THE PEC:</p> <p>3 JULIA HOSFORD BARNES, ESQ.</p> <p>4 Barnes Mediation and Law, PC</p> <p>5 200 W. DeVargas Street, Suite 7</p> <p>6 Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501</p> <p>7</p> <p>8</p> <p>9</p> <p>10</p> <p>11</p> <p>12</p> <p>13</p> <p>14</p> <p>15</p> <p>16</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p>	5
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6	<p>1 THE CHAIR: Good morning, everyone. I'm 2 going to bring to order this meeting of the Public 3 Education Commission. It is Monday, December 9th -- 4 I have no idea what day of the week it is -- Monday, 5 December 9th, and it is 8:04 a.m. And I'm going to 6 ask Commissioner Beck to do roll. 7 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Burt. 8 (No response.) 9 SECRETARY BECK: Not here. 10 Commissioner Taylor. 11 (No response -- 12 SECRETARY BECK: Not here. 13 Commissioner Armijo. 14 (No response.) 15 SECRETARY BECK: Not here. 16 Commissioner Clahchischilliaje. 17 (No response.) 18 SECRETARY BECK: Not here. 19 Commissioner Manis. 20 COMMISSIONER MANIS: Here. 21 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Brauer. 22 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: Present. 23 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Ingham. 24 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: Here. 25 SECRETARY BECK: Chair Gipson.</p>	8	<p>1 SECRETARY BECK: So moved. 2 THE CHAIR: Second. 3 Take roll, please. 4 SECRETARY BECK: Chair Gipson. 5 THE CHAIR: Yes. 6 SECRETARY BECK: Vice Chair Carrillo. 7 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Yes. 8 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Ingham. 9 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: Yes. 10 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Brauer. 11 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: Yes. 12 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Manis. 13 COMMISSIONER MANIS: Yes. 14 SECRETARY BECK: Secretary Beck, yes. 15 There are six votes for, zero votes 16 against. The motion passes. 17 THE CHAIR: Thank you. We are on to Item 18 No. 3, which is Public Comment. Do we have anyone 19 that signed up for regular public comment? 20 MS. MELISSA BROWN: We don't have anyone 21 signed up for regular public comment. 22 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Item No. 4, School 23 highlights and Spotlights. 24 On Friday. Yeah, I think we just moved 25 this to Friday. Yeah.</p>
7	<p>1 THE CHAIR: Here. 2 SECRETARY BECK: Vice Chair Carrillo. 3 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Here. 4 SECRETARY BECK: Secretary Beck, here. 5 We have six present. There is a quorum. 6 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. And I am 7 going to ask everyone to stand for the Pledge of 8 Allegiance and then the New Mexico Salute. 9 (Pledge of Allegiance and Salute to the 10 New Mexico Flag conducted.) 11 THE CHAIR: Does someone have the Mission 12 and Vision up? -- yeah -- 'cause I can't -- I can't 13 get into my drive right now. It is somewhere -- 14 somewhere. 15 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: I can go ahead and 16 read that. 17 (Mission and Vision recited.) 18 THE CHAIR: Thank you. We are on to -- 19 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: There's that other 20 little thing. I'm not going to read it in the 21 entirety. 22 (Mission and Vision continuation.) 23 THE CHAIR: We are now on to Item No. 2, 24 which is the Approval of the Agenda. 25 Yeah, I don't --</p>	9	<p>1 Item No. 5, the Consent Agenda. 2 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Move to pass the 3 Consent Agenda. 4 THE CHAIR: Second. 5 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Manis. 6 (No response.) 7 SECRETARY BECK: That's not good, because 8 we need six. 9 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Brauer. 10 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: Yes. 11 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Ingham. 12 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: Yes. 13 SECRETARY BECK: Vice Chair Carrillo. 14 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Yes. 15 SECRETARY BECK: Chair Gipson. 16 THE CHAIR: Yes. 17 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Manis. 18 COMMISSIONER MANIS: Yes. 19 SECRETARY BECK: Secretary Beck, yes. 20 There are six votes for, zero votes 21 against. The motion passes. 22 THE CHAIR: Thanks. And now we are on to 23 the meat of our next four days, which is our renewal 24 hearings. 25 So the first school that we have up is</p>

10	<p>1 Tierra Adentro of New Mexico. So, welcome. Good 2 morning.</p> <p>3 So we will -- Public Ed Department -- CSD 4 will go first; okay? And then I don't think there 5 will be anyone. But if there is anyone here for 6 tribal consultation, there's tribal input. And then 7 you'll have your opportunity to do your fabulous 8 presentation. So thank you.</p> <p>9 DR. BRIGETTE RUSSELL: Good morning, 10 Chair Gipson, Commissioners. My name is Brigette 11 Russell. I'm the Deputy Director in the Charter 12 Schools Division, and I am here to present the CSD 13 recommendation for Tierra Adentro.</p> <p>14 Tierra Adentro of New Mexico, The School 15 of Academics, Arts and Artesania, opened in 2010 16 with the Public Education Commission. This is their 17 third renewal with the PEC.</p> <p>18 The mission of the school is to create an 19 inclusive and thriving learning environment 20 comprised of a demographically and culturally 21 diverse student population with a focus on 22 academics, arts, artesania -- artisanship -- and the 23 study of the cultures that comprise our rich New 24 Mexican heritage, to ensure awareness, preservation, 25 and progression of our cultural legacy.</p>	12	<p>1 Excuse me. At the beginning of every 2 meeting, I have to sort of readjust to having only 3 one screen instead of the three I have at my desk. 4 By Friday, I'll be fine.</p> <p>5 The school -- in terms of financial and 6 organizational performance, the school has had only 7 two financial indicators over the entire contract 8 term with ratings other than Meets the Standard, 9 making Demonstrates Substantial Progress the highest 10 rating that CSD can give the school on this section.</p> <p>11 The school has sound fiscal processes and 12 has reported timely to the PED School Budget Bureau 13 for the past three years.</p> <p>14 The school has not had more than two audit 15 findings in any year of the contract term and no 16 repeat findings.</p> <p>17 The school's ratings on Part B of the 18 renewal analysis are as follows:</p> <p>19 Meets -- let's see. Academic -- academic 20 progress is Demonstrates Substantial Progress. They 21 met the standards because the school is not a 22 Spotlight school, it's a Traditional school.</p> <p>23 In terms of mission-specific goals and 24 educational program and equity and identity, the 25 school meets the standards. There are no issues.</p>
11	<p>1 Tierra Adentro's current Executive 2 Director is Veronica Torres, and Genevieve Lopez is 3 the principal.</p> <p>4 The renewal site visit took place on 5 Monday, October 21st, and the team consisted of Lucy 6 Valenzuela as team lead, Kelli Renken, and Kristen 7 LaVolpa.</p> <p>8 The Charter School Division recommends 9 that Tierra Adentro of New Mexico be renewed for a 10 term of five years without conditions.</p> <p>11 Tierra Adentro has been designated a 12 Traditional school for the last two years through 13 New Mexico Vistas.</p> <p>14 The PED has published the Spring 2024 15 assessment results, and I will share screen to 16 show -- 2024.</p> <p>17 As Commissioners and the public can see, 18 Tierra Adentro's ELA proficiencies were the same as 19 the district and the state, but above state averages 20 for several subgroups.</p> <p>21 Math proficiencies were not above state 22 and district. Science proficiency for all students 23 was above the state and district average and was 24 above the state and district average for all 25 subgroups as well.</p>	13	<p>1 The school demonstrates substantial 2 progress in terms of governance responsibilities and 3 other performance framework indicators.</p> <p>4 Thank you.</p> <p>5 THE CHAIR: Thank you so much. 6 So I forgot to ask at the beginning if 7 there are any Commissioners that have to recuse 8 themselves from a vote. 9 (No response.) 10 THE CHAIR: Okay. Thanks. 11 Is there anyone here for tribal input? 12 (No response.) 13 THE CHAIR: Okay. Thanks. Whenever 14 you're ready. 15 (School Flamenco Performance.) 16 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Just want to say 17 quickly before you start, too bad the kids are 18 outside. You are why I just love being part of 19 state charter schools in New Mexico. This is why. 20 Right here. Thank you so much. 21 MS. MELISSA BROWN: If you could start 22 with introducing yourself and spelling your last 23 name, so we could get that over for the -- 24 MS. VERONICA TORRES: Veronica Torres, 25 T-o-r-r-e-s, Executive Director of Tierra Adentro</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">14</p> <p>1 Charter School. So, Madam Chair, members of the 2 PEC, thank you so much for having us this morning. 3 I hope that was a little treat for your Monday 4 morning to wake you up and get you ready for the 5 day, set you right. 6 We have a slide show presentation just to 7 wrap up. I wanted it to be mostly about the 8 students and what we do at Tierra Adentro; so that 9 is our mission right there in your face as we start 10 this morning. 11 If you could put up the slide show, Missy, 12 that would be awesome. That's just our welcome. We 13 can go straight past that. 14 No problem. 15 All right. So our mission has already 16 been read by the lovely Brigitte Russell, so I'm not 17 going to go over that again. But as you can see, 18 this is a number of our dance folkies (ph) performing 19 at Hispanic Cultural Day for Sandia Labs for 20 Kirtland Air Force Base and Sandia Labs. 21 Next slide, please. 22 We've had some incredible milestones. I'm 23 so proud that this is our third renewal with all of 24 you. 25 As you can see, when we first started at</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">16</p> <p>1 We were one of the first charter schools in 2 New Mexico to build from the ground up in the 3 Sawmill District, just east of the Sawmill Market. 4 We are in our mission completely with, you 5 know, many museums and Old Town right near. So our 6 students can take full advantage of not only what's 7 in the building, but what's in the community. So 8 that was awesome. 9 During COVID, as you all know, everyone 10 suffered. But performing arts suffered a lot. To 11 keep our students thriving in the arts at home, we 12 handed out portable dance floors like you saw here 13 to all of our students. Every student got a guitar. 14 Every student got a computer. We kept the arts 15 alive. 16 We couldn't have an end-of-year 17 performance, so we did a documentary called "Doce." 18 It was featured on Channel 13 and on our YouTube 19 channel. It was, I think like, a 45-minute 20 documentary on what the students' life was like at 21 home, student artists, with culminating performances 22 as we voyaged into our new building coming out of 23 the pandemic. 24 So here we are today in front of you in 25 our third renewal, and we're so proud to be here and</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">15</p> <p>1 1511 -- I think Alan may have even visited that 2 building. But people came for the community and not 3 the building. It was on Central and University. 4 And it wasn't the safest. 5 But we saved up, and we moved on to our 6 next milestone, which was in 2015, when we were part 7 of the Distinguished Concerts International in 8 New York, and we were invited to perform at Carnegie 9 Hall in a show called "Misa Tango." It was a 10 sold-out crowd. 11 Carnegie Hall sits over 6,000 people, and 12 my eyes have never been wider when I stepped onto 13 that stage, as well as our students. It was an 14 amazing experience. I wouldn't change it for the 15 world. 16 We moved into what we called TANM Two, 17 which is near the Sawmill Area -- and, Alan, I know 18 you were in that building -- and right across from 19 Tiguex Park in Old Town, and that's where we could 20 spread our chi a little bit and work really hard 21 with our foundation president, Diego Gallegos, to 22 move into our brand new \$8 million facility, which 23 is up and running right now, in 2021. 24 So we're super excited that, yes, we went 25 through three phases, it was well worth the wait.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">17</p> <p>1 feel very welcomed by all of you. 2 Thank you. 3 Next slide, please. 4 So here's a few of our highlights. That's 5 actually two of our students in 2016 on the Carnegie 6 Hall stage, that picture. That's Jose Encinias and 7 Marisol Cisneros. 8 Next slide, please. 9 That is artwork done by one of our 10 sophomore students, I believe. 11 So in 2023, we did win the Hispanic 12 Heritage Award and Corazon de Cultura Award. And so 13 just some distinguished things coming out of the 14 pandemic that was right coming out. And so that was 15 a wonderful award to receive. 16 Next slide, please. 17 In April, we were approved for the state 18 Bilingual Literacy. So this is a new program. We 19 actually had three students that received the 20 honors. And this year, we're on track to have 21 definitely more than three. 22 So I think we're moving up. So that 23 was -- that was a great -- great honor that our 24 bilingual coordinator that was back here clapping 25 our hands with me; that was Ms. Osuna, and, of</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">18</p> <p>1 course, our principal, Genevieve Lopez, were the 2 ones that made that happen. So thank you for that. 3 Then we were just awarded a few months ago 4 an Outstanding Diversity award by Albuquerque 5 Business Journal. We received that this last 6 October. And so that was an exciting day for us as 7 well to receive that honor. 8 Next slide. 9 And breaking news, Ms. Janelle Gonzales, 10 who is one of our guitarists, she is up for Charter 11 School Student of the Year. This Thursday, the 12 12th, she'll be present and playing that evening 13 with the other two guitarists. So I know you all 14 will be present for that. So send Ms. Janelle good 15 vibes. 16 And then last, but not least, our student 17 outcomes. 18 So as you can see, as the school, in 19 proficiency, that's not our gig. Growth, we have 20 over a 40 percent growth level. If you bring them 21 to us in sixth grade -- a lot of our kids will come 22 in as low as kindergarten, very minimal, some at a 23 preschool level in reading and math. And our 24 teachers are jumping them, jumping them -- by the 25 senior year, we have over half of our students</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">20</p> <p>1 different, because of the calculations. So you did 2 see a drop in that coming out of the pandemic. But 3 we are going to get back up there; I know we will. 4 Other than that, I think everything on 5 that slide is basically what Brigitte had read to 6 you, so I won't read the entire thing. So I'll go 7 on to the next slide. 8 MS. GENEVIEVE LOPEZ: Madam Chair, members 9 of the PEC, my name is Genevieve Lopez, L-o-p-e-z. 10 I'm the principal of TANM. 11 Like Veronica said, we focus on growth at 12 TANM. We do the NWEA three times a year in math, 13 reading, and science. 14 After each round of testing, we bring in 15 our data coach from charter school testing, and they 16 do a deep dive of data with our teachers so they can 17 strategically plan. 18 We have noticed a 40 percent growth since 19 we started doing that. 20 We have a lot of student supports in 21 place, such as our crisis team who are all (audio 22 distortion) certified. We have a quiet room that is 23 a designated spot for students if they need to 24 reset. 25 We have a lot of different programs that</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">19</p> <p>1 proficient. 2 So we're getting them there in those 3 subject areas. But we do need bottoms in the seat. 4 We do need students on time and present. Our 5 teachers will get them there. 6 We do have three teachers that are 7 nationally board certified and one more, I believe, 8 that's going to be getting her national boards this 9 year. And so we're moving them. We're moving them. 10 We're just not quite there yet. 11 And as everybody suffering coming out of 12 the pandemic, it's not an excuse; it's just a fact. 13 It's what happened. So we are a growth school. We 14 market that and promote that to our families. 15 Our graduation rate, to us, internally, is 16 100 percent. Again, if you bring them to us, we 17 will graduate them. We do sometimes get students 18 with a lot of credit recovery. A lot. So they're 19 supposed to be a junior, and they only have credits 20 for a freshman. 21 So we may get them there in five years 22 which on New Mexico Vistas, we get dinged for. But 23 we will graduate them. So that's why when we 24 present to our community, we're 100 percent. On New 25 Mexico Vistas, obviously, the math is going to be</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">21</p> <p>1 students can be involved in, and we always push that 2 everyone attends tutoring, which is available to all 3 of our students in all grades and is, of course, 4 always free. 5 Next slide. 6 MS. VERONICA TORRES: So, like I said 7 before today, we just want to thank you again for 8 having us here. This was actually our students' 9 last year at the Public Charter Schools New Mexico 10 out in Tamaya. So we decided to do a quick photo 11 shoot after our performance, take advantage of the 12 scenery out there. 13 But, again, thank you for your attention 14 to all of us, to all charter schools, your 15 dedication and your support you give us each and 16 every day. I also especially want to thank Charter 17 School/Public Ed, you guys are a support, and we 18 really thank you for that. We know we can reach out 19 to you and thank you for your open lines of 20 communication as always. 21 And we want you all at our performance at 22 the end of the year. You all have tickets. 23 So that concludes our presentation. Thank 24 you. 25 THE CHAIR: Thanks.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">22</p> <p>1 So do we have folks signed up for comment? 2 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Thank you, Chair. We 3 have seven people in the room signed up for public 4 comment. 5 Okay. And our first is Isabel Tickerhoos 6 (ph). You're going to come up to me. 7 Isabel is changing. 8 Do we have -- is everybody changing? 9 Sarah Hartshorn. Okay. 10 FROM THE FLOOR: Is this okay? My name is 11 Sarah Hartshorn, H-a-r-t-s-h-o-r-n. 12 Okay. I just wanted to briefly speak as I 13 have a unique perspective as a founding member and a 14 staff member and also a parent of a former student 15 and an upcoming student. 16 So as a founding member, I've seen a lot 17 of what they spoke to, which was the resilience of 18 the organization, how we've changed buildings and 19 moved and had new communities that we had to reach 20 out to. And that resilience has shown up through 21 the -- how we've always thought about meeting our 22 mission and doing that through our staff. So I'm 23 lucky to be on the staff. 24 And it's an amazing place to work. And 25 our crew is -- I call it a crew because you see what</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">24</p> <p>1 it's really just, like, helped my life. Like, it 2 helps me experience different things. 3 Like, I wasn't like really, like, doing a 4 lot of activities as a child, so, like, flamenco 5 really brought me out and had me talk to people. 6 And the school, I started in, like, eighth 7 grade. I was attending a different public school, 8 and then he came to Tierra Adentro. And the people 9 here just, like, really helped me come out of my 10 shell. I was a very different person compared to 11 now. I didn't really like talking to other people, 12 but now I just feel very comfortable. 13 The community at the school has helped me 14 a lot. They have made me a better dancer, person. 15 The teachers are really nice. They actually care, 16 which is really nice. Like, they want to be there. 17 It's not, like, a sad environment. It's, like, very 18 like, lively and, like, happy. Like, you don't, 19 like, walk into a class where the teacher is having 20 a bad day or something. It's a nice school, a nice 21 place. It makes everyone feel welcomed. 22 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Elizabeth Marshall. 23 FROM THE FLOOR: Hi. Elizabeth Marshall 24 M-a-r-s-h-a-l-l. 25 I just want to say thank you for</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">23</p> <p>1 we've done here; right? We work together to make 2 things happen. And because of what I've seen as a 3 founding member and as a staff member, I was happy 4 to bring my son to TANM. 5 He enjoyed it tremendously, even though 6 he's not a dancer. He's a high performing academic 7 student, but I knew that TANM could meet his needs. 8 That's what we do is meet the individual needs of 9 all of our students. 10 He was a dual-credit student. 11 I also have a sixth grader who will be 12 joining us. And she's an artist, so she is all of 13 this. So I've seen how TANM is incredibly fluid 14 with our community, and I'm lucky to be a part of 15 it. So thank you. 16 MS. MELISSA BROWN: All right. So we have 17 Isabel. Okay. 18 FROM THE FLOOR: T-i-c-h-a-e-r-o-o-s. 19 (Audio distortion.) 20 Okay. So I'm a student at Tierra Adentro. 21 I have been doing flamenco for about seven, eight 22 years, and, honestly, it's amazing. The art form is 23 just, like, beautiful. The music, the people, the 24 culture just, like, built around it is really 25 amazing, and it's really, like -- like -- I think</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">25</p> <p>1 everything you do. It's so nice to actually see 2 your faces and be in person. I recognize a lot of 3 your names. 4 We appreciate so much of what you do. 5 What I was -- I actually had something I 6 was going to say. But what I was kind of struck by 7 when I got here is that this room right now has, 8 like, every stakeholder in our community. 9 Like, we have, you know, all the way from 10 our administrators to our students to our parents, 11 to the state. And it's, like, such a profound 12 experience to be able to be in this room with all of 13 you and all of us here that have, like, the same 14 goals of success. 15 It's a pretty amazing thing. And I 16 started thinking how cool it must be for all of you 17 to do these renewals and see all these schools come 18 through the door. I was thinking this must be like 19 Christmas to them. That's why they do it now; 20 right? It's a Christmas present to themselves. 21 So I'm kind of in a unique position. 22 Sarah said that as well. But I was a founding 23 teacher. I am a flamenco parent. I am a 24 vice president of the governing council. I also am 25 a school principal myself.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">26</p> <p>1 And, yeah, so I kind of cover all the 2 bases that way. 3 And I just want to say that I think you've 4 seen all of the evidence of growth. You've seen all 5 of the success with operations. All of that is, you 6 know, checking the box. 7 But I really wanted to impart to you that 8 this school has such an amazing network of people 9 that are crossing over in so many different ways 10 culturally. They're coming through, and they're not 11 just walking in the door, like, what, you know, the 12 student was saying. 13 They're coming in, and they're able to, 14 like, go out in the community and work 15 professionally. 16 There are students here that went to 17 school, and they're professionals now, working and 18 being paid. There are people in every one of the 19 departments who are out doing things professionally. 20 The vocational impact is huge for these students. 21 So, yeah, I think that's where they've 22 been successful, outside of everything else, is 23 building a family that's professional and personal. 24 Thank you. 25 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Okay. I'm going to</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">28</p> <p>1 Hello. My name is Janelle Gonzales, and I 2 am currently a senior at Tierra Adentro of 3 New Mexico. And I have been attending since the 4 sixth grade. Being at TANM has opened my eyes to 5 the arts and community. They have given me a lot of 6 resources to pursue music and guitar throughout my 7 whole career at TANM. I feel as though my 8 musicianship would not be where it is today without 9 them. 10 As to my academics, they have encouraged 11 me to take dual credit courses at UNM. Since then, 12 I have completed 13 dual credit classes. Because it 13 is such a small school, I feel like the relationship 14 between my peers and my teachers have -- are a lot 15 closer compared to a public school. And this has 16 helped me -- sorry -- because of this, TANM, as a 17 whole, has helped me become the best student I can 18 be. I truly cannot imagine myself at a different 19 school. 20 Seeing all the students there has really, 21 like, just as they grow and they graduate, it just 22 makes me feel like having a career in music is 23 possible. 24 So, yeah. I am very grateful for that. 25 Thank you.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">27</p> <p>1 pronounce this wrong. Aileen? Eileen Gonzales? 2 FROM THE FLOOR: Spell my last name? 3 G-o-n-z-a-l-e-s. 4 Good morning. My name is Aileen Gonzales. 5 I am an alumni -- sorry -- from Tierra Adentro. I 6 attended sixth through twelfth grade, and I 7 graduated in 2020. Throughout my time in Tierra 8 Adentro, I learned about community, discipline, and 9 the art of flamenco. 10 Since graduating, I have carried these 11 values, and it has given me the opportunity to 12 perform in tablas regularly and collaborate with 13 fellow artists. 14 I also have the amazing opportunity to 15 teach young upcoming artists flamenco cante. And it 16 has felt fulfilling to give back to the community 17 because they've given me so much. 18 I wouldn't be where I am without 19 Tierra Adentro. I would not have grown as much as I 20 have. They really helped me find my voice and have 21 given me a unique and exciting career path. And for 22 that, I am forever grateful. Thank you. 23 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next, we have Janelle 24 Gonzales. 25 FROM THE FLOOR: G-o-n-z-a-l-e-s.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">29</p> <p>1 MS. MELISSA BROWN: (Off-mic.) 2 FROM THE FLOOR: G-u-e-r-r-a. Hello, 3 guys. My name is Nicole Guerra. I am currently a 4 special education teacher at Tierra Adentro as well 5 as an alumni from 2017. 6 My journey through Tierra Adentro has 7 profoundly shaped my educational and personal 8 development, laying a robust foundation from a 9 student into a successful career as a special 10 education teacher. 11 At the Tierra Adentro, I was encouraged to 12 embrace diversity in all forms, a principle that I 13 now carry into my classroom each day as I work with 14 students who face various challenges. 15 This dedication to inclusivity is crucial 16 for fostering an environment where every child can 17 thrive. 18 As you consider renewing Tierra Adentro's 19 charter, it is imperative that we remain committed 20 to these core values, insuring that the future 21 generations also benefit from the same enriching 22 experiences that have shaped my own life and career. 23 Thank you. 24 MS. MELISSA BROWN: And, finally, but not 25 least, Anna Flores.</p>

30	<p>1 FROM THE FLOOR: Good morning, Anna 2 Flores. F-l-o-r-e-s. 3 I am a parent of four from Tierra Adentro. 4 My youngest is in sixth grade, and my oldest was 5 there last year. I have a junior and a freshman as 6 well. Darien just performed today, and you did very 7 well, son. So proud of you. All of you guys did, 8 by the way. 9 I am constantly impressed by what 10 Tierra Adentro is able to do to children and expose 11 them to a part of their creativity that I think most 12 schools cannot do. 13 Tierra Adentro has something for everyone, 14 I feel. All four of my children have definitely 15 different personalities; two boys, two girls, 16 different ages. And each of them have been able to 17 find something that has motivated them to express a 18 part of their creativity that I know I couldn't do 19 as a parent, and I know that a lot of our public 20 schools wouldn't be able to do. 21 It has been an honor to be a parent at 22 this school, to watch all of the children grow and 23 learn. And when you say that these kids are 24 professionals, that's how I see them, too. 25 Because I've tried on a pair of those</p>	32	<p>1 record. 2 The first from Madison Olguin, 3 O-l-g-u-i-n, TANM's 2019 valedictorian. 4 "TANM gave me so many wonderful 5 performance opportunities as a young teenager and a 6 young adult that serve me to this. I had the 7 pleasure of being able to learn to play the guitar, 8 visual arts, and dance simultaneously, giving me a 9 very balanced and well-rounded artistic experience. 10 "Performing at Carnegie Hall as part of 11 the school's ensemble in eighth grade showed me that 12 hard work, discipline, and preparation can take you 13 just about anywhere in life. 14 "Now, in adulthood, I have carried these 15 skills with me, and it has opened doors my younger 16 self would have never imagined stepping foot 17 through. 18 "I am very thankful and grateful for the 19 work that Tierra Adentro does for the Albuquerque 20 community and am excited to see the future artists 21 that flourish from this school." 22 And the second comment is from Dr. Diego 23 Gallegos, G-a-l-l-e-g-o-s, Tierra Adentro Charter 24 School Foundation president and former parent. 25 "PEC Commissioners, thank you for your</p>
31	<p>1 shoes, and it's not easy. So when I see them do 2 that, it's just a huge privilege and honor. 3 I appreciate the teachers, all of the 4 staff. It's a small school, which I love. Maybe 5 one day, it'll get a lot bigger -- right? -- because 6 it just seems to be expanding more and more, and 7 it's doing great for our community and our children. 8 So I appreciate that, and I am forever 9 grateful. Thank you. 10 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Okay. Evan Duran. 11 FROM THE FLOOR: Good morning, everybody. 12 D-u-r-a-n for my last name. All-righty. 13 My name is Evan Duran, and I'm a student 14 here at Tierra Adentro. I have been dancing for six 15 years, and this school has been incredibly 16 beneficial for me as a person and as a student. 17 This school has not only provided many scholarships 18 but opened my eyes to flamenco. It has also 19 supported me emotionally. 20 This is not just a school; it's a family, 21 an emotional system. I would like to express my 22 gratitude to everyone who's here and I hope you 23 enjoyed the performance. Thank you. 24 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Okay. Then we have 25 two written comments, which I will read into the</p>	33	<p>1 continued support of charter schools in New Mexico 2 and of Tierra Adentro Charter School. 3 "As the president of the Tierra Adentro 4 Charter School Foundation, I continue to be involved 5 with the school in a business relationship as we 6 have collectively and collaboratively built a brand 7 new school in the Sawmill area of Albuquerque, 8 worked through a challenging property tax issue with 9 the County Assessor, and are now in the process of 10 requesting capital outlay to pay down/off the debt 11 of the school. 12 "I am also involved with the school as 13 part of our collective involvement in the flamenco 14 community in Albuquerque. Tierra Adentro continues 15 to provide students that are successful in local and 16 international flamenco circles. 17 "The Tierra Adentro Charter School 18 Foundation believes that the school has shown its 19 ability to integrate academics and the arts to 20 benefit its students and to manage its business and 21 finances effectively. 22 "We look forward to a continued 23 relationship." 24 And that concludes our public comment. 25 THE CHAIR: Sure.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">34</p> <p>1 FROM THE FLOOR: G-a-r-c-i-a. 2 And I just want to say thank you to 3 everybody listening who helped support me through my 4 issues and helped me along the way. And I feel like 5 flamenco has been a great outlet for me to express 6 myself and show who I really am. And I feel like 7 these people here, and as well as (audio distortion) 8 have helped me see that. And I would like to thank 9 everyone here and there. Thank you, guys. 10 THE CHAIR: Commissioners? 11 Commissioner Beck. 12 SECRETARY BECK: Yeah. Fantastic 13 performance. But I want to put into the record 14 also, we have some beautiful artwork up here that we 15 should recognize as well. 16 It looks -- is that one down? Would you 17 put that one back up for us, I think? 18 FROM THE FLOOR: We can't see them. 19 (Simultaneous speaking.) 20 SECRETARY BECK: Tremendous. Wonderful. 21 It -- it's just great to see what you are doing 22 there. 23 But I do have a few questions. 24 There are three areas that I'd kind of 25 like you to real quickly discuss what your</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">36</p> <p>1 And then I think there's some data 2 challenges with the attendance rate. You know, I 3 don't know -- but there is a correlation -- there is 4 a correlation between schools that are strong 5 academically and their attendance rate. It would 6 seem to me with all these art opportunities your 7 students have, they -- I would want to come to the 8 school and be able to do that. 9 I'm wondering if there are any kind of 10 weird circumstances that create that attendance 11 issue and what you're doing to try to combat that. 12 Those are the three kind of areas. Thank 13 you. 14 But it's wonderful. Congratulations, 15 guys. You guys are incredible. Amazing, really. 16 MS. VERONICA TORRES: Okay. All right. 17 Madam Chair, members of the PEC, thank you 18 for your question. 19 So, yes, that 15 percent math proficiency 20 rate, of course, makes all the red flags and the 21 bells go off; right? 22 So as Ms. Hartshorn was saying, we have an 23 incredible faculty that pulls together to try to 24 meet these challenges. 25 As you said, in the state, coming out of</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">35</p> <p>1 strategies are for improvement, from what I can see. 2 Number one, I understand that your growth 3 rate in math at 55 percent is strong. But the 4 actual, you know, base number of 15 percent is 5 somewhat challenging. 6 So I'm just kind of curious as to what 7 your specific strategies are, whether it's 8 professional development or what type of 9 professional development it is. 10 And, by the way, for the two years I've 11 been here -- I was a teacher for my last 13 years of 12 my career. Math is a challenge to everybody. So 13 you're not alone in this struggle. And we should 14 figure out something to do statewide to fix that, or 15 at least improve it. 16 But I'd like to hear what your specific 17 strategies are on that. 18 Number two, I saw that your four-year 19 graduation rate is, like, in the 71, 72 percent 20 range. Your five and six years look real strong, 21 very strong. And it's probably a lot to do, I would 22 assume, with your credit recovery situation. 23 But if you have any specific strategies 24 you're trying to do to get that four-year 25 improvement up.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">37</p> <p>1 the pandemic -- of course, not an excuse, it's just 2 a fact -- everybody, attendance was down 20 percent 3 overall statewide. And, obviously, proficiency 4 rates went down. 5 So us, bringing in the kids that we bring 6 in at such a low proficiency rate just starting from 7 preschool, kinder level on up, we're jumping the 8 levels. But, again, it meets up -- you're 9 absolutely right -- with that attendance rate. 10 If they're late to school -- students, I 11 hope you're listening -- if you're late to school -- 12 they don't want me to name names back there, but I 13 will. If you're late to school, if you're not in 14 the seat, if you're not awake and on time, that is a 15 challenge for our teachers. If you're there, we can 16 teach you. If you're not there, we got nothing. 17 What our high school team does -- and I'll 18 speak about them in particular -- is they put 19 together a team of teachers that just looks at dual 20 credit. So I'm kind of going to answer your 21 four-year grad rate and proficiency rate at the same 22 time. We've done a summer intensive in credit 23 recovery and math studies and tutoring. 24 Yeah, a summer intensive. So they do a 25 three-week summer intensive, where they're in school</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">38</p> <p>1 from 9:00 to 3:00. So we catch them now. So right 2 now students in trouble of not graduating or not 3 meeting proficiency must attend after-school 4 tutoring with their math teacher, who is also board 5 certified, and also attend with her in the summer 6 for a three-week intensive.</p> <p>7 We just started that last year. So this 8 is kind of a beta test. We'll see where we are at 9 the end of this term.</p> <p>10 Our middle school team has started what 11 they call a skills recovery program. If you have 12 failed any particular subject in the arts or 13 academics, then you must stay after school with our 14 science teacher and Ms. Nicole, our special 15 education teacher, for credit recovery -- or skills 16 recovery -- sorry -- where you go back and the 17 teachers put individual packets together to hit on 18 those certain skills that the students missed, 19 whether it was due to absenteeism, or they just need 20 more work on that skill. And they go back and they 21 rehit those areas.</p> <p>22 Again, we just started this program last 23 year. So it was beta-tested. So we'll see, on a 24 three-year level, where it gets us to. Our 25 hypothesis, obviously, is that proficiency level</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">40</p> <p>1 home lives, it's real. It's hard. We are their 2 safe place. We feed them. We go on breaks. Some 3 of our students are scared. They don't want to go 4 home.</p> <p>5 Like Ms. Hartshorn, we're a crew, and 6 we're clawing at the bit every day to get those 7 students into school and get those rates up.</p> <p>8 SECRETARY BECK: That's apparent. That's 9 apparent. One last quick note about the attendance. 10 What's your transportation situation there?</p> <p>11 MS. VERONICA TORRES: We don't have 12 transportations and school buses. Parents are 13 responsible for getting their students to school. A 14 lot of kids do carpool or families do carpool that 15 live in the same areas, and we help them do that if 16 we can. But we don't have school bus 17 transportation.</p> <p>18 SECRETARY BECK: Thank you.</p> <p>19 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Carrillo.</p> <p>20 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: I don't use the "A" 21 word very often. "Awe." You're awe-inspiring, all 22 of you in your performance and everything you do. 23 And like I said, it just makes me so happy to be a 24 part of state charter schools.</p> <p>25 Commissioner Beck touched on what I was</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">39</p> <p>1 comes up. So hopefully in five years, or our next 2 renewal, we're going to see better numbers there.</p> <p>3 Our four-year graduation rate, you said it 4 exactly perfectly. The four-year, if we get them 5 with no credit recovery, we're fine with all the 6 programs we have in place.</p> <p>7 But, again, we're getting these kids who 8 are 18 years old and they have two credits, three 9 credits. And, actually, Genevieve is profound in 10 working with the high school staff and with our 11 college and career counselor in a get-ahead project. 12 So we double up on Edgenuity.</p> <p>13 You've probably seen our packet. We do 14 have an online program. That's where those could be 15 doubling up, because we don't have a normal summer 16 school, like we would have back in the day. So 17 they're -- they're in school working on this and 18 also working on their Edgenuity. They're attending 19 the summer intensive; they're attending after 20 school.</p> <p>21 So we do our best. But, again, we tell 22 the kids, "We have our diplomas. The diploma is in 23 your hands. How quick do you want to get it?"</p> <p>24 We motivate them with the arts. We try to 25 get them there. But, again, some of our students'</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">41</p> <p>1 going to talk about. it's interesting where math is 2 where it is when science is so high, because, 3 generally, they correlate together. I'm happy to 4 hear that you recognize that and what you're doing.</p> <p>5 Is there any specific professional 6 development that you have relative to math 7 instruction?</p> <p>8 MS. GENEVIEVE LOPEZ: We started doing our 9 data talks with Charter School Testing last year. 10 And we've noticed on NWEA that our scores went up 11 40 percent. We've only done it for a year. We are 12 hoping that when we take our spring assessments that 13 we'll see even more growth.</p> <p>14 So when she comes in, she does a deep data 15 drive with our teachers so they can figure out, 16 "This is the area where we really need to focus on, 17 and this is the area where we need to push our 18 kids." This seems to be helpful so far.</p> <p>19 MS. VERONICA TORRES: It also helps our 20 teachers, when she goes through the deep data dives, 21 how they're going to group them in their smaller 22 math groups. I know our middle school math teacher 23 actually has three curricula running at the same 24 time.</p> <p>25 What's interesting, what I really love</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">42</p> <p>1 about her classroom when I visit it, is maybe I'm in 2 honors group for this particular skill level, but 3 maybe I have to go down and do a remedial group when 4 I'm at this other particular skill school level. 5 It's not just I'm in honors math and 6 honors math only. It's skill-dependent. And so, 7 okay, we're going to enrich your curriculum here. 8 You need extra help here, or you're right on track 9 right here. 10 So she's, again, another nationally board 11 certified teacher. But she's running those at the 12 same time. That also couples up with how we do it 13 in the parts. 14 And what's interesting, I keep telling 15 teachers, "Break down the walls." Students will 16 compartmentalize and say, "Whatever I learned in 17 Ms. B.'s class, this is what I learned." 18 And I tell these kids, "Do you realize how 19 quick you're counting and multiplying and dividing 20 every time you step on stage?" 21 So even in the performance you saw today, 22 they were dancing in threes, they were dancing in 23 sixes, they were dancing in nines and twelves. They 24 were going back and forth and back and forth. We're 25 doing palmas, the hand-clapping, sometimes in twos,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">44</p> <p>1 "happiness index" of the kids wanting to come to 2 school, because every part of what they're doing in 3 school is joyful, because art is part of everything. 4 And I can imagine -- many of you spoke, I 5 took down the names as well. But many of you spoke 6 about the joy that you get from flamenco and from 7 being a part of this. 8 And I've got to tell you, just the passion 9 you exude when you're dancing and you're singing, 10 it's just infectious. 11 Before I forget, when is the date of your 12 performance? Is that -- I've got to get that down. 13 Okay. Can you look that up, and I'll -- 14 MS. VERONICA TORRES: It will be at the 15 Hispanic Cultural Center, National Hispanic Cultural 16 Center this year, the 21st and 22nd. 7:00 p.m. 17 shows. And we always set aside ticketing for all of 18 you, so I'll be reaching out via e-mail. 19 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Great. Of May, 20 yeah. 21 So question I had. Because I don't have 22 the statistic in front of me here. But those that 23 are Free and Reduced Lunch, is there a way -- how do 24 you subsidize instruments and costumes? 25 MS. VERONICA TORRES: Okay. Great</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">43</p> <p>1 in sixes, in six, eight, tens. 2 So they're doing that constantly. But 3 until we have to state the obvious to our students, 4 "Break down the walls, you're doing math everywhere 5 all day." So, again, it will constantly be a 6 continued work in progress, 'cause kids think the 7 way they think. They're very concrete. 8 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: I'm glad you brought 9 that up, because schools also that have really 10 strong music programs also have pretty strong math 11 results. And also on the arts side, where you're 12 embedding art in all of the curricula, whether it's 13 history or science or what it is and you're 14 embedding art in everything, not only do kids 15 embrace it more, but they end up doing better and 16 they end up wanting to come to school. 17 There's a district in -- it's a county 18 district in Guilford, North Carolina. They 19 committed to arts-embedded education for the entire 20 school, every subject, all grades, absolutely 21 everything. It was hard to get some teachers on 22 board with that. 23 What they noticed was just a really strong 24 boost in their scores, but, more than anything, 25 something that I called when I met them the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">45</p> <p>1 question. So we are recipients of the CTE grant, 2 Career Technology grant. 3 MS. JULIA BARNES: Career Technical 4 Education. 5 MS. VERONICA TORRES: There it is. 6 Because we chose the strands. We have one in 7 careers in performing arts and one in fine arts. We 8 use some of that money to costume students through 9 that. I do use Title I money to buy shoes and 10 castanets for the students. A pair of flamenco 11 boots can be anywhere from \$115 to \$300. You see 12 how these guys hit the floor. They ruin them fast. 13 We are a CEP school. All of our students 14 eat for free. We have been eating for four years 15 now because of our high poverty rate. Because of 16 that, we know that our students can't afford -- like 17 Ms. Flores was saying. She has four kids at TANM. 18 That's four sets of shoes every day all day. That 19 can get expensive for parents. 20 We put money towards Title I and CTE to 21 get costumes and help students every day with their 22 everyday materials. Because flamenco shoes to us 23 are the same as a math book. They have to have them 24 in hand all day long. 25 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: I like that you said</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">46</p> <p>1 that.</p> <p>2 On the graduation rate side -- no, Tim</p> <p>3 touched on that. It just makes perfect sense for</p> <p>4 what you're doing relative to growth.</p> <p>5 And, just, I liked the idea of what you're</p> <p>6 doing with data talks in the quiet room. Just</p> <p>7 different ways that you've constructed your school</p> <p>8 environment to be so supportive of the kids; of the</p> <p>9 teachers as well, I would imagine.</p> <p>10 The -- on the math side, one thing that --</p> <p>11 because you said you're doing -- Ms. Lopez, one of</p> <p>12 the things that -- a couple of schools have had</p> <p>13 great success with is approaching math from a</p> <p>14 different angle. I wasn't one of these kids, but --</p> <p>15 because I loved math when I was in school. I</p> <p>16 embraced it.</p> <p>17 And -- but there's a math phobia that I</p> <p>18 believe has happened in the past 20, 30 years. And</p> <p>19 there's a way to also -- for teachers to learn how</p> <p>20 to reach kids that are kind of afraid of math where</p> <p>21 they just don't think they can do it.</p> <p>22 But the fun thing about math is when you</p> <p>23 solve a problem, you solve a problem. It's instant</p> <p>24 success. But just how to teach, keeping that in</p> <p>25 mind, has been very successful for some of the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">48</p> <p>1 these people from the offices on this floor were</p> <p>2 crowding -- they should have come in. They were</p> <p>3 crowded in the foyer listening. So thank you very</p> <p>4 much.</p> <p>5 SECRETARY BECK: I just have a quick</p> <p>6 question. I think it's probably for Dr. Russell or</p> <p>7 Director Chavez.</p> <p>8 On the Vistas, when they say growth, and</p> <p>9 we're dealing, like, obviously, with a high school,</p> <p>10 with eleventh grade, and that's the only grade they</p> <p>11 test, is it from last year's eleventh grade to this</p> <p>12 year's eleventh grade? Is that what they're</p> <p>13 saying -- so for their 55 percent growth in math and</p> <p>14 their 58 percent growth in reading in Vistas, is</p> <p>15 that how they are coming across that number?</p> <p>16 DR. BRIGETTE RUSSELL: Chair Gipson and</p> <p>17 Commissioner Beck, I do not believe Vistas shows</p> <p>18 growth data for the school.</p> <p>19 Vistas does not include growth for any</p> <p>20 high school. It only includes growth -- is -- are</p> <p>21 you -- are you looking at Vistas right now? I</p> <p>22 can -- let me check.</p> <p>23 SECRETARY BECK: (Off-mic.)</p> <p>24 DR. BRIGETTE RUSSELL: Okay. Great. Then</p> <p>25 that growth is for the students in grades 4 through</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">47</p> <p>1 teachers that had math challenges at some of our</p> <p>2 schools.</p> <p>3 So it might be something to look into.</p> <p>4 And I'm very impressed how you just focus</p> <p>5 on growth, not letting kids just graduate in four</p> <p>6 years, but they end up working at Allsup's because</p> <p>7 they can't read and write. You're focused on their</p> <p>8 success as individual.</p> <p>9 I'm super impressed with your school.</p> <p>10 There was a person that spoke about how -- it's</p> <p>11 Christmas when you come and when kids perform.</p> <p>12 It -- it's a window into your school that we never</p> <p>13 get to see.</p> <p>14 And, I mean, we have 60 -- we're going to</p> <p>15 have 61 State charters soon, I think. It's a way</p> <p>16 that we end up being able to see and know all of the</p> <p>17 schools, even if we can't get there.</p> <p>18 I live up here, and they joke with me</p> <p>19 about I don't get down La Bajada much unless the</p> <p>20 Santa Fe High Demons are playing in sports. I don't</p> <p>21 want to work anymore. I just want to do this work</p> <p>22 and visit schools, because that's where the joy is.</p> <p>23 So thank you for your commitment for all</p> <p>24 you do. And, kids, just, you just knocked it out of</p> <p>25 the park. You didn't see it happening. But all of</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">49</p> <p>1 8. So only the students up through grade 8 are --</p> <p>2 have growth reflected in Vistas. Any growth that</p> <p>3 schools -- that students make from grade 8 through</p> <p>4 grade 12 would not be reflected. The school does</p> <p>5 administer interim assessments.</p> <p>6 SECRETARY BECK: I know that. But that's</p> <p>7 not on Vistas, I know. Great. Thank you.</p> <p>8 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: Thank you. Thank</p> <p>9 you so much.</p> <p>10 I have one question, but I'm going to have</p> <p>11 a lot of -- I'm just going to gush for a little bit.</p> <p>12 I want to just first say, like, thank you</p> <p>13 so much to the amazing artists today. That's just</p> <p>14 so profoundly heartfelt to see that. And to see,</p> <p>15 you know, the -- so I haven't had a chance to travel</p> <p>16 too much in my life. But I went to -- in 1999, I</p> <p>17 remember going to Madrid and Plaza Mayor. And I saw</p> <p>18 flamenco for the first time in my life there. And I</p> <p>19 just think about just the exceptional artists that</p> <p>20 we have here.</p> <p>21 And it just made me go back to that moment</p> <p>22 when I first went to Spain and saw it for the first</p> <p>23 time. And today was like one of those moments where</p> <p>24 I feel like I saw it for the first time, even though</p> <p>25 I've seen it a lot, maybe some of you, but</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">50</p> <p>1 definitely your predecessors at your school. So 2 definitely go to the event in May. It's amazing and 3 just really emotional. And so thank you so much for 4 all of that.</p> <p>5 I also want to share, like, this school 6 is, like, literally -- I could throw a baseball and 7 hit this school from my house. I live on Mountain 8 and Rio Grande, so across from where you used to be.</p> <p>9 The first school I went to when I was in 10 Director Chavez's seat, that's the first school I 11 went to. I thought when I first joined the team 12 that maybe I should go to the one that, if I had 13 children, I would want them to be able to walk to 14 school.</p> <p>15 And it was an old Post Office building. I 16 assume it was a post office. It was a post office 17 when Alice King was there, and then you all moved 18 in.</p> <p>19 I was, like, how do you fit an art school 20 in a post office? You walk in and see the hustle 21 and bustle and the amazing dedication. That was 22 like profoundly changing for me in terms of what 23 charter schools can do with the little that they 24 receive oftentimes.</p> <p>25 And now seeing where you all are, just a</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">52</p> <p>1 100 percent. So every single student, at least, was 2 admitted into CNM with many other students going 3 other places, and every student taking at least one 4 dual credit course.</p> <p>5 I just think those are the things that, 6 like -- I know we can have conversations around high 7 school graduation. We should absolutely continue to 8 hone in on that. And then also thinking about the 9 expectation that that has, especially for young 10 people who are in the arts, which oftentimes, arts 11 are good -- it's like being an athlete. I would 12 love to have been a soccer player and made money. 13 But we knew that wasn't going to happen. You love 14 it, but also plan.</p> <p>15 One of the plans is are you college-bound? 16 Are you able, if you are -- if everything else goes 17 wrong, at least you can have college.</p> <p>18 And so I think that -- that is something 19 that just jumps out to me in terms of just over one 20 year's time, that increase and that intentionality, 21 setting high expectations for your young people. 22 And then having thirteen courses already done before 23 you graduate high school, that is like a 24 life-changing experience, especially for young 25 people who may not come from money, who may not have</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">51</p> <p>1 little bit further away from home, it's just amazing 2 to see that.</p> <p>3 So thank you for all that. And the story 4 is just so awesome.</p> <p>5 I have just a few -- a few thoughts. The 6 financials, I think, look great. I know you have 7 two, like, material weaknesses. I know you all have 8 a plan for that. I also think about having the cash 9 on hand, especially after building an \$8 million 10 school a couple of years ago, to have that much 11 money on hand, too, takes a lot. It takes a lot of 12 fundraising; it takes a lot of good thinking and 13 smarts financially with yourselves and your 14 foundation and your board from both institutions. 15 It's just really awesome.</p> <p>16 I -- you're not an early college school; 17 right? So I don't know if you all have seen this. 18 But buried in the Part B, what I think is just 19 amazing about art school, an art school, in 2022, 20 there -- I saw this on your -- Ms. Torres, on your 21 slide. And it was kind of buried, and I don't think 22 it should be buried. And that's no ding on you 23 guys.</p> <p>24 But, you know, in 2022, your college 25 admissions rate was 65 percent. In 2023, it was</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">53</p> <p>1 those options.</p> <p>2 And I think about all that time I wasted 3 in AP classes when I was a senior and before -- I'm 4 sorry, Commissioner. That -- I feel like I fleeced 5 my opportunity thinking, like, if I had a school 6 where I could actually get credit where credit was 7 due during -- so I think those things, like, change 8 lives.</p> <p>9 One question I have -- this is my 10 question.</p> <p>11 So congratulations. I honestly -- like, I 12 know that we've beat around the bush a little bit. 13 But there's some -- there's just sometimes, like, 14 schools that we ought to, like, think through, like, 15 an even extended period of renewal. I know that's 16 not necessarily in our control all the time. But, 17 like, thinking about some of our schools that we've 18 seen. And this is one that I think about what would 19 it mean for us to kind of really think about what we 20 need to do legislatively to change our cycle of how 21 often schools like this need to be renewed.</p> <p>22 Some states, you can do a ten-year 23 renewal. I just think about the work that you all 24 are doing and the track record that you have since 25 2010. We have other schools just like you who have</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">54</p> <p>1 very specific and awesome --</p> <p>2 SECRETARY BECK: Then it would be ten</p> <p>3 years before we get the flamenco dancing.</p> <p>4 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: Commissioner Beck,</p> <p>5 you can go there in May, May 21st and 22nd.</p> <p>6 One of the questions I have, I think about</p> <p>7 young -- young artists who have such great dreams</p> <p>8 and such great talent, and also the need to maybe</p> <p>9 have some business experience, too.</p> <p>10 I was wondering. Is there any emphasis --</p> <p>11 or what emphasis is there on any business courses or</p> <p>12 things like that that kind of pair up with, like,</p> <p>13 the love of arts? If you feel like that's</p> <p>14 important. For me, obviously, you see, like, I</p> <p>15 wonder how that is, because all these great artists</p> <p>16 and then maybe they don't have the business acumen,</p> <p>17 like some basics, and it's kind of hard to make --</p> <p>18 live out your dreams in that way.</p> <p>19 I was just curious how you all think about</p> <p>20 that and if there's any -- any direct kind of</p> <p>21 learning that happens around that, even when you all</p> <p>22 are at an institution.</p> <p>23 MS. VERONICA TORRES: Madam Chair,</p> <p>24 Commissioner Brauer, we do. So I think it was</p> <p>25 Ms. Marshall and Ms. Hartshorn that stated it. We</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">56</p> <p>1 artist and a former teacher and now a principal.</p> <p>2 So, again, there are many pathways in front of them.</p> <p>3 They can actually see it happen. They'll always ask</p> <p>4 us, "What is your story? How do you do it?"</p> <p>5 Along with our dual credit program, what</p> <p>6 you pointed out perfectly was many of our kids they</p> <p>7 can't just afford to go to college. Sometimes</p> <p>8 they're not going to get all the financial aid that</p> <p>9 they need or all the support that they need. So the</p> <p>10 dual credit program, we always tell them, take</p> <p>11 advantage of it, now. You get a free ride</p> <p>12 scholarship right now with support. You can come to</p> <p>13 after-school tutoring, where our teachers could help</p> <p>14 you in your academic classes.</p> <p>15 We have students branching out and not</p> <p>16 just taking dance classes or music classes or art</p> <p>17 classes at our school; they're trying painting and</p> <p>18 drawing, other things, and theater, in other areas</p> <p>19 at CNM.</p> <p>20 We do contract out with -- she's actually</p> <p>21 one of our parents, but she also works in admissions</p> <p>22 at CNM. She will sit down with our kids and guide</p> <p>23 them through their whole college program as well.</p> <p>24 What we want to do is eliminate the fear</p> <p>25 of you're that starving artist. And we want to</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">55</p> <p>1 have working artists working at our school. So,</p> <p>2 like, Ms. Osuna dances professionally. She's a</p> <p>3 soloist in Yjastros, the dance company. I'm a</p> <p>4 former soloist.</p> <p>5 So we have many either retired dancers or</p> <p>6 current dancers, current artists in the community,</p> <p>7 current musicians in the community that show kids</p> <p>8 every day, "If you can't be an artist and support</p> <p>9 yourself, here's education. Here's one way to do</p> <p>10 it."</p> <p>11 So in real time in real life, students</p> <p>12 have that vision and that goal and a plan. So they</p> <p>13 will often come around and ask any one of us, "Well,</p> <p>14 how do you do it? How do you do it? How do you do</p> <p>15 it?"</p> <p>16 This isn't the only way. So if they do</p> <p>17 have another plan, we have students going into doing</p> <p>18 internships with veterinarians right now. We have</p> <p>19 students doing marketing internships in the summer</p> <p>20 or summer work perhaps with the National Institute</p> <p>21 of Flamenco.</p> <p>22 So they go around to different communities</p> <p>23 and see firsthand working artists and how they</p> <p>24 perform themselves.</p> <p>25 Ms. Marshall is a professional visual</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">57</p> <p>1 eliminate that at the parent level, too. We have</p> <p>2 had parents say, "You can go to college, but you're</p> <p>3 not majoring in dance. You have to major in</p> <p>4 something else. You can minor in dance, but you</p> <p>5 can't major."</p> <p>6 So we also have to work with our parents</p> <p>7 on that mindset. And I'm, like, "Hey, I am where I</p> <p>8 am, and I'm an artist." So there you go.</p> <p>9 So we do have that vision in mind with our</p> <p>10 students and we do work with them. Like,</p> <p>11 Ms. Hartshorn was saying, it depends individually on</p> <p>12 the student. We meet them where they're at and</p> <p>13 create their roadmap, where they want to go.</p> <p>14 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: Thank you very much.</p> <p>15 Congratulations. Really appreciate it.</p> <p>16 MS. VERONICA TORRES: Thank you.</p> <p>17 THE CHAIR: So thank everyone. I mean,</p> <p>18 this was a fabulous way to open a Monday. I'm kind</p> <p>19 of sad you're not the last one, you know, because</p> <p>20 this would be a great way to end as well.</p> <p>21 So if you want to come back, come back on</p> <p>22 Thursday. We'd appreciate it.</p> <p>23 But if I remember correctly, your first</p> <p>24 location, you shared a parking lot with a gun/pawn</p> <p>25 shop? Yes? Was that --</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">58</p> <p>1 MS. VERONICA TORRES: I think we did; 2 right? Yeah, it was -- yeah. We were on the news, 3 actually, a couple of our students stepping over 4 homeless people to go to class. 5 THE CHAIR: So this has been -- and you 6 also had staff that used to have to stand on Central 7 to direct -- cross the kids; right? 8 Yeah. So it's -- this is a remarkable 9 journey. If you -- I was fortunate that I could 10 attend the ribbon cutting for the new facility and 11 just -- and just an incredible experience of 12 community support; the kids, the families, you know, 13 an incredible foundation that has worked really hard 14 to get this -- you know, to get that building up. 15 It is just, you know, quite a highlight 16 for -- and accomplishment for what you can do. 17 Do you still run the after -- kind of like 18 the after-hours recovery program? 19 How many people do you have in that, 20 enrolled in that? 21 MS. GENEVIEVE LOPEZ: I think right now we 22 have about six. And our college-and-career 23 counselor is the one that oversees that program, and 24 she checks in with them daily to make sure they are 25 on track and they can come in if they need to. But</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">60</p> <p>1 to be doing, but going above and beyond and making 2 sure that every one of those kids is set for a 3 positive future and is walking out as -- just as a 4 better human being, plain and simple, you know. 5 And that they're going to be dinged on a 6 State report card -- we don't call it "report card" 7 anymore, but -- you know, for what you're doing 8 is -- it's just -- it's just a shame. 9 I want to thank the one student who said, 10 "I went to another public school," not, "I went to a 11 public school and then I came to the charter 12 school," because that -- you know, that's a hurdle 13 we also deal with, you know, is that, "Oh, I'm going 14 to a charter school now, and it's not a public 15 school." 16 And the fact that this school is able to 17 provide all of these services, and, like 18 Commissioner Brauer said, have the cash on hand that 19 they have and provide expensive pieces of 20 instruction -- and I'm going to call them 21 instructional materials -- is just, you know, 22 incredible. It really is. So I just want to thank 23 you for everything that you do every day. 24 Did you want to say something else? 25 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: A couple of</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">59</p> <p>1 I believe it's six right now, on the program, yes. 2 THE CHAIR: Because that was also -- for 3 Commissioners, that was also a hurdle to get over to 4 get PED to agree to that program, you know. They 5 just didn't want to support it. So thanks for 6 continuing with that, because I think it really is 7 important. 8 I just want to say I think I'm -- I don't 9 think -- I am appalled that a sixth grader could be 10 arriving at any school and be testing at a preschool 11 or a kindergarten level. I mean, that's just -- 12 that's the tragedy of what our educational system is 13 here. 14 It's just -- so that the fact that this 15 school is able to get those kids, by the fifth and 16 sixth year, graduated is a testament to everything 17 that you do. 18 Because I -- I get it. To try to get 19 those kids out in four, that's great. But it's -- 20 you know, it's almost an impossible -- impossible 21 hurdle. And I think the State really should be 22 looking at the student populations and adjusting the 23 graduation rate rating based on that, you know, that 24 why should a school who is dedicated and obviously 25 doing what they -- not only what they are supposed</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">61</p> <p>1 questions. 2 Actually, I want to -- remember -- he 3 used -- which reminded me of something that I 4 thought, I said, "You need to say it. You need to 5 tell them." 6 SECRETARY BECK: My youngest son is a 7 doctor in the military. We were with him this 8 weekend. We were talking about what he's going to 9 do after the military. 10 He said, you know, "I'm friends with a lot 11 of docs. I know guys..." -- he went to Temple Med, 12 the guys at Temple Med. 13 And he said, "They're all failing because 14 they don't have any business background." 15 Medical school or anything doesn't teach 16 anything about business. 17 I had a 30-year career in the textile 18 industry, 25 of it owning my own business. And for 19 the students out there that are going into their own 20 professional careers, I would highly advise you, on 21 your own, if need be, to really learn about business 22 and how business works, and, you know, the 23 difference between income statements, cash flow 24 statements, things like that, how much money you 25 need in immediate cash versus how you're going to</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">62</p> <p>1 build your asset base over time. 2 Docs don't even have that. And lawyers 3 don't have that. And they -- you hear these people 4 making all sorts of tons of money. But it's not how 5 much money you make; it's how much money you keep. 6 So that's it for me. 7 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Thank you. I'm glad 8 Commissioner Beck shared that. So the question -- I 9 have one question, because it's a red here; it's on 10 staff credentialing, where it says Does Not Meet. 11 And I -- and maybe Ms. Russell -- maybe 12 Dr. Russell knows what that is. But the staff 13 credentialing, red, it's in the -- on theirs. Maybe 14 it's not up to date or something. I'm curious about 15 it. There's no red; it's all green here. 16 DR. BRIGETTE RUSSELL: Okay. Let me look. 17 Unless Ms. Valenzuela has it open and can address 18 it, I'm not sure. 19 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: I'm sure that's 20 addressed. I'm sure you're aware. 21 DR. BRIGETTE RUSSELL: It is being 22 addressed. The CSD works closely with the Licensure 23 Bureau. And when a school has ratings of other than 24 Meets the Standard, we always talk to Licensure and 25 then talk to the school to determine how it can be</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">64</p> <p>1 with their -- with kids, and producing adults that 2 are going to be productive parts of society and 3 creative parts of society. 4 And I just want to say thank you. 5 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Do you want me to do 6 a motion? 7 THE CHAIR: So I'm going to ask Mr. Hill, 8 because we are in receipt of the e-mail that you 9 sent us. But disclosing that, just to e-mail us 10 isn't sufficient enough. So can you just briefly, 11 for the record, speak to the Title IX complaint? I 12 remember the last time you guys were up here and we 13 had a Commissioner that read the wrong application 14 and actually made them a charge about a staff 15 person, and it wasn't that school. 16 They're looking like deer in headlights at 17 us, and they're, like, what the heck are you talking 18 about. They read the wrong application and was 19 making an accusation about a staff member. This 20 isn't about that. But we need this quickly on the 21 record. 22 MR. DAN HILL: Good morning. Thank you, 23 Madam Chair, members of the Commission. I'm Dan 24 Hill, the school's attorney. It's H-i-l-l. So we 25 did disclose over e-mail there was a Title IX</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">63</p> <p>1 improved in future. 2 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: I'm satisfied with 3 that. Yeah. 4 So in speaking -- in building on what 5 Commissioner Beck said, do you teach -- I know a lot 6 of high schools now, financial literacy is part of 7 what's -- oh, you're teaching that, too? 8 Outstanding. 9 And civics? Anywhere -- great. Okay. To 10 me, civics and U.S. history are often lost, and our 11 country wouldn't be where it is, to me, if people 12 had a foundation in civics and U.S. history. All 13 right. Thank you very much. 14 Do you have anything? 15 SECRETARY BECK: I just wanted to say 16 you're a Spotlight in my view. 17 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Heck, yeah. 18 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: Can I just say -- I 19 got a chance to visit your school. It was my first 20 charter school, I think, I visited. I think I might 21 have not even been on the council yet. 22 But I am very impressed and thankful for 23 having schools like this. And what the one lady -- 24 it is like Christmas to come and see really 25 wonderful schools succeeding and doing great work</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">65</p> <p>1 complaint. The reason why it wasn't disclosed with 2 the application is because the way the application 3 is worded, it only specifies, I believe it's U.S. 4 Department of Ed, U.S. -- or New Mexico Public Ed 5 Department or state-level special ed complaints. 6 So Title IX is kind of a weird statute 7 federally where there's multiple levels of 8 enforcement. So one mechanism is a -- a Title IX 9 coordinator at the school actually is responsible 10 for handling the complaint. 11 So without getting into, like, specifics 12 of the people, there was a letter that was sent to 13 the Public Ed Department, not actually a complaint, 14 just a letter, and that letter was referred to the 15 school. Given the nature of the letter, we felt 16 like it was something that at least conceivably 17 could be a Title IX issue because it involved 18 discrimination on the basis of sex. 19 I think you would characterize it as, 20 like, sexual harassment in this case. 21 And so that was handled according to the 22 Title IX regs. So the school has to unfortunately 23 pay an investigator and pay a decision-maker, and 24 then we do what they say. 25 In this case, the decision-maker said it</p>

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1 wasn't -- the conduct wasn't severe enough to raise
 2 to the level of a Title IX violation. There was
 3 some misconduct that was noted as being addressed at
 4 kind of a site level from, you know, an HR
 5 perspective.
 6 And then we also disclosed there's also --
 7 it's our understanding that there was a separate
 8 licensure complaint filed against a staff member,
 9 which the school is not involved in. PED is
 10 handling that.
 11 And the staff member remains on
 12 administrative leave pending that investigation.
 13 So I'm happy to answer questions about it.
 14 We wouldn't -- it came up at another hearing that
 15 there was a Title IX complaint. So we felt like,
 16 just as a matter of transparency, to disclose that.
 17 And apologize it only went out last
 18 minute. But we just have had a lot going on lately.
 19 THE CHAIR: No. I appreciate it. We just
 20 wanted to get that on the record. So I don't -- we
 21 don't need to dig into it. So thank you. I
 22 appreciate it.
 23 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: All right thank you,
 24 Madam Chair, Commissioners.
 25 I move that the Public Education

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1 Commission approve the application for
 2 Tierra Adentro of New Mexico, the arts (verbatim) of
 3 Academics, Arts, and Artesania, for a five-year
 4 term, with the following -- for a five-year term
 5 without conditions.
 6 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: I'll second.
 7 THE CHAIR: There's a motion by
 8 Commissioner Brauer and a second by Commissioner
 9 Carrillo.
 10 Any further discussion?
 11 (No response.)
 12 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Beck?
 13 SECRETARY BECK: I already put the Xes
 14 down.
 15 Commissioner Gipson.
 16 THE CHAIR: Yes.
 17 SECRETARY BECK: Vice Chair Carrillo.
 18 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Yes.
 19 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Ingham.
 20 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: Yes.
 21 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Brauer.
 22 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: Yes.
 23 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Manis.
 24 Is Commissioner Manis on?
 25 Commissioner Manis.

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1 COMMISSIONER MANIS: Yes.
 2 SECRETARY BECK: Secretary Beck, yes.
 3 There are six votes for, zero votes
 4 against. The motion passes. Congratulations.
 5 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Congratulations.
 6 We're taking a break until 11:00.
 7 (Recess taken, 9:42 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.)
 8 THE CHAIR: Good morning, everyone.
 9 Welcome. Thank you all for coming. We love to see
 10 new faces, and we love the room packed, and we're
 11 looking forward to an exciting presentation.
 12 So thank you very much for helping us
 13 through our morning. We really do appreciate that.
 14 We are here for our second hearing, and
 15 that is The Montessori Elementary & Middle School
 16 located in Albuquerque.
 17 So what we will do first is do Public Ed
 18 Department. CSD will give their report. In case
 19 there's someone here for -- online, we'll do that.
 20 And then we will -- you'll have your time
 21 to shine.
 22 And then we'll do public comments from the
 23 folks in the building that may have signed up. And
 24 then we'll go.
 25 So thank you.

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1 MS. LUCY VALENZUELA: Good morning, Chair
 2 Gipson and Commissioners. My name is Lucy
 3 Valenzuela, Authorizing Practices Administrator for
 4 the Charter Schools Division. And I'm here to
 5 provide the CSD/PED evaluation for The Montessori
 6 Elementary & Middle School.
 7 The Montessori Elementary & Middle School
 8 opened in 2005 under Albuquerque Public Schools.
 9 And in 2010, they renewed with the Public Education
 10 Commission. This is the third renewal with the PEC.
 11 The school offers an accelerated program
 12 by providing a strong Montessori academic curriculum
 13 combined with a unique fine arts program, including
 14 Suzuki Method, general music, and visual arts.
 15 The mission of the school is to encourage
 16 students, grades K through 8, to become responsible
 17 citizens who have the ability and desire to fulfill
 18 lifelong educational and social goals.
 19 The school's head administrator, Ms. Piper
 20 Curry, is in her second year at the school.
 21 The renewal visit took place on Wednesday,
 22 October 16th. And the visit team consisted of
 23 myself as team lead Kelli Renken, and Kristen
 24 LaVolpa.
 25 The Charter Schools Division recommends

70	<p>1 that the Montessori Elementary & Middle School be 2 renewed for a term of five years without conditions. 3 The recommendation is based on the record 4 of the school's performance over the course of the 5 contract term, the renewal application, which 6 highlights adult actions and programs in the service 7 of student progress, and verification of those 8 programs and adult actions during our renewal site 9 visit and annual visits. 10 In regards to academics, The Montessori 11 Elementary & Middle School has been designated a 12 Spotlight School for two consecutive years through 13 NM Vistas. Additionally, the PED has published the 14 Spring 2024 assessment results, and the school's 15 Vistas designation is Spotlight with a score of 16 68.5. 17 The school's proficiencies are 67 percent 18 in ELA, 59 percent in science, and 37 percent in 19 math. 20 Reminder. According to the PED and 21 NM Vistas web page, point totals from School Year 22 '22-'23 and School Year '23-'24 cannot be compared 23 due to changes in business rules. 24 These proficiencies have remained about 25 the same in all areas in the last two years, and the</p>	72	<p>1 March. 2 In conclusion, The Montessori Elementary & 3 Middle School is committed to providing the best 4 Montessori education experience to all students that 5 attend the school. The school's leadership is 6 committed to providing continued support to all of 7 its students in an equitable manner, especially when 8 it comes to their field trips around the country and 9 internationally. 10 The school holds several fundraising 11 opportunities for all students. Adult actions were 12 proactively taken by school leadership to address 13 issues related to their finances, demonstrating a 14 commitment to improvement and compliance. 15 This focus on resolving financial concerns 16 has contributed to the school's overall positive 17 performance. 18 It is for these reasons that the CSD 19 recommends the school for a five-year renewal 20 without conditions. 21 THE CHAIR: Thank you. I'm assuming 22 there's no one on for tribal input. 23 MS. MELISSA BROWN: That is correct, 24 Chair. 25 THE CHAIR: So, now, it's the school's</p>
71	<p>1 school's growth and performance suggests an upward 2 improvement. 3 For their financial and organizational, 4 the school has only had three financial indicators 5 over the contract term with ratings other than Meets 6 the Standard, making Demonstrates Substantial 7 Progress the highest rating CSD can give the school 8 on this section. 9 The school has sound fiscal processes and 10 has reported timely to the PED School Budget Bureau 11 for the past three years. The school has not had 12 more than three audit findings in any year of the 13 contract term. 14 For the Part B ratings, the school met the 15 standard in student outcomes, mission-specific 16 goals, educational program, governance 17 responsibilities, equity and identity, and other 18 performance framework indicators. 19 They received Demonstrates Substantial 20 Progress for their financial compliance. 21 The school has submitted amendment 22 requests for an enrollment cap increase, an 23 additional facility that would be implemented if 24 approved in the next contract term. This will be 25 voted on during contract negotiations later on in</p>	73	<p>1 opportunity to shine. 2 MS. PIPER CURRY: Good morning. My name 3 is Piper Curry. 4 THE CHAIR: I'm sorry. I don't mean to 5 interrupt. But as you speak for the first time, if 6 you could spell your last name for the record. 7 MS. PIPER CURRY: Certainly. Piper Curry, 8 C-u-r-r-y. 9 And I'm the school's executive director. 10 We are going to start our day with a performance 11 from our advanced strings group. 12 (Performance by school string players.) 13 MS. PIPER CURRY: Thank you for that 14 performance. We are so lucky to have Megan Holland 15 and Nick Upton as two of our wonderful teachers. So 16 thank you to both of them. 17 Thank you for having us here today and 18 thank you for the work that you do for public 19 charter schools. 20 As I said, I'm Piper Curry, and I'm the 21 executive director. I'm in my second year as the 22 executive director with The Montessori Elementary & 23 Middle School. Today, I want to go over some of our 24 successes over the last five years. It's very 25 difficult to highlight all our accomplishments in</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">74</p> <p>1 30 minutes, but we're certainly going to try. 2 First, I'd like to acknowledge and 3 introduce our leadership team who's with us here 4 today. 5 Like I said, I'm Piper Curry. 6 This is Stan Albrycht, our CFO and 7 business manager. 8 Amanda Hagerty, our principal. 9 Alissa Sanchez is not here with us today. 10 She's running the school. She's our assistant 11 principal. 12 Tahirih Garcia, our special education 13 director. 14 Mary Chappell is here as our governing 15 counsel vice president. 16 Javier Benavidez is here as both a 17 governing council member and a TMEMS parent. 18 We have our teachers, Jill McCallum, 19 Sherry Haworth, Claire Alecksen, Jennifer Born, and 20 Victoria Blakely. 21 I would also like to acknowledge Megan 22 Holland and Nick Upton, our string teachers, and 23 Patricia Matthews, our legal counsel, is here with 24 us. 25 Thank you to our parents and students</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">76</p> <p>1 growth that we've seen and consistency in that 2 demand for growth. 3 Over the past five years, we have noticed 4 the need for growth with an overwhelming number of 5 applicants. This past year, we had 713 applications 6 for our school. 7 Of those 713, we were only able to accept 8 110. And 62 of those were in kindergarten. 9 So we have a very low attrition rate, and 10 our current enrollment is very stable. 11 And based on those Niche.com scores, it is 12 because of our staff. They are wonderful. They 13 deserve all the credit. We have the best teachers 14 in the state. I truly believe that. 15 And 84 percent of our total staff returned 16 this year. And so we were really proud of that 17 number. 18 We'd like to go on to talk about our 19 mission-specific goals. And we have met those 20 goals. 21 Number one, addressing the middle school 22 eighth-grade students, completion of their 23 independent study and their internship. And then 24 our goal number two addresses fidelity in the 25 elementary classrooms to Montessori and the prepared</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">75</p> <p>1 joining us today. 2 Everything that we do at TMEMS ties back 3 to our mission statement. We truly believe that 4 learning is best achieved with a positive social 5 atmosphere that supports each individual's unique 6 development. 7 As you saw, we have a strong Suzuki 8 strings program, alongside our wonderful Montessori 9 curriculum and visual arts curriculum. 10 We wholeheartedly believe that we are 11 encouraging students to become responsible citizens 12 of the world who will go on to have the ability and 13 desire to fill lifelong goals. 14 We would like to showcase that we received 15 a top Niche.com review. This review is taken based 16 on comments, parent comments, community comments, 17 and input, as well as test scores. And we received 18 a designation as number one elementary 19 schoolteachers in New Mexico and number one middle 20 school teacher in New Mexico. So we're incredibly 21 honored and proud to have these teachers. 22 We are No. 6 of the Best Charter 23 Elementary Schools, and we're honored to have that 24 designation as well. 25 We'd like to talk a little bit about our</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">77</p> <p>1 environment. 2 If we go to the next slide, you'll be able 3 to see some of our middle school students completing 4 their internships during a week in February. And we 5 are going to send you all an invitation and, 6 hopefully, you'll be able to join us for their 7 presentations at the end of the year, and you can 8 see it all culminate and come together. And it's a 9 really wonderful experience. 10 Goal number two, you can see our prepared 11 environment here. And these are just a few photos 12 of our beautiful Montessori classrooms, lined with 13 Montessori materials. 14 You are welcome to stop by the school any 15 time. We would love to show you Montessori in 16 action and the students using those materials and 17 just interacting with the materials. It's so 18 meaningful when you're able to see it in person. 19 The next slide we're going to talk about 20 is our student outcomes, which we're extremely proud 21 of. We're a Spotlight School. And for the past 22 several years, we've used Renaissance Star testing 23 in order to track our interim assessments; so 24 beginning, middle, and end of the school year. 25 And this data is so important whenever it</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">78</p> <p>1 comes to looking at student growth. Our teachers 2 meet on a weekly basis in their PLC groups to go 3 over data, to look at data, to see how they can help 4 students improve. And as you can see, we made 5 progress in both reading and math last year. 6 This year, we are setting the bar high 7 with a beginning-of-the-year score of 73 percent 8 proficient in reading and 58 percent proficient in 9 Star -- the Star assessments in math. 10 And so right now, we're in the -- we're in 11 the middle-of-the-year testing. So we're hopeful to 12 see that growth continue. 13 Our NM-MSSA reading scores are something 14 that we are encouraged and excited to see. Our 15 reading scores are absolutely something to 16 celebrate. While we went from 70 percent proficient 17 to 67 percent proficient, 70 percent proficient is a 18 pretty high bar to set. And so we're still 19 extremely proud of that 67 percent proficiency. 20 And this just goes to our amazing 21 teachers, because they have embraced LETRS that the 22 PEC has provided for teachers across the state. And 23 they've really used those evidence-based practices 24 in their classroom. And I believe that that shows 25 through our reading scores.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">80</p> <p>1 Assistance Team, where we bring in parents, 2 administrators, our social worker. We have several 3 people on this team that collaborate to help these 4 students. 5 Now, if, for some reason, we aren't able 6 to see growth, and we need to initiate a referral 7 for a special ed evaluation, we do that as well. 8 This next slide that you're seeing are 9 just many of the layers of intervention that we're 10 providing our students and all of the different 11 programs and strategies and tools that our teachers 12 use on a daily basis. 13 So if that special education referral is 14 made, we -- we are very proud of our special 15 education department. A lot of that credit goes to 16 Tahirih Garcia, our special education director. She 17 has really transformed our special education 18 department, and we're so thankful to have her. 19 We prioritize these students, and it 20 shows. 21 And I'm going to show you why on the next 22 slide. 23 This year, 18 percent of our population is 24 supported through an IEP. Last year, 16 percent 25 was, and the year before that, 15 percent. So we</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">79</p> <p>1 Moving on to our math scores, when looking 2 at '22-'23 proficiency, we really wanted to focus on 3 math because we felt like this was an area where we 4 knew we could do better. 5 And so we did focus on math. We -- we 6 went from 33 percent proficient to 37 percent 7 proficient, which we're extremely proud of that 8 4 percent gain. 9 And the growth really reflects the 10 dedication of our teachers, who have embraced 11 targeted professional development and implemented 12 high quality instructional materials alongside our 13 Montessori curriculum. 14 I want to take a moment to talk about 15 student supports. 16 We understand that early and consistent 17 interventions are the best way to ensure that we 18 continue to have our students make academic and 19 social gains. 20 So when teachers meet in those 21 professional learning committees and those 22 professional learning groups each week, they look at 23 that data, they talk about it, and they decipher 24 whether or not students need additional supports. 25 If they do, they refer them to the Student</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">81</p> <p>1 are having an increase in our special education and 2 our IEP kiddos. But we are taking additional 3 measures to support those students. 4 Those students are supported by multiple 5 providers. Like I said, we have our special 6 education director, who also is a practicing 7 educational diagnostician. So we have an 8 educational diagnostician in house for our students. 9 We have three special education teachers, 10 a full-time social worker, a part-time speech and 11 language pathologist, who is actually with us, Meg, 12 a part-time occupational therapist. And this allows 13 us to offer those specialized services to our kiddos 14 in multi-age inclusion classrooms for kindergarten 15 through fifth grade. And then in middle school, we 16 have specialized intensive instruction for those 17 kids. 18 Consistent and ongoing progress monitoring 19 and data-informed instruction always takes place. 20 We understand that our whole community benefits from 21 understanding, teaching, and the reinforcement of 22 acceptance and inclusion of our learners and their 23 families. 24 This next slide is one that we're very 25 proud of. It is our special education growth from</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">82</p> <p>1 '22-'23 to '23-'24. And I want to point out that 2 TMEMS is in orange, and the state average is in 3 blue. So we start out higher than the state 4 average. But then, in reading, as you can see, we 5 went from 23 percent proficient to 33 percent 6 proficient for our students with disabilities. 7 And then in math, this is even more 8 exciting. We went from 10 percent proficient to 9 30 -- or, sorry -- 22 percent proficient. So we had 10 a 12 percent gain in math for our students with 11 disabilities. 12 This just shows how those targeted 13 interventions and our teachers' dedication are 14 really working to help those students. 15 We want to talk a little bit about our 16 restorative behavior approach. 17 When it comes to behavior, restorative 18 practices are at the heart of Montessori, ensuring 19 TMEMS has a positive and inclusive environment where 20 relationships are prioritized. 21 Conflicts are resolved peacefully, and 22 accountability is embraced with empathy. 23 Montessori emphasizes grace and courtesy 24 from the second students walk into the door, which 25 fosters a sense of community and mutual respect</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">84</p> <p>1 our priorities are attendance. It's always 2 attendance. Kids have to be in school to learn. So 3 attendance is a high priority for our equity 4 council. And also family and community support; 5 resources, workshops, personalized outreach to 6 address student and family needs. 7 Moving forward, for '25-'26, we have our 8 priorities set as attendance, always. But we also 9 want to incorporate a lunch program. We don't 10 currently have lunch because we don't have space. 11 But moving into this new building and expanding will 12 give us the space to have a lunch program at every 13 campus. 14 This next slide is just a sampling of all 15 the ways we have family engagement on a daily and 16 weekly basis. There's meetings. There's 17 conferences, progress reports. There's texts that 18 we send. E-mails. The website. Stakeholder 19 surveys are important, weekly newsletters. We have 20 a student and a parent portal, and we also utilize 21 Facebook. So we try to have plenty of outreach to 22 our community. 23 Next we really want to talk about our in- 24 and out-of-classroom experiences. Some people might 25 call them field trips, but we called them in- and</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">83</p> <p>1 among students and teachers. 2 This approach helps students thrive 3 academically, socially, and emotionally. 4 The heart of our restorative practices is 5 our Montessori Peace Table. The Peace Table process 6 is explicit. And it's a lesson taught multiple 7 times to reinforce throughout the school year so 8 students have a positive way of handling peer 9 disagreements. 10 The dedicated space in each classroom is 11 developmentally appropriate, peaceful, and 12 respectful. There's problem solving and conflict 13 resolution that happens there. It fosters 14 independence and self-regulation, and there's always 15 a focus on repairing relationships. 16 Our equity council and stakeholder 17 communication and input meetings. This work has 18 been slow, steady, but thoughtful. 19 We strive to hold a minimum of two 20 meetings per year to engage our community and all 21 stakeholders, sharing vital information and 22 gathering feedback from our community. 23 We proudly serve students from 24 30 different ZIP Codes in and around Albuquerque. 25 We have priorities each year. This year,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">85</p> <p>1 out-of-classroom experiences, because so much of 2 what we are and what we do is tied to our in- and 3 out-of-the-classroom experiences, which is what 4 Maria Montessori described as the Planes of 5 Development. 6 This theory describes how children develop 7 through four paths -- or planes -- that each have 8 specific characteristics, needs, and sensitivities. 9 So in our in- and out-of-the-classroom experiences, 10 they allow our early childhood or kindergarten 11 students to build a deeper understanding of 12 classroom lessons. 13 It allows our childhood, or lower and 14 upper elementary students, to be able to explore and 15 learn outside of the classroom safely while 16 following and practicing grace and courtesy. 17 And it allows for our adolescents, our 18 middle school students, to be able to build 19 self-confidence and challenge themselves while 20 learning how to travel away from school and become 21 global citizens. 22 This all leads to the last Plane of 23 Development, which is maturity. And it's 18 and 24 older, where they will have a sense of independence 25 and personal responsibility to the world.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">86</p> <p>1 We always want students to participate. 2 So at the heart, and in every single field trip we 3 do, we have fundraising. So there are always 4 fundraising efforts so that all students can always 5 participate. 6 This next slide is just a sampling of the 7 in- and out-of-classroom experiences that we are 8 doing this school year. 9 This last list -- some of this stays the 10 same, and some of it changes, based on our year and 11 our teachers and what they ask for and where they'd 12 like to take their children to tie back to their 13 classroom. 14 This is an important process. Teachers 15 plan, teach, and reflect on every in- and 16 out-of-the-classroom experience that takes place at 17 TMEMS, making them meaningful and tied to our 18 mission and the State standards. 19 On this next slide, you're going to see 20 some of our students in the in- and out-of-classroom 21 experiences over the past year. 22 And then this next slide just shows some 23 of our international trips that the students have 24 taken some photos from those trips. 25 And that's an eighth-grade trip. They</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">88</p> <p>1 well-being of all staff and students. 2 Amanda has collaborated with multiple 3 other charter schools to work together to plan for 4 emergency situations and reunification. So it's 5 really nice to be able to share information with 6 other charter schools, and it builds community 7 between those charter schools. So we're very 8 thankful for that. 9 We're approaching the end of our 10 presentation. But we can't stop here without 11 talking about our future plans, because they're 12 important. 13 For 2025-2026, we would like to change our 14 name to "The Montessori Academy." 15 We would like to move our middle school to 16 our new location. 17 We would like to add lunches at all 18 campuses to promote equity and support our 19 community. 20 And then from 2026 to 2030, we would like 21 to add a high school, adding one grade level per 22 year. 23 We'd like to add a free pre-K program. 24 And then we'd eventually like to add transportation 25 to and from school.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">87</p> <p>1 build up to that. 2 A new initiative this year at TMEMS is our 3 Montessori Institute. 4 This year we started a Montessori 5 Institute for all of our teachers and staff to learn 6 and reflect on Montessori best practices. 7 We also have four teachers enrolled in the 8 North American Montessori training online to become 9 Montessori trained and certified. 10 The TMEMS Montessori Institute meets 11 monthly to reflect and share Montessori strategies 12 and best practices between the staff. We have our 13 Montessori certified teachers leading this 14 initiative to continue to keep fidelity to the 15 Montessori curriculum. 16 School safety. We felt it was extremely 17 important to acknowledge the effort that has gone 18 into school safety at TMEMS. Amanda Hagerty, our 19 principal, has improved our school safety 20 tremendously over the past two years. She has 21 developed a safety committee that frequently meets 22 with APD, AFD, and the surrounding businesses and 23 schools. 24 We have implemented tools such as Rave, 25 Raptor, and the STOPit app that promotes safety and</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">89</p> <p>1 Last, we want to leave you with some 2 student voices. I'd like to just read a couple of 3 comments from our alumni. 4 "The teachers cared about us individually 5 and prepared me for high school well. The academic 6 level at TMEMS made it easier for me to keep on and 7 go above and beyond my high school courses. I 8 definitely miss the atmosphere, teachers, and 9 friends I had there, and will forever be grateful 10 for that experience." 11 "I'm just one alumni, but I can honestly 12 say the school deserves to stay, not for the 13 teachers, but for the students." 14 And last, this is a compilation of current 15 students and what they have to say about our school. 16 If we can just play that next video. 17 Thank you. 18 (Video played.) 19 THE CHAIR: How many people do we have? 20 Oh. 21 MS. PIPER CURRY: You may get a good 22 sampling with those 15, if that video doesn't work. 23 THE CHAIR: While we're doing this, can 24 the roll-call vote record please reflect that 25 Commissioner Burt is now online?</p>

90	<p>1 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Apologies. I had not 2 checked to make sure that I could -- for some 3 reason, it's not letting Lucy or I elect to share 4 sound with this presentation. 5 So -- so is that the end? You have four 6 minutes, so -- 7 MS. PIPER CURRY: Yes. 8 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Sorry. Would you like 9 to move to the comments then? 10 THE CHAIR: We'll just move to Public 11 Comment. Thank you. 12 MS. MELISSA BROWN: All right. So as I 13 said, we have 15 people. I'm going to ask people to 14 come up here. I have the microphone on. You don't 15 have to be close to it. Just about this far; okay? 16 When you come up, I'm going to say your 17 name. I'm probably going to mispronounce it. I'm 18 sorry in advance. 19 We need you to spell your last name for 20 the court reporter -- okay? -- who's online. 21 Our first person is Natalie 22 Pacheco-Zamora. She looks super excited. 23 FROM THE FLOOR: I feel like this school 24 is good, because it's helped me pronounce and 25 understand words correctly.</p>	92	<p>1 school, because it represents a very cool 2 atmosphere. So, like, people get to go, like, in 3 middle school, like, everybody gets to go super cool 4 places. And I think it's super cool because 5 everyone, like, gets a chance to explore the world. 6 And the field trips are really fun. Like 7 a couple of months ago, I went to Glorieta, and it 8 was super fun because it was overnight, and it was 9 just like a really great experience. 10 MS. MELISSA BROWN: (Off-mic.) 11 FROM THE FLOOR: I think the school 12 represents, like, kindness and peace. I really like 13 the curriculum they do and writing and math. They 14 help out all -- I just want to say thank you all to 15 my friends and my teachers for supporting me 16 (inaudible.) 17 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next, we have River 18 Gardner. G-a-r-d-n-e-r. 19 FROM THE FLOOR: Even on some of the field 20 trips, we still get educated. But we have fun. 21 Like, at Glorieta, I learned a lot while having fun. 22 So (inaudible.) 23 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Off-mic. And then 24 Rachel Hadcock. H-a-d-c-o-c-k. 25 FROM THE FLOOR: Good morning. My name is</p>
91	<p>1 MS. MELISSA BROWN: (Off-mic) Born. 2 I'm sending the last names to the court 3 reporter. 4 FROM THE FLOOR: So at The Montessori 5 Elementary & Middle School, the school provides, 6 like, a very outstanding opportunity for the 7 students. And I feel like the teachers have really 8 supported me and -- and I know that my peers feel 9 that way, too. 10 And it's just, like, been an amazing 11 experience. For me, like, I -- I transferred in the 12 middle of the year in second grade. And, like, 13 immediately, it was just, like, wow, this is, like, 14 a lot better than my old school. 15 It's -- like I said, it provides, like, 16 amazing opportunities for everyone. And, yeah. And 17 the teachers are really supportive of everyone 18 around me. And, of course, like, all the things 19 that -- like, we have to say, like, they're, like -- 20 like, they are -- like, they know, like, what we 21 need, and they're -- like, they're very -- how 22 should I say this? -- they're, like -- very 23 supportive and, like, what -- like, everything we 24 have to say. 25 FROM THE FLOOR: So I really like my</p>	93	<p>1 Rachel Hadcock. 2 FROM THE FLOOR: And my name is Eva 3 Sanchez. 4 FROM THE FLOOR: We are both in the eighth 5 grade at The Montessori Elementary & Middle School. 6 As members of the student council, we are here 7 representing our school. 8 FROM THE FLOOR: Montessori really means 9 to prepare for the future. Whether that means 10 planning for the rest of your day or planning for 11 the rest of your life. This has been implemented at 12 TMEMS since kindergarten. 13 FROM THE FLOOR: We have had many amazing 14 teachers during our time at this school. Every one 15 of them has made a difference in our lives and in 16 our futures. One teacher, Ms. Alex, one of our 17 middle school English teachers, has made a huge 18 difference in our experience here. 19 She's been our teacher for three years 20 now, and she's amazing at teaching us, including 21 many valuable life lessons for middle-schoolers. 22 FROM THE FLOOR: TMEMS provides so many 23 fun, amazing school events, such as the Winter Ball, 24 the Gala, the Jog-a-Thon, and the Holiday Bazaar. 25 All of these events are also fundraisers for our</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">94</p> <p>1 EAs, our eighth-graders and our seventh-graders. 2 FROM THE FLOOR: Another thing that TMEMS 3 provides are field trips. Every year in middle 4 school, a beginning-of-the-year trip and 5 end-of-the-year trip is planned for the students. 6 We usually go on a trip that is three to four days 7 long and focuses on teamwork and bonding; although, 8 in eighth grade, we get to go on an international 9 trip to learn about different cultures, gain 10 independence and form better connections. 11 Aside from big trips, we also frequently 12 go on other field trips, such as Popejoy Hall, Main 13 Event, the Zoo, Explora, and the Natural History 14 Museum, all of which are an amazing learning 15 experience, and they are good in- and 16 out-of-classroom experiences. 17 FROM THE FLOOR: Ms. Alissa, our assistant 18 principal, has been a big part of our middle-school 19 years, to make sure that our school is taken care of 20 and everyone feels included. She goes on most of 21 our field trips and pushes us out of our comfort 22 zones, which I would have never done myself, but it 23 helped me make new friends and experience new 24 things. 25 FROM THE FLOOR: In conclusion, The</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">96</p> <p>1 help us with our education. 2 Our one teacher, Ms. Tina, she is a very 3 amazing teacher. She is the math teacher, and she 4 helped me with multiple stuff that I did not 5 understand. And she helped me understand how to do 6 so many things. 7 And I'm just so happy I have the 8 opportunity to have. And I am glad that I am able 9 to represent our school today, and, I hope, for 10 eighth grade. Thank you for listening. 11 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Jennifer Born, 12 B-o-r-n. 13 FROM THE FLOOR: Good morning. I'm going 14 to talk really briefly, since you've heard from both 15 of my children already, about my experience. I wear 16 a professional hat at this school, and I also wear a 17 parent hat at this school, and I was a parent before 18 I was a professional. 19 I feel incredibly supported as a 20 professional by our administrative team. They are 21 open to our ideas. There's a huge sense of 22 collaboration and camaraderie at our school, and it 23 feels like a family, which is why I'm so glad that 24 my children have had the opportunity to attend this 25 school.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">95</p> <p>1 Montessori Elementary & Middle School is a wonderful 2 school. They prioritize hands-on learning, building 3 confidence, independence, and preparing for the 4 future. They push us to do better and complete our 5 goals. Thank you. 6 MS. MELISSA BROWN: (Off-mic.) 7 FROM THE FLOOR: I like this school 8 because it's a school, and it prioritizes on 9 whatever you're working on, wherever your level is. 10 Like, I've been here for three years, and I feel 11 like my reading skills and math skills have 12 increased a lot. Thank you. 13 MS. MELISSA BROWN: (Off-mic.) 14 FROM THE FLOOR: Hello. My name is 15 Genesis La Paz, and I am the vice president of The 16 Montessori Elementary & Middle School. It's a very 17 good -- it's a pleasure to help support and to 18 provide for my school and help them with anything. 19 If they have any suggestions, they can 20 always talk to me, and I will talk to the rest of 21 the student council about it. 22 I think the Montessori Elementary School 23 is a very great school. They help with -- sorry -- 24 with academics and social lives. They help us 25 become -- they help us with making friends, and they</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">97</p> <p>1 My husband and I moved to Albuquerque six 2 years ago as our children were entering elementary 3 school. And we were looking for the best 4 opportunity for them. We found that opportunity 5 after two and a half years of trying, at The 6 Montessori Elementary & Middle School. And our 7 children have developed lifelong friendships. 8 They've been provided opportunities to learn and 9 grow both academically and socially. 10 And the two of them, you got to witness 11 them perform for you at the beginning of this whole 12 event today. And as a parent, I could not be more 13 proud of the growth that they've exhibited. And I 14 know that they will continue that into their middle 15 school years. 16 There's absolutely no other place that my 17 husband and I would send them for middle school. So 18 thank you very much. 19 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Sherry Haworth. 20 FROM THE FLOOR: Good morning. Thank you, 21 Commissioners. First, I want to say wow about our 22 students. When I was their age, I don't think I 23 could have done that. 24 So I've been with the school for 16 years. 25 Originally, I was the executive director of Keep</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">98</p> <p>1 New Mexico Beautiful, and I brought Dusty Roadrunner 2 to the school as a guest presenter. And I was so 3 amazed at what I saw. The Montessori model blew me 4 away.</p> <p>5 Students had choice. They were making 6 responsible choices. Students had freedom of 7 movement; they were using it wisely. So I was 8 completely wowed by it. And I had the fortunate 9 opportunity to work with the school, and I became an 10 educator.</p> <p>11 Part of what I want to share with you is 12 about the professionalism. This past weekend I 13 attended PED's conference on UDL, which is Universal 14 Design for Learning, put on through the Department 15 of Curriculum and Instruction.</p> <p>16 We had five educators there spending their 17 Saturday learning more about how we could serve our 18 students.</p> <p>19 One thing that really impressed me about 20 the conference was they were talking about student 21 choice. And I was, like, "Hey, we've been doing 22 that for the last ten years."</p> <p>23 They talked about student voice. Well, 24 that's part of the Montessori method, and the way 25 that we function and we've always functioned.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">100</p> <p>1 support, they support us; so...</p> <p>2 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Sharla Parsons.</p> <p>3 FROM THE FLOOR: Thank you, Commissioners, 4 for being here. And thank you everybody, all of the 5 kids.</p> <p>6 I echo everything that I've heard so far. 7 I think I have a little bit of a unique story to 8 tell. So we started out at the Montessori 9 Elementary School with my now seventh-grader. She 10 has -- she's a gifted student. And so we decided to 11 try her out at the public school, the regular public 12 school system, to go into the gifted program.</p> <p>13 And it was fine. And we got into middle 14 school, and there just -- there was a ton of 15 bullying, peer pressure, drug use, things that were 16 really hard for us to deal with in school.</p> <p>17 So at the time, we were, like, anything 18 can be better than this. Let's try to get on all 19 these lotteries. And we got back into the 20 Montessori Middle School. And it's hard for me to 21 talk about this without being emotional. But I will 22 say it has been life-changing for our family.</p> <p>23 We have -- we came from a place, you know, 24 with everything that I just said to a culture that's 25 kind, respectful, caring, a place where my daughters</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">99</p> <p>1 So I did learn a lot in the conference but 2 I also felt I was really validated as an educator 3 being part of this environment with the Montessori 4 model, and also how our school functions.</p> <p>5 The other thing I wanted to share with you 6 is I also am a parent, like Ms. Jennifer who just 7 spoke. And it has been absolutely astounding to 8 watch my child go from our Casita program to now 9 prepare to enter middle school.</p> <p>10 Our strings teachers are truly 11 professional world-class instructors. My child's 12 never received any instruction outside of our 13 school, and she was here to perform for you today.</p> <p>14 So I just -- I want to -- I knew that was 15 going to happen -- I just want to acknowledge how 16 amazing this school has been for me as a 17 professional and my family. And I love the 18 administration. Thank you.</p> <p>19 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Keira Featherstone.</p> <p>20 FROM THE FLOOR: I just wanted to say that 21 the school has helped me through reading, spelling 22 and I think I've really improved in that. And I 23 think the teachers here are just the best. They're 24 positive. They encourage us to do whatever we think 25 we should do when we grow up. Or whenever we need</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">101</p> <p>1 can actually be themselves in a way that's really 2 genuine.</p> <p>3 And it's just changed everything. It's 4 changed our family life. It's created a world where 5 they can actually go and learn and be creative and 6 thrive in a way that just never existed before.</p> <p>7 And the differentiation, obviously, works 8 to our advantage, being that our kids are gifted and 9 they need that higher level instruction.</p> <p>10 My middle school kid is to the point where 11 she's in, like, high school-level, advanced 12 crazy-style things that she's learning.</p> <p>13 And I'm, like, "Okay. I don't know how 14 long I'm going to be able to help you with your 15 homework at this point."</p> <p>16 Good problems to have. I love that our 17 school takes our kids out of their comfort zones, 18 like we are today. You guys are really brave, and 19 I'm so proud of all of them for doing this.</p> <p>20 And they have to do hard work to achieve 21 these trips that they go on. They fundraise their 22 bottoms off.</p> <p>23 Anyway, we're grateful to have all of you 24 help with us.</p> <p>25 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Mary Chappell.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">102</p> <p>1 FROM THE FLOOR: Good morning. I'm 2 Dr. Mary Chappell. I am the vice president of the 3 governing council. 4 I'd like to give you a little bit of 5 background to establish the depths of my knowledge 6 of education systems. 7 I was a teacher for about 20 years. I 8 left teaching during the pandemic and actually came 9 here to the Public Education Department where I 10 served as the Deputy Director of the Special 11 Education Division. 12 At the time, I was working on my doctorate 13 in leadership and learning in educational systems. 14 And I am now an instructor within the school of 15 education at Central New Mexico Community College. 16 My professional interest is really in 17 looking at educational systems that support student 18 success. 19 You know, you've heard about the metrics 20 that demonstrate the success of the students at the 21 school. Many of those Piper Curry shared with you 22 are things such as staff retention and student 23 enrollment and their very strong academic records. 24 And so the metrics are certainly an indicator of the 25 school's success.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">104</p> <p>1 these children are receiving a -- an education that 2 is on par with a private school education. And, 3 honestly, I think it's better. 4 And a lot of what has improved my teaching 5 style is the professional development that I've 6 received. And so thank you all for imparting that 7 and funding that. Especially, the LETRS training 8 has really been amazing for me. 9 As far as my children go -- so, my son 10 became a cellist. Mr. Nick was his teacher. And 11 because of that, he went on to the Albuquerque 12 Symphony, and because of that, he now works at 13 Hummingbird Music Camp, and he is a counselor now. 14 My daughter, because of the amazing 15 education she received, she went on. She was AP in 16 high school. Now she's studying at UNM to be an 17 epidemiologist. 18 And because of her travels -- my son went 19 to Europe; my daughter went to Europe. And my 20 daughter did the exchange program in Poland. We had 21 a Polish exchange student stay with us, and she went 22 and stayed with her. 23 So next year, she's going to Sweden, and 24 she's going to study public health in Sweden. And 25 she is also reconnecting with our exchange student</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">103</p> <p>1 It's harder to quantify school culture. 2 However, I think that you're getting a sense of 3 that, especially as the students are coming up to 4 share their stories with you. 5 And I think the other thing that we really 6 have to look at when we're analyzing school culture 7 is things such as parent satisfaction, teacher 8 happiness. That's one of the things that drew me to 9 the school. 10 What I witnessed over the last year and a 11 half is an incredibly strong leadership team that's 12 very, very collaborative, excellent. And I'm 13 talking about outstanding teachers who are happy in 14 their jobs and feel supported and an extremely 15 strong quality of instruction. Thank you so much. 16 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next we have Jill 17 McCallum. 18 FROM THE FLOOR: Thank you for having us. 19 Good morning everyone. I wear many, many hats. I'm 20 a teacher at the school. My children went through 21 the school. And I also -- I came to this school as 22 a Montessori teacher. 23 I worked for 17 years in Albuquerque at 24 very elite Montessori private schools. And I came 25 into our charter school. And what I know is that</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">105</p> <p>1 while she's there. 2 And so love the school. Thank you for 3 having us. Thank you. 4 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Javier Benavidez. 5 FROM THE FLOOR: Good afternoon, 6 Commissioners, and so proud of all the students and 7 presenters today. It's really such a blessing to 8 get to see all the love for the school. 9 So I have three kiddos at TMEMS, second 10 grade, fourth grade, and sixth grade. And it's been 11 a journey all along the way. 12 And I'm so grateful for the school. I've 13 got one of those kiddos in a special ed program. 14 And just to think about how far he's come, just to 15 show up coming out of the pandemic was rough for a 16 lot of kiddos. I'm just really grateful. 17 Two things I wanted to focus on that I 18 think are unique to TMEMS, and, I would have to say, 19 a Montessori Academy to go into high school. I'm 20 hoping my kid can stay the whole time. That's so 21 fascinating what a Montessori high school can look 22 like, mixed with the Suzuki model. 23 What's great about that is it teaches kids 24 how to practice something, over and over, 10,000 25 tries, instruments. And then I see my kids applying</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">106</p> <p>1 that to research or to drawing or martial arts. 2 And, yeah, that's amazing. 3 And the second thing is just a really 4 unique focus -- I've done some work in public 5 education, too. But at TMEMS, it's focused on 6 social-emotional learning and the Choose Love 7 program. In this day and age, preparing a better 8 humanity coming out of the divisiveness, dealing 9 with things like ADHD rampant, all the distractions 10 on attention that our kids are dealing with and 11 living with, to practice things like mindfulness and 12 empathy and restorative at the Peace Table. It's 13 such a nice change. And I really wish that more 14 kids had access to this model. But at least we can 15 do our best to set the example going forward. 16 Thank you. 17 THE CHAIR: Thank you. And thank 18 everyone. This -- you know, I know what it takes 19 for anyone to get up and speak. But when you're 20 looking at much younger ones coming up, it speaks to 21 the commitment and the support. 22 And I have to say, just watching the 23 students engrossed with the musical presentation, it 24 doesn't happen in most places. So it's really that 25 supporting their -- you know, their fellow students.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">108</p> <p>1 Well -- and I also want to thank you for 2 acknowledging, like all schools seem to have to do, 3 about the growth you're looking forward to in math. 4 That is a consistency that we're dealing 5 with across the board. You know, and to the 6 Vice Chair's point in the previous thing, it's kind 7 of a weird disconnect that science is so good and 8 then math, which you'd think connects up, is so 9 challenged, I think probably because math is more 10 abstract, and science, you can get your hands into 11 and do things like that, you know. 12 Maybe it's more -- what is it? -- tactile, 13 or whatever they call it. So maybe that's it. I 14 don't know. I'm curious about that. 15 But I'm curious how you -- in your mission 16 goals, your first one for eighth grade, I saw you 17 have a rubric for the internship and the independent 18 study. 19 I'm just curious -- and this is no more 20 than a minute response -- how you evaluate that. 21 The same thing with your third -- the 22 other one with the observing the prepared 23 environment, how you're able to quantify an 24 evaluation of that. And then just tell me what 25 LETRS is.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">107</p> <p>1 So I really appreciate that. 2 Oh. Is your -- is that your hand being 3 up? I thought you were pointing at someone there. 4 SECRETARY BECK: What a beautiful story. 5 It's a great story. It's wonderful. 6 Congratulations to the -- all the teachers, the 7 elementary and mid-school teachers for being number 8 one. That's incredible. Can't get much better than 9 that. That's great. Very impressive. 10 I'm thrilled about your future plans based 11 on what I've seen here. It would be a great move. 12 What I was interested in was how connected 13 these students are with each other and with you guys 14 and the faculty and everything. 15 And I'm looking at the enrollment. And 16 it's 442 students. It's not 60 or 70. It's 17 442 students. That's impressive that they feel that 18 connected with each other and the faculty with that 19 size of an enrollment now. 20 So that's -- that's great. 21 I love Rachel Hadcock's earrings. 22 Awesome, the little Zia symbols on them. That's 23 great. 24 But I do have just two real quick 25 questions.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">109</p> <p>1 MS. PIPER CURRY: Well, let me tell you 2 what LETRS is first. LETRS is Language Essentials 3 for Teachers of Reading and Spelling. 4 And it is basically like a college course 5 that these teachers take, kindergarten through fifth 6 grade. And it is a course that the PED has funded. 7 It's expensive, and they have funded it. 8 And I really think, based on our teachers' 9 buy-in and how much they absorbed what came out of 10 this, it's not a curriculum at all. Some people 11 think it's a curriculum. It's more of a course that 12 they take. 13 And it's how the brain connects to 14 reading. It's all the different components that go 15 into reading. It's explicit instruction. They 16 definitely give some strategies and tools in order 17 to teach reading. 18 But I think that our teachers were excited 19 about it. It ties very well to our Montessori 20 materials, and they've embraced it and integrated 21 some of the strategies into their class. 22 It's usually a course, over about a year 23 and a half, that they take. So they've got to do 24 32 online -- 32 online hours. They have eight units 25 that they have to complete with an 80 percent or</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">110</p> <p>1 better. And then they have to attend 16 facilitated 2 sessions over Zoom.</p> <p>3 If they meet those requirements, they 4 receive a reading endorsement on their teaching 5 license. And so far, every one of our teachers that 6 has finished LETRS has met every single requirement.</p> <p>7 SECRETARY BECK: I was a twelfth-grade 8 teacher, so I guess it didn't reach up to me.</p> <p>9 MS. PIPER CURRY: We have the goal of 10 having every one of our teachers at our school that 11 teach elementary having that reading endorsement 12 and. The PED is helping with that. So that's 13 exciting.</p> <p>14 THE CHAIR: Sorry. Amanda has taught -- 15 Amanda has actually taught the middle school -- 16 the -- the middle school Goal No. 1. And so I'd 17 like her to expand on that. She can put it into a 18 minute or less. I probably can't.</p> <p>19 MS. AMANDA HAGERTY: All right. So our 20 Goal 1 is focused on the completion of those 21 internships. It also encompasses our Next Step 22 Plans. Our eighth-graders, that's a culmination of 23 that.</p> <p>24 Through the year, they work on resumes, on 25 cover letters. They do different projects. They</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">112</p> <p>1 I forgot to mention. Congratulations to 2 all the violinists and cellists. I don't know if 3 you had violists. I'm 69, so it's hard to see up 4 here. I did see it was all memorized music. You 5 did not look at the music sheet. Eight or nine 6 songs, something like that.</p> <p>7 MS. AMANDA HAGERTY: Suzuki Method is 8 about initially not having that music in front of 9 them.</p> <p>10 SECRETARY BECK: That's beautiful. That's 11 great. Thank you.</p> <p>12 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Carrillo.</p> <p>13 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: (Audio distortion) 14 some of you, when you were walking in, just how much 15 we love having the students here. It just -- it 16 reminds us why we do what we do. It reminds us -- 17 and for me, in particular, because I was on the 18 board up in Santa Fe -- how much I enjoy and support 19 State public charter schools, the innovation and 20 what's going on. It's just -- it's remarkable the 21 successes that we have in our charters.</p> <p>22 And so -- and thank you for being a part 23 of that. I really enjoyed your presentation.</p> <p>24 The -- okay. First thing I want to ask 25 is, end-of-year presentation -- because I marked the</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">111</p> <p>1 have to practice phone calls to businesses they want 2 to intern at. All those are graded. They all get 3 put within a grade book, and they have to hit that C 4 mark to say yes, they finished that goal. They have 5 to do their presentation. They have to finish their 6 internship. They have to fulfill their 20, 7 30 hours. That's how we look at that data and say 8 did they meet that goal or not.</p> <p>9 The Montessori fidelity, we have a rubric 10 we go through as administrators or Montessori leads.</p> <p>11 Yeah, Goal 2. So we have to go through. 12 And it goes -- it tells -- it has different rankings 13 that we can go through that says "observed" or "not 14 observed." Like, student voices are calm. Student 15 voices are respectful. Shelves are uncluttered and 16 in the right sequence. Guide or teacher is 17 circulating the room. Guide gets on student level. 18 Just some of those key Montessori pillars that we 19 should be looking at that are hard to look at in the 20 traditional public ed mesh.</p> <p>21 So we go through that. And there's 46 of 22 them. And we go quarterly and average it to meet 23 that goal.</p> <p>24 SECRETARY BECK: Did it within a minute. 25 Well done.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">113</p> <p>1 last one for the last school -- when is it, 2 typically?</p> <p>3 MS. PIPER CURRY: (Off-mic) like, in 4 April. Because the internships are in February. So 5 they go towards the end of April, depending on 6 breaks.</p> <p>7 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: If you could 8 remember, please -- and you can send it to 9 Chair Gipson and she can send it out, or to Director 10 Chavez. Just, please -- you know, I don't get down 11 to Albuquerque a lot. I would love to come down to 12 your school for that. I just can imagine just how 13 joyful that would be. So I want to get that in my 14 book as soon as I can. I'm glad you said it wasn't 15 in May, because there's just so much happening 16 everywhere in May.</p> <p>17 So a couple of parents spoke. I think one 18 of the things that makes your school exceptional is 19 the parent involvement.</p> <p>20 Can you speak just a little more to that, 21 especially if there are those kids who don't have -- 22 who have parents maybe that are working, you know, 23 two and three jobs, how you support parents that 24 can't be quite as involved as you know they want to 25 be?</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">114</p> <p>1 MS. PIPER CURRY: Sure. We really try -- 2 and, Amanda, you can also speak to this. We really 3 try to have a ton of outreach and constantly be in 4 communication. We're all available by e-mail. 5 If someone e-mails us if they need 6 something, if they have a question, we're very 7 responsive to them. 8 If we see a kiddo who might be absent for 9 several days in a row and we haven't heard from the 10 parents, we call the parents. We touch base with 11 them. We are, like Ms. Jennifer said, like a family 12 or a community, we take care of each other. And 13 those family members who need that extra support, we 14 try to provide it, however we can, and whatever the 15 need is. 16 We try to plan our events where parents 17 may be able to come to it after work. We like 18 getting parent input. 19 The Montessori Academy was actually not my 20 first choice for a name, but we surveyed our 21 stakeholders, and it was their first choice. And so 22 that's -- we want their buy-in. We want their 23 feedback. 24 And the school calendar, we sent -- we 25 just sent it out last Friday. "What did you like</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">116</p> <p>1 they're done. Or if they have a hard time getting 2 to us, they can do it through Zoom or different 3 platforms. 4 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Something I'm 5 curious about, too. The calendar can be online. In 6 the Santa Fe Public Schools, that was the most 7 dreaded committee there was for either the parents 8 or the board members to serve on. 9 I'm glad you were able to work it all out. 10 (Audio distortion.) 11 MS. PIPER CURRY: The Montessori Academy. 12 I was out voted. 13 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: I would agree with 14 the stakeholders on that particular one, because 15 what would somebody else (audio distortion) in 16 Santa Fe. (Audio distortion) I show Tim, it's like 17 we need this in Santa Fe. 18 Yeah, we have Montessori up here, but 19 they're extremely expensive. And so what about 20 everybody else? 21 We've crossed that bridge, because we're 22 opening Sun Mountain Community School, which is a 23 Waldorf school. It will be one of 16 Waldorf 24 schools in the country. Free Waldorf schools. How 25 great is that?</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">115</p> <p>1 about this year's school calendar? What did you not 2 like? What would you rather see?" 3 Some of our parents expressed how hard it 4 was when we did the survey last year. We expressed 5 how hard it was to have students in half days. 6 We -- they said, "If you're going to have 7 a day off, have a day off." 8 Half days are hard for working families. 9 We don't have half days on our calendar this year. 10 We take that into consideration. 11 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: That's great to 12 hear. 13 MS. AMANDA HAGERTY: Short version. I 14 think we reach out in different areas. We do a lot 15 of face-to-face -- our conferences are important. 16 We offer Zoom. Any makeup, some of our teachers 17 will do them before our conferences or after if our 18 parents need them. 19 We do a lot of technology. Those surveys, 20 they're not paper. They're Google forms. So they 21 go out to them multiple times, so if they miss it in 22 one newsletter, it goes out in another. 23 We really try and reach out 24 technology-wise as much as possible, so those busy 25 families can get on their phone, boom-boom-boom, and</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">117</p> <p>1 Okay. So why does math fall off in the 2 middle years? I was noticing that. Why do you 3 think that is? 4 MS. PIPER CURRY: Are you talking about, 5 like, in sixth grade? 6 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Just saw that. 7 MS. PIPER CURRY: We have movement between 8 fifth and sixth grade. Some fifth-graders leave to 9 get some middle to high school, because they're 10 looking for that high school piece. We get a lot of 11 students in in sixth grade. 12 And so the sixth grade and kindergarten 13 are our two biggest lottery pulls. We have to bring 14 those students that maybe were at a different school 15 up. 16 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: The previous school, 17 she spoke how there wasn't (audio distortion) enough 18 to get kids (audio distortion) in middle -- so they 19 were 7-12 -- that were coming in at, like, a 20 second-grade level. 21 That just shows just how we're failing 22 children, itty-bitties, you know, kiddos at the 23 lower levels when this happens to a school. But 24 their whole thing on growth was really terrific. 25 I'm glad you're doing lunch. And I know</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">118</p> <p>1 that part of that is mandatory, but I'm glad you're 2 doing it, because lunch is an equity issue. Meals 3 are an equity issue. 4 We have so many schools around our state 5 that do three meals a day. They have to; the 6 families need that. I'm really happy about that. 7 That's going to allow you to increase your 8 diversity, because perception is the same way it was 9 for Waldorf, is, "Oh, yeah, they're kind of the 10 private white school." 11 And I know that's not the case. But 12 perception can be everything. And we have to dispel 13 that. 14 Oh, yeah. "Montessori is private." 15 No, no, no. We have to dispel all that. 16 Very impressed with all the kids that 17 spoke about the various things. Their families -- 18 seemed to be family support, both for teachers and 19 kids, individuality. 20 Kindness and peace. And I love that 21 that's Maria Montessori's -- those where 22 foundational to everything in Montessori. Wouldn't 23 it be nice if this were a kinder, more peaceful 24 world? 25 What they talked about also, which I liked</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">120</p> <p>1 for us. It brings so much joy into our lives and 2 into our day. You've just got to know that you are 3 a gift, you know. You kids are a gift to all of us 4 in what you bring. 5 So thank you. Yeah. Thank you. 6 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Brauer. 7 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: Thank you, Chair. 8 Thank you to the school. I will reiterate what 9 Commissioner Carrillo mentioned, and Chair Gipson. 10 It's so great to have young people who are so 11 talented and multi-talented. 12 I think there is a different type of 13 transfer that you have to do from, you know, like, 14 performing and then talking into a microphone to a 15 bunch of people is, like, such a different type of 16 leadership. And being able to see each and every 17 one of you do that is just really -- like, it's 18 delightful to see that and to be part of it. 19 I think I mentioned this to the 20 Commissioners for my Spotlight in June. But I was 21 the -- I did my first keynote as a Commissioner at 22 this school back in May. So I had a chance to see 23 the eighth-graders and just learn more about their 24 experiences prior to -- to promoting. 25 And so I just really appreciate all the</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">119</p> <p>1 about Montessori, developing good habits. A lot of 2 times that's called executive management with kids 3 or whatever. But that's a really big piece, because 4 all the stuff you're learning now early, these great 5 habits you're learning early, they're going to make 6 life so much easier. Even if you go to a different 7 high school for your next job, or college or 8 whatever, having those basic skills is huge. 9 One thing I noticed here was only 10 61 percent of the budget was teacher- and 11 instruction-related. And, oftentimes, it's a lot 12 higher. 13 It just kind of impressed me that you're 14 able to do what you do by spreading your money out 15 and not having to focus only on this one thing at 16 the expense of others. So -- when I was looking at 17 your money page. 18 And on the math side -- and Commissioner 19 Beck mentioned this -- because you're so strong in 20 music, one would think you would be -- have a little 21 bit stronger in math, because the two correlate so 22 much. 23 And so -- anyway. 24 I'm just super impressed with your school, 25 with your kids. Thank you so much for performing</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">121</p> <p>1 work that you all have done over the years. 2 I think -- I'm going to vote for you for 3 five years, for sure. I think that I loved seeing 4 the -- the -- the areas of next steps that you -- 5 that you shared today. I think those are just 6 really great. 7 I know that the -- the idea of a 8 Montessori high school has been in the works for at 9 least since 2016 or earlier. And I know that is 10 something that could be really, really great, and 11 not necessarily run-of-the-mill in the Montessori 12 world. 13 I think high schools aren't necessarily a 14 thing that happens a lot within Montessori 15 programming. I'm not an expert. But I know that 16 from others. 17 I think this is going to be a great 18 opportunity for you all as we move forward through 19 this process to really expand into these areas. 20 I think having a lunch program, having a 21 free preschool program, I think those are really 22 wonderful things. 23 And so I -- so my question is connected to 24 that. So I'm going to kind of give you maybe 25 another thing -- you can take it or leave it. But I</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">122</p> <p>1 think it's something that's really important. 2 We're all men and women of the people. 3 And when I look at your -- and take this to heart, 4 but don't take offense. I'm not demanding you not 5 to take offense, but I hope you don't take offense. 6 The enrollment subgroups. It's very 7 obvious that your economically disadvantaged is 8 masked, so it indicates that your number of students 9 who are economically disadvantaged, based on the 10 indicators that we use to measure that, are lower 11 than most other schools that we work with 12 completely. 13 And, for me, I think about the plans that 14 you have moving forward: pre-K, lunch, continued 15 transportation. I think it would be really 16 enriching to get more young people and their 17 families interested in seeing that Montessori is for 18 a lot of people, not just a certain group of people 19 based on economics. 20 And I know before I got into education 21 work -- not when I first got into it; maybe ten 22 years ago -- is when I first realized that 23 Montessori models aren't necessarily just for rich 24 people. So it took me almost 40 years to see that. 25 That was my mindset. That was my schema.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">124</p> <p>1 Commissioner Brauer a little bit. I can remember -- 2 and I want to applaud you for every great thing that 3 you do. So what I say is couched with that, that 4 it's not that I don't support the school. It's not 5 that I'm not going to vote for the -- you know, I'm 6 not going to not vote for the school. 7 But I have just a little bit of angst, 8 only because I remember the last renewal hearing and 9 the discussion about our concern about not serving 10 lunch. And the response that we got back then was, 11 "Well, that's not the Montessori thing. It 12 doesn't -- that's -- we don't do that. We do a 13 shared table and kids bring in." 14 And the concern that was raised was, well, 15 if you're from a family that can't afford to bring 16 in, or you're going to be ashamed of what you might 17 bring in, that's a barrier for people. 18 And this is such a fabulous program. And 19 there are families that it's that -- and we use the 20 term "chilling factor." A family is going to say, 21 "Oh, no. I'm not going to send my kid there because 22 I can't pack a lunch," you know. And that was the 23 conversation last renewal. 24 So I'm a little disheartened that we're 25 still in the "We hope to be able to do a free</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">123</p> <p>1 And so I think that still is, like, most people's 2 schema. I know I should probably use an "I" 3 statement. But I think most people would say 4 different. 5 The school that made me feel different is 6 a school in Cochiti Pueblo, Keres Children's 7 Learning Center, that used Montessori methodology 8 because it was the best model that would support 9 their emphasis in culturally responsive 10 Cochiti-centered learning. And so that's where I 11 became very different and radicalized my view on 12 what Montessori could be. 13 I think you all have a really great 14 opportunity in the heart of Albuquerque to expand 15 that a little bit. And so that's what I hope. I 16 hope you guys are doing great. 17 Like I said, this is not an arrow over the 18 bow towards you all. But I think with these new 19 opportunities, I think, comes with a responsibility 20 also to see how are we going to continue to have 21 these beautiful children that are behind you, and 22 also widening the net in a way that could be really 23 profound for a lot of young people. Thank you. 24 MS. PIPER CURRY: Thank you. 25 THE CHAIR: I'm just going to kind of echo</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">125</p> <p>1 lunch," because that's that lack of opportunity that 2 so many families have lost over these years, to be 3 able to come, because there -- you know, as much as 4 you may try to reach out and -- but there's going to 5 be families who are saying, "Can't do it," you know. 6 "It's not for me." 7 As Commissioner Carrillo mentioned, we've 8 got a school who -- opening here in Santa Fe, who 9 there is a perception that it's -- because it had -- 10 it had been private, so there's that perception -- 11 "We can't do that." 12 And I think there's a level of that with 13 Montessori. And so that's the only thing that, you 14 know, when I look at it through an equity lens, 15 there's that -- you know, that ongoing concern. 16 So I'm glad that it's still part of that 17 conversation. But I truly thought that when we were 18 coming here this year, it kind of would have been 19 not part of the conversation, that there would have 20 been work to do that. So that's -- you know, that's 21 my only regret. 22 MS. PIPER CURRY: One of our big 23 roadblocks with that has been the space. We are -- 24 we have divided classrooms in half to give us space 25 for students. And so with this new building, moving</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">126</p> <p>1 into this new building, we are planning a lunch area 2 in this new building. We're already talking about 3 where the lunch can go, because we echo, and we 4 agreed with what you're saying. It is an equity 5 piece, and we have to have lunches for our students. 6 THE CHAIR: And I appreciate that. But we 7 have schools that are significantly smaller. They 8 eat in the classroom, you know. It's not ideal. 9 But, you know, the opportunity is there, that we 10 have many schools that don't have a lunchroom. 11 MS. PIPER CURRY: And I think that we can 12 take our lunches and take them back to the classroom 13 and still have it be Montessori -- 14 THE CHAIR: Right. 15 MS. PIPER CURRY: -- but have that free 16 lunch component as well. 17 THE CHAIR: Right. Okay. 18 MS. PIPER CURRY: Absolutely. We are in 19 agreement with you on that. 20 THE CHAIR: And you said you're hoping for 21 transportation? 22 MS. PIPER CURRY: Within the next few 23 years. We've got to get moved to the new building. 24 We need to -- we serve 30 different ZIP Codes. That 25 is a vast population. And so we really -- there's</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">128</p> <p>1 have to do it thoughtfully. It's not something that 2 we're just going to throw together and say, "We hope 3 that this works." 4 We really want to put the right people in 5 place to take on these tasks to be able to grow and 6 do it right. 7 And so our plan with that is we're really 8 hopeful that Jill is going to finish that admin 9 program and then kind of take the lead on that and 10 be the director for that. 11 THE CHAIR: Okay. Thanks. 12 About how many kiddos come in from the 13 pre-K into the K? Do you have a rough estimate? 14 MS. PIPER CURRY: Our pre-K isn't huge; 15 right? The paid pre-K is not huge. 16 THE CHAIR: Right. 17 MS. PIPER CURRY: Maybe seven -- seven get 18 in. But we don't -- we maybe have twelve. So it's 19 not this huge -- maybe half of the kiddos that 20 apply. 21 With the free pre-K, though, because 22 they're different funding, the kid will go to free 23 pre-K. But then they also have to go to a 24 kindergarten lottery. It doesn't mean they're going 25 to be admitted.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">127</p> <p>1 going to be planning that goes into that. When we 2 hear from our stakeholders, lunch is more of a 3 priority than transportation. 4 THE CHAIR: Right. Right. 5 MS. PIPER CURRY: So when we have to look 6 at the move next year, that's going to be a big move 7 to move those middle-schoolers to the new building. 8 And then to also add the lunch program, we wanted to 9 prioritize. And lunch was a priority over the 10 transportation for next year. 11 THE CHAIR: And when is your 12 anticipated -- because I'm sure it's going to be 13 somewhat of a transition to go from the K to pre-K. 14 And I know that's not part of the application, but 15 just out of curiosity. 16 MS. PIPER CURRY: Jill McCallum is one of 17 our -- where is she? She spoke earlier. 18 But she is our early childhood specialist. 19 She's a Montessorian. 20 She recently got into a program to get her 21 admin license. And we have been working with her 22 and talking to her about moving forward with that 23 program. 24 So in order to plan for both the high 25 school for transportation, for pre-K, I think you</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">129</p> <p>1 THE CHAIR: I know that. 2 MS. PIPER CURRY: So we're hopeful. And 3 that is discouraging. But -- but it is what it is. 4 We're hopeful that a lot of those kiddos, once 5 they're in the door through the pre-K, will be able 6 to apply and get into the kindergarten. 7 THE CHAIR: I'm a proponent of if they're 8 in the pre-K, they should get into the kindergarten. 9 But they don't ask me, so -- anyone else? 10 Commissioner Ingham. 11 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: I was just -- the 12 transportation -- I live in the South Valley. And, 13 you know, I know there are several schools that 14 have, like, a hub, where parents can bring their kid 15 to a hub and then get transported to the school. 16 And I really do believe that there are 17 areas in our city that are -- it is -- the 18 transportation is a big old issue, especially with 19 traffic situations. 20 So I guess I -- I understand that it's a 21 difficult nut to crack. But that might be something 22 I would consider is to try to find a -- even if it's 23 a small bus or something like that that they could 24 get a few kids on in some of the more impoverished 25 areas in Albuquerque, I really would love to see</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">130</p> <p>1 some of those kids break through out of that -- 2 their mentality of themselves. 3 I told you I was a construction manager. 4 And I -- I had worked on a couple of middle schools. 5 One was McKinley, and the other one was -- oh -- 6 James Monroe. And the kids from McKinley went to 7 play a basketball game at James Monroe. And it 8 was -- they were hurt. They play in a gym that's 9 really, really decrepit. And it's almost like the 10 kids from James Monroe wouldn't want to come down to 11 where they play. 12 And so that issue is real important to me, 13 and I would love to see where some of these kids 14 that feel like they're chopped liver, they're not. 15 They're not, at that -- but if they could get a 16 chance, they would be -- it would be a life-changing 17 event for a whole neighborhood, even, to see one kid 18 get a different -- that. 19 That's all I wanted to say. Thank you so 20 much for what you're doing. There isn't even a 21 question. You guys are beautiful -- your family 22 here is -- 23 THE CHAIR: I just have one thing, because 24 they may have to respond. 25 I sent out an e-mail for \$10,000 PEC</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">132</p> <p>1 for construction, just to be clear. Thanks. 2 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: One follow-up. This 3 follows up on what -- yes -- what Commissioner 4 Ingham said. 5 Transportation. So I know that we're 6 making transportation a priority in this upcoming 7 legislature, because there are many districts where 8 the buses go right by our kids, but they won't pick 9 them up. 10 And there's room. They can do it. And 11 the schools will pay for it, but they won't do it. 12 So that's an issue for us, and we're going to the 13 legislature with it. 14 I know that the New Mexico School Boards 15 Association, they're making that a huge legislative 16 priority, so that district schools don't have to 17 take money from Operational for transpo, that the 18 State is adequately and sufficiently funding all 19 transportation for all public school children, 20 which, obviously, includes charters. 21 So I would say, to the extent that you 22 can -- I think there was someone here that -- they 23 said they you were a lobbyist? Maybe that the 24 last -- I don't know. 25 If you have somebody, go to these</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">131</p> <p>1 special projects available. Are -- 2 MR. STAN ALBRYCHT: Did we get that? 3 THE CHAIR: Sent to head admin and head of 4 the GC. 5 MS. PIPER CURRY: Recently? 6 THE CHAIR: No. When did we send that 7 out? October. 8 MS. PIPER CURRY: Okay. Let me look for 9 that. I don't recall seeing it. 10 THE CHAIR: We may end up having to send 11 it out again to everyone. I sent it to each head 12 admin and to the head of the GC that we have a 13 \$10,000 -- and it's ongoing. 14 So it said, you know, like, December 1st. 15 But it's -- that wasn't a cutoff. 16 MS. PIPER CURRY: Okay. Okay. To apply 17 for it. Thank you. 18 MR. STAN ALBRYCHT: It's free money. 19 THE CHAIR: Don't say no -- there's not a 20 whole -- it has to -- the only requirement is it 21 needs to somehow be related to your improvement on 22 the performance framework. 23 MS. PIPER CURRY: Okay. 24 MR. STAN ALBRYCHT: Yeah. 25 THE CHAIR: Period. And you can't use it</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">133</p> <p>1 committee hearings. They need to hear from you. 2 Because that's an equity issue. 3 Parents automatically know, there's no way 4 I can take my kids across the valley or the river, 5 or whatever it is you all folks do down there. I 6 live ten minutes from here. I feel -- just so easy 7 for me. 8 If you can look and see when that's going 9 to be on their agendas. Show up to committee 10 hearings. It's super important. Bring kids. They 11 love kids. If a kid talks and says, "If I didn't 12 have my mom drive me here, I wouldn't be able to 13 come." 14 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Brauer. 15 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: Madam Chair, members 16 of the Commission, I move that the Public Education 17 Commission approve the renewal application for The 18 Montessori Elementary & Middle School for five years 19 without conditions. 20 THE CHAIR: Second. 21 A motion by Commissioner Brauer, a second 22 by Commissioner Gipson. 23 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Burt. 24 COMMISSIONER BURT: Yes. 25 SECRETARY BECK: You know what you're</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">134</p> <p>1 doing here.</p> <p>2 Commissioner Manis.</p> <p>3 COMMISSIONER MANIS: Yes.</p> <p>4 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Brauer.</p> <p>5 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: Yes.</p> <p>6 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Ingham.</p> <p>7 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: Yes.</p> <p>8 SECRETARY BECK: Vice Chair Carrillo.</p> <p>9 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Yes.</p> <p>10 SECRETARY BECK: Chair Gipson.</p> <p>11 THE CHAIR: Yes.</p> <p>12 SECRETARY BECK: Secretary Beck, yes.</p> <p>13 There are seven votes for, zero votes</p> <p>14 against.</p> <p>15 The motion passes. Congratulations.</p> <p>16 MS. PIPER CURRY: Thank you.</p> <p>17 THE CHAIR: And we will be in recess until</p> <p>18 2:00.</p> <p>19 (Recess taken, 12:35 p.m. to 2:01 p.m.)</p> <p>20 THE CHAIR: I'm going to bring back to</p> <p>21 order the meeting of the Public Education</p> <p>22 Commission. And we are on to our third hearing for</p> <p>23 the day, and that is Monte del Sol Charter School.</p> <p>24 So thank you for coming. Good afternoon.</p> <p>25 Just to remind you, Charter School</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">136</p> <p>1 program are community, environmental sustainability,</p> <p>2 global literacy, and arts integration.</p> <p>3 The principal learner at the school is</p> <p>4 Dr. Zöe Nelsen.</p> <p>5 The renewal visit took place on</p> <p>6 October 10th, with Lucy Valenzuela as team lead, and</p> <p>7 myself and Kelli Renken in person, Ken Norris and</p> <p>8 Martica Davis participating remotely.</p> <p>9 The Charter Schools Division recommends</p> <p>10 that Monte del Sol Charter School be renewed for a</p> <p>11 term of five years with the following condition:</p> <p>12 Due to repeated audit findings and subpar</p> <p>13 financial ratings on the performance framework over</p> <p>14 the charter term, Monte del Sol failed to meet</p> <p>15 generally accepted standards of fiscal management.</p> <p>16 Therefore, school leadership and the governing board</p> <p>17 will provide a financial report and finance</p> <p>18 committee minutes to CSD quarterly, beginning</p> <p>19 July 2025.</p> <p>20 The school leadership and governing board</p> <p>21 will improve financial systems and will continue to</p> <p>22 show consistent improvement on financial indicators</p> <p>23 and audit results over the next charter term.</p> <p>24 The recommendation is based on the record</p> <p>25 of the school's performance over the course of the</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">135</p> <p>1 Division will give their analysis and</p> <p>2 recommendations, and if anyone is on for tribal</p> <p>3 consult, which is unlikely.</p> <p>4 And then we will allow you folks to go.</p> <p>5 And then we'll do any public comment. And then</p> <p>6 we'll go.</p> <p>7 So -- and I will remind you, when you --</p> <p>8 for the first -- when you speak for the first time,</p> <p>9 if you will spell your last name for the record and</p> <p>10 identify what role your -- you hold in the school;</p> <p>11 okay?</p> <p>12 Thank you. I don't know who's doing it.</p> <p>13 DR. BRIGETTE RUSSELL: Good afternoon,</p> <p>14 Chair Gipson and Commissioners. My name is Brigitte</p> <p>15 Russell, and I'm the Deputy Director in the Charter</p> <p>16 Schools Division.</p> <p>17 Monte del Sol opened in the year 2000 as a</p> <p>18 district charter with Santa Fe Public Schools. The</p> <p>19 school changed authorizers in 2015 when they renewed</p> <p>20 with the PEC, and this is their third renewal</p> <p>21 application with the Commission.</p> <p>22 Their mission is to build strong</p> <p>23 relationships and creatively engage the local and</p> <p>24 global community.</p> <p>25 The four pillars of their educational</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">137</p> <p>1 contract term, the renewal application, which</p> <p>2 highlights adult actions and programs in the service</p> <p>3 of student progress, and verification of those</p> <p>4 programs and adult actions during our renewal site</p> <p>5 visit and annual visits over the course of the</p> <p>6 charter term.</p> <p>7 Financial compliance is the only area of</p> <p>8 the renewal application Part B which the school</p> <p>9 received a rating of Failing to Demonstrate Progress</p> <p>10 for.</p> <p>11 The school has had multiple ratings of</p> <p>12 Does Not Meet Standard on financial performance</p> <p>13 framework indicators across the charter term, and</p> <p>14 has had both repeat and material weakness findings</p> <p>15 in every year of the term.</p> <p>16 The school has a new business manager in</p> <p>17 the '24-'25 school year, and the site visit team</p> <p>18 saw, during the renewal visit, indications of</p> <p>19 improving processes. But the data to confirm these</p> <p>20 processes -- that these processes are working will</p> <p>21 not be available until the next audit, which has not</p> <p>22 been publicly released.</p> <p>23 The school rated Meets the Standard on</p> <p>24 three areas of the application: Mission-specific</p> <p>25 goals, for which the school either met or exceeded</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">138</p> <p>1 in each year of the contract term; educational 2 program, which the school was implementing with 3 fidelity; and equity and identity, with an active 4 equity council and robust professional development 5 to facilitate culturally responsive instruction. 6 The school rated Demonstrates Substantial 7 Progress on other parts of the application: student 8 outcomes, governance responsibilities, and other 9 performance framework indicators. 10 In terms of student outcomes, the school 11 has been rated a Traditional school on NM Vistas for 12 three years. For most of their charter term, 13 proficiencies have been near or below district and 14 state proficiencies; though they exceeded Santa Fe 15 Public School proficiency in reading in '23-'24 and 16 in science in '23 -- sorry -- reading in '22-'23 and 17 science in '23-'24. 18 Math proficiencies have declined over the 19 charter term however, dipping to 10 percent in 20 '23-'24. 21 The school has taken actions to increase 22 math scores. They use NWEA Math as an interim 23 assessment, and they've seen growth in interim math 24 scores; though that growth has not yet moved the 25 majority of students to score proficient on the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">140</p> <p>1 is working with the Licensure Bureau to resolve 2 licensure discrepancies and issues with background 3 checks. 4 The school has implemented a new 5 background check policy to ensure that background 6 checks are consistently conducted to improve 7 compliance and to ensure the safety of the students. 8 Thank you. 9 DR. ZOË NELSEN: Could you bring up the 10 presentation? 11 Okay. Chair Gipson, members of the 12 Commission. My name is Zoë Nelsen. I'm the head 13 learner of Monte del Sol. N-e-l-s-e-n. 14 I'm honored to serve in this role as the 15 head learner. 16 We're celebrating our 25th anniversary as 17 a school this year. I invite you to come on 18 April 25th, 2025, to the school to witness some of 19 the transformative educational experiences students 20 have had over the years. 21 Next slide. 22 Today's presentation will include an 23 address from a founding faculty member and our NEA 24 union president, a student mission portfolio 25 presentation, fascinating -- fabulous slide show,</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">139</p> <p>1 summative assessments. 2 The school has restructured the math 3 department so that they can focus on math as a 4 stand-alone subject instead of keeping it under the 5 STEM department. The math curriculum has also been 6 revamped, and the school has committed to hiring 7 highly qualified math teachers. 8 In terms of governance, the school has 9 maintained a five-member board throughout the term, 10 but has struggled to submit notifications timely. 11 They have taken actions to correct this. 12 For other performance framework indicators 13 discussed, the majority of the Does Not Meet 14 Standard ratings that the school has received have 15 been for financial indicators, and the 16 organizational and financial frameworks are combined 17 in their performance framework. 18 Apart from the financial indicators, the 19 school has several ratings of Does Not Meet or 20 Working To Meet on other organizational indicators, 21 but is taking steps to improve performance in those 22 areas, as verified by Charter Schools Division. 23 The school is working with Language and 24 Culture Division to improve reporting and services 25 to English Learners -- that's Indicator 1.d. -- and</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">141</p> <p>1 and then sort of setting the context of staffing and 2 leadership changes during the course of the contract 3 and a financial response. 4 So with that, next slide. 5 MS. WENDY LEIGHTON: Good afternoon, 6 members of the New Mexico Public Education 7 Commission and guests. 8 My name is Wendy Leighton. 9 L-e-i-g-h-t-o-n. 10 I never imagined I would be standing 11 here -- or sitting -- for our 25th year at Monte del 12 Sol Charter School. It continues to be a lifelong 13 journey. 14 This journey began when the founding 15 faculty and staff began organizing in the summer of 16 2000 to open a public charter school in Santa Fe 17 offering a different kind of education. 18 We really are, and have always been, a 19 small community school where we value individuals in 20 relationships. 21 Examples of our founding principles. 22 These founding principles continue to be 23 guided by an idea that arose from a pioneer in 24 cultural anthropology, Margaret Mead, during one of 25 our first professional development sessions that</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">142</p> <p>1 summer of 2000.</p> <p>2 "Never doubt that a small group of</p> <p>3 thoughtful citizens can change the world. It is the</p> <p>4 only thing that ever has."</p> <p>5 These founding principles include shared</p> <p>6 leadership and governance, diversity as a core</p> <p>7 value, community, the arts, arts integration, global</p> <p>8 principles, and sustainability in technology.</p> <p>9 Here is a fabulous example of arts</p> <p>10 integration. This artifact is a red scarlet macaw</p> <p>11 made by seventh graders for a project in social</p> <p>12 studies about the Mayans of Mesoamerica.</p> <p>13 Our founder, Tony Gerlicz, in 1999 and in</p> <p>14 early 2000, sought out educators who were qualified</p> <p>15 to teach core subjects such as history or</p> <p>16 mathematics, and the arts.</p> <p>17 Our pillars today include, as mentioned</p> <p>18 earlier, the arts, community, global literacy, and</p> <p>19 sustainability.</p> <p>20 Most importantly, continued themes are</p> <p>21 organizing for change and working across cultures.</p> <p>22 There are many stories that exemplify the</p> <p>23 spirit of Monte del Sol Charter School. One that I</p> <p>24 would like to share is from February of 2019, when I</p> <p>25 took my eighth grade U.S. History students to the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">144</p> <p>1 Our mission includes social justice and</p> <p>2 anti-oppression work and curriculum that educates,</p> <p>3 for example, about the civil rights movements and</p> <p>4 leaders, such as Dolores Huerta, Cesar Chavez,</p> <p>5 Harvey Milk, Angela Davis, Bayard Rustin, and Winona</p> <p>6 LaDuke.</p> <p>7 If the labor rights movement is part of</p> <p>8 our curriculum, then the school must support the</p> <p>9 labor rights of all its employees. This makes for a</p> <p>10 better school for all.</p> <p>11 Our union, administration, and governing</p> <p>12 board share a vision of working together,</p> <p>13 celebrating our diversity, and promoting solidarity</p> <p>14 at Monte del Sol.</p> <p>15 I remember back in 2003, at our new</p> <p>16 building dedication, students shared a dream that</p> <p>17 Monte del Sol would become nationally known for its</p> <p>18 vision and that our school would produce some of</p> <p>19 tomorrow's world-changing people.</p> <p>20 Let us continue this dream and journey at</p> <p>21 Monte. I invite all of you to walk the street with</p> <p>22 us into history and get off the sidewalk. As</p> <p>23 Dolores Huerta said, "Sí se puede." Thank you.</p> <p>24 FROM THE FLOOR: Hello, Madam Chair and</p> <p>25 members of the Commission. My name is Lidah Larsen.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">143</p> <p>1 State Legislature to work with labor and civil</p> <p>2 rights activist Dolores Huerta.</p> <p>3 These young people learned about the</p> <p>4 democratic process and workings of the House and</p> <p>5 Senate. We collaborated with Dolores in The</p> <p>6 Rotunda. She asked each of us to write letters to</p> <p>7 the chair of the Legislative Finance Committee to</p> <p>8 request funding for Chicano Studies for K through 12</p> <p>9 schools and at the college level in the state of the</p> <p>10 New Mexico.</p> <p>11 It was so inspiring to see these young</p> <p>12 students so engaged in civics and advocating for</p> <p>13 themselves as members of the Latino and Chicano</p> <p>14 community. This is an example of organizing for</p> <p>15 change. That's us with Dolores Huerta at The</p> <p>16 Rotunda.</p> <p>17 As NEA/MDS president, I wanted to share</p> <p>18 one more story which exemplifies our teachers union</p> <p>19 which was formed in 2009.</p> <p>20 Our union and CBA -- or collective</p> <p>21 bargaining agreement -- is another example of</p> <p>22 organizing for change in shared leadership. We</p> <p>23 continue to collaborate with our administration and</p> <p>24 governing board to improve our working and learning</p> <p>25 environment.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">145</p> <p>1 L-a-r-s-e-n. And I'm an eighth-grader at Monte del</p> <p>2 Sol.</p> <p>3 Next slide, please.</p> <p>4 For the art pillar, in seventh grade, I</p> <p>5 had an art and design class. And we worked on many</p> <p>6 different things, like shading techniques and</p> <p>7 watercolor techniques.</p> <p>8 In one class, we were making portraits.</p> <p>9 And I chose to make a portrait of my best friend,</p> <p>10 because I really love and appreciate her for</p> <p>11 everything she has done for me.</p> <p>12 In the background of my portrait, there is</p> <p>13 a drawing. And that's what I had used to sketch out</p> <p>14 what I wanted to do before I converted it onto the</p> <p>15 canvas.</p> <p>16 I chose those colors, because my best</p> <p>17 friend has, like -- is, like, a calm space for me,</p> <p>18 but she's also got a really strong personality, and</p> <p>19 she encourages me to do what I want to do in my</p> <p>20 life.</p> <p>21 Next slide, please.</p> <p>22 For the sustainability pillar, in my</p> <p>23 science class in seventh grade, we made a PSA, which</p> <p>24 is a public service announcement. We talked about</p> <p>25 pollution in arroyos. And me and my friends chose</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">146</p> <p>1 to talk about the harm of microplastics in our 2 arroyos and what to watch out for so we can stop it 3 in the future. 4 On this PSA, it talks about how arroyos 5 are one of the most common places microplastics get 6 caught in and basically harms plant life and plants' 7 interaction and health with the soil. And I think 8 it was really important to learn about this so we 9 can watch out for microplastics in our water and 10 prevent it from happening in the future. 11 Next slide, please. 12 For my community pillar, we took a hike up 13 Sun Mountain, which is a seventh-grade tradition, 14 which has been going on since the beginning of 15 Monte del Sol. 16 In that picture, you can see one of my 17 friends -- this is the view from the top of 18 Sun Mountain. And it shows -- the bottom of the 19 picture is Santa Fe. And so I feel like it was a 20 really amazing opportunity to be part of this 21 community, making friends and hang out with my 22 friends. 23 Next slide, please. 24 For my global literacy pillar, we had a 25 civil rights gathering last -- last year in seventh</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">148</p> <p>1 life. So I've been helping out with the photography 2 class this year. 3 And this is a portrait of Aryton Senna, 4 who was a three-time Formula One world champion. 5 And I thought it was really nice how the school lets 6 us pursue and talk about our interests. 7 So next slide, please. 8 So first, sustainability. This year, I am 9 in the gardening class, which helps out with the 10 gardens and greenhouses around our campus. And so 11 we have harvested kale and dried it into kale chips 12 for the school, along with juicing apples and 13 grapes. And this year, the greenhouse is doing 14 hydroponic gardening. 15 So next. Thank you. 16 This year, my pod is organizing Pod 17 Olympics for all the eighth grade pods as a 18 competition. We did this last year but only for our 19 little pod instead of the entire class, which -- and 20 I feel like this year, it has really helped bring 21 our entire grade together as a community. 22 And, also, last year, I joined late into 23 the school year. And by the end of my first day, I 24 had already found a great group of friends that I 25 still hang out with today; so...</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">147</p> <p>1 grade. And I made a poster about George Takei, who 2 is a Japanese-American and LGBTQIA+ rights activist. 3 He's important to me because I identify as part of 4 the LGBTQIA+ community, and I think it's important 5 for people to know about his impact on the world. 6 He was the first Japanese-American in the 7 show Star Trek, and he played an important role in 8 that show, so I think that was really cool to learn 9 about. 10 And in pod, which is basically, like, a 11 homeroom, we read a book that he wrote about his 12 experience in the Japanese internment camps. So I 13 feel like that was really important to learn about. 14 Thank you. 15 THE CHAIR: Thanks. 16 FROM THE FLOOR: Thank you. 17 FROM THE FLOOR: Good afternoon, 18 Madam Chair, and members of the Commission. My name 19 is Willow Beeman, B-e-e-m-a-n, and this is my 20 mission portfolio. 21 Next slide, please. 22 So for the arts pillar, last year in my 23 arts and design class, along with my painting class, 24 we did portraits and abstract arts. And this really 25 helped me to see arts in kind of all aspects of my</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">149</p> <p>1 For global literacy, I also took part in 2 the civil rights gathering last year. And so I read 3 "Apologia" by Oscar Wilde, and I also wrote a short 4 essay about him, for which me and my friend Alex 5 were featured in The New Mexican. So I will read an 6 excerpt of that poem now. 7 "May, if it be thy will, I shall endure 8 and sell ambition at the common mart," which I 9 believe represents his willpower and dedication to 10 pursue, no matter how many people might have 11 disliked him for who was. 12 Next slide, please. 13 And for global literacy this year, as one 14 of my electives, I had a French class, which has 15 really helped me see different cultures and interact 16 with them differently and helped me kind of dispel 17 some of the stereotypes I had about France and its 18 cultures and schools. 19 Thank you. 20 FROM THE FLOOR: Hello Madam Chair, 21 members of the Commission. My name is Ruby Rivas, 22 R-i-v-a-s. And this is my mission portfolio. 23 Next slide, please. 24 This is a quote that I used many times 25 during last year and this year. And the quote is,</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">150</p> <p>1 "We have to lock in." 2 This quote means to always stay focused 3 focus and not be distracted, even though it is hard 4 to be distracted (verbatim). 5 Next slide, please. 6 The four pillars of the community are the 7 base of our community. It bonds us no matter what. 8 The four pillars are arts integration, global 9 literacy, sustainability, and community. 10 The first pillar, I'd like to mention 11 photography. Photography is one way that I myself 12 can express myself and many others. 13 For global literacy, when I think about 14 it, it means diversity. We will always welcome you, 15 even though you're -- it doesn't matter your 16 religion or your culture, we will always accept you 17 for who you are. 18 For sustainability, last year I made a 19 poster about content of a vape, how it can leak 20 through our water system and be bad for the 21 environment. 22 And for community, last year, I published 23 a newspaper throughout the school talking about a 24 policy that we have in our school. And we got much 25 insight of each and every student.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">152</p> <p>1 have a 4.0 GPA if not higher, be the top student in 2 my classes, which I currently am, which feels great, 3 and leave an impact on our community. 4 Next slide, please. 5 (Speaks in Spanish.) 6 Next slide, please. 7 I encourage our eighth-graders and all of 8 our school to fight for what's right. As in this 9 moment, I will speak for all of our school and 10 eighth-graders. This place is so special that I 11 can't even describe it. Even though I am extremely 12 nervous right now, I can say one thing about our 13 school. It's a bond that you guys will never break. 14 It's something that will keep us united as one. 15 You guys will have the choice to keep our 16 school running, which is fair. But keep this in 17 mind when you think about it. Me and all of our 18 school fight for our second home. 19 Next slide. 20 Thank you. 21 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Okay. Now I need to 22 stop sharing and then reshare as I get to the next 23 slide. 24 (video is played.) 25 DR. ZOË NELSEN: How about give it up for</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">151</p> <p>1 Next slide, please. 2 On the top left, you'll see a photo that I 3 made. It's called an environmental portrait. It's 4 when you have objects that you have, and you put it 5 in one area, and that describes who you are. 6 In the bottom left, you will see two 7 flags. As you can see, Spain and China have two 8 completely different religions and cultures. 9 For me, you can see how anyone is welcome 10 here. 11 And in our space, we call -- I forgot. 12 Sorry. I'm nervous, and I'll practice in the 13 future. Sorry. 14 You'll see how everyone is welcome. In 15 the middle, you'll see the newspaper I published. 16 And on the right, you'll see the poster. 17 Next slide, please. 18 Some highlights for the first quarter this 19 year. I always thought of the opportunities that 20 were suppressed by me. I'm glad to say that this 21 opportunity for representing the school has been 22 such a blessing. 23 Next slide, please. (Speaks in Spanish.) 24 Next slide, please. 25 Some goals that I have for this year is to</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">153</p> <p>1 our students? Good job presenting. 2 MS. MELISSA BROWN: All right. Just give 3 me a second here to find the right screen again to 4 share. 5 DR. ZOË NELSEN: Thank you, Chair Gipson 6 and Commissioners. 7 I'll spend a little bit of time in our 8 last minutes framing the charter contract. 9 In leadership and staffing. 10 So the second year of our contract was my 11 first year as head administrator. And that was in 12 year '21-'22 which was our first year coming back 13 from the pandemic. And so, needless to say, I had a 14 firehose of learning as I stepped into the new role. 15 I feel like we've done a real, I think, 16 substantial job on committing to who we are and 17 really settling into our roots as a school. 18 We also -- and we also moved forward with 19 some key initiatives that I am really proud of, and 20 I think have made the school stronger and continue 21 to allow us to meet the needs of our diverse 22 students. 23 So our advisory structure really focuses 24 on social-emotional well-being and creating a strong 25 community within a community and a family. That's</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">154</p> <p>1 always been the case for the school. But we've 2 really continued to bring in more resources. 3 Our policies have shifted -- we've shifted 4 some policies for equity. 5 And then we've also created a series -- or 6 went through a series of collaborative committees to 7 structure our -- restructure or schedule for deeper 8 learning, moving more to a longer block schedule. 9 We've developed our graduate profile and 10 redefining, as I mentioned, our advisory council -- 11 excuse me -- our advisory committees. 12 And as Ruby said -- darn, I'm nervous up 13 here, I just need to settle in a little bit -- 14 because within this time, there have been bold moves 15 and there have been setbacks also. 16 And year two -- year three of our 17 contract, four teachers who had been at the school 18 for more than 20 years retired. And I am proud to 19 say that we have a full staff of enthusiastic 20 professional teachers who are moving us forward. 21 Next slide. 22 So framing the contract within the 23 business office -- and I know a lot of our concerns 24 over this contract has been with the financial 25 management. And I just want to really lay out the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">156</p> <p>1 moving parts in the business -- in the business 2 office. 3 And I -- we quickly learned, in August to 4 September of FY24, that we needed to make a change. 5 And I went in September -- early September -- went 6 to the governing council to talk about shifting our 7 business manager again. We felt like Axiom 8 Analytics was a good fit for Monte del Sol. 9 And in the course of last year, we made 10 that transition. We kept that previous personnel 11 in house, which I might have done something 12 differently in hindsight, because the year -- the 13 transition was rougher than I think it needed to be. 14 However, moving forward, we have a strong 15 financial company, and we've settled in and are 16 looking forward to where we go forward in the 17 future. Yeah. 18 MS. KATIE RARICK: Just tell me when you 19 want me to go. 20 Good afternoon, PEC Commission. My name 21 is Katie Rarick, R-a-r-i-c-k. I am an employee at 22 Axiom Analytics and the business manager for 23 Monte del Sol. 24 What you're seeing now are the findings of 25 the previous fiscal years that have occurred. And</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">155</p> <p>1 movement within the business office. 2 So the first year of our contract, FY21, 3 we had a new business manager. I wasn't the head of 4 school at that time. But they transitioned from an 5 off-site business management model to bringing 6 somebody on site in house, full time. That person 7 came in as the assistant business manager, and we 8 had an off-site consultant. 9 During that time, we had -- the first year 10 of the governing council treasurer, really strong, 11 had a lot of expertise, a lot of time, a lot of 12 support. 13 The second year, which was my first year 14 as the head of school, the assistant business 15 manager became the business manager with the 16 consultant off site, and then also the same 17 treasurer. 18 FY23, midyear, that treasurer for the 19 governing council resigned for personal reasons. 20 The consultant also had more demands on their time 21 and had less support within the business office. 22 What I noticed is that -- and I attended 23 a -- at the charter school conference, the national 24 charter school conference, a financial seminar. And 25 I noticed that, you know, we -- there's a lot of</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">157</p> <p>1 there are actually two slides here. We bucketed 2 them to the best of our ability. And when it's 3 green, that's when the finding eventually went away. 4 There were two persistent findings or 5 categories of findings, one being a material 6 weakness that persisted through FY23 -- Missy, you 7 could go to the next slide -- and then the other 8 being non-compliance around budgetary authority. 9 So those are two -- those are the two 10 buckets we came into last year and we worked with 11 the school leadership and governing council to 12 address. 13 In addition to that, we needed to really 14 change the way some of the systems and structures 15 worked. 16 The head learner did inherit a lot of 17 issues in the business management office. And so 18 when we came in, it was time to start unraveling 19 those and changing them. 20 You can go to the next slide. 21 Okay. So a few of the things that have 22 happened to make sure that we are on the right path 23 here: 24 We hired new staff. So there's new staff 25 in the business management office and at Axiom to</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">158</p> <p>1 support Monte del Sol, in addition to me helping as 2 the business manager.</p> <p>3 We also departmentalized stuff. So we 4 have -- the way Axiom works is that we have an 5 accounts payable department, payroll department, so 6 we have specialists so that they can go in and make 7 sure that each part of the business management 8 office is working as well as it can be, given that 9 they are the experts in their field.</p> <p>10 We are really focusing on timelines and 11 deadlines, because one of the findings we've 12 received in the past has been that things were not 13 submitted in a timely manner.</p> <p>14 Given that we have a whole team working on 15 the school, not just one person, we feel confident 16 that definitely in FY 2025 we're going to hit every 17 deadline given to us, including the deadlines of the 18 quarterly reporting to CSD.</p> <p>19 We are as transparent as we can be with 20 the governing council. They have reporting monthly.</p> <p>21 In addition to that, we have many 22 meetings, either with the head learner, their office 23 staff, or the governing council every month.</p> <p>24 So we have monthly check-ins. We work 25 very closely with Zoë and her team. We also check</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">160</p> <p>1 two minutes and spell your last name.</p> <p>2 FROM THE PUBIC: Okay. Can you hear me?</p> <p>3 MS. MELISSA BROWN: We can.</p> <p>4 FROM THE PUBLIC: Good. My name is 5 professor Eric Trules, T-r-u-l-e-s. I was a USC 6 theater professor for over 30 years, but I'm here 7 today to talk about my son, Exsel's experience and 8 our family's experience of having chosen 9 Monte del Sol.</p> <p>10 We moved to Santa Fe from Los Angeles in 11 2022. To say the least, our son, Exsel, was 12 miserable being yanked out of ninth grade in the 13 middle of his high school and being torn from his 14 friends.</p> <p>15 And it was something the family had to do.</p> <p>16 We researched high schools very carefully, 17 and we ended up choosing Santa Fe High.</p> <p>18 A combination of my son's disappointment 19 and anger of being in a new city and going to this 20 sort of overwhelming high school made for a pretty 21 miserable first semester in the fall of '22.</p> <p>22 Somehow we got a Christmas present a few 23 days after Christmas, and we'd won the lottery, 24 allowing Exsel to be accepted into the second 25 semester of tenth grade at Monte del Sol, a</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">159</p> <p>1 in with the office manager to make sure that they 2 feel comfortable in what they're doing.</p> <p>3 And the division of labor at all the 4 different levels, especially when it comes to 5 approval and record-keeping, is in place.</p> <p>6 We are committed to working with the 7 school to partner with the school. But we are 8 contractors. We definitely see ourselves as more of 9 an advocate for the school. We want to be as 10 closely intertwined to their systems as possible so 11 that they can become successful financially and 12 sustainable.</p> <p>13 DR. ZOË NELSEN: Thank you. That's the 14 end of our 30-minute presentation.</p> <p>15 THE CHAIR: Commissioners? Oh. I'm 16 sorry.</p> <p>17 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Okay. We have seven 18 folks in the room and one online. I will promote 19 the person online first.</p> <p>20 For the people in the room, you'll come up 21 here and speak into this microphone. You don't need 22 to be too close. This is a good distance.</p> <p>23 I'm going to ask you to spell your last 24 name. So, Eric, I'm going to allow you to talk. 25 And if you could please try to keep your comments to</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">161</p> <p>1 five-minute walk from our house, where I no longer 2 had to drive him. So that's just geographically 3 convenient and coincident.</p> <p>4 But it seemed to become the neighborhood 5 classic school.</p> <p>6 My son changed his attitude, was no longer 7 hostile towards meeting all the kids at Santa Fe 8 that he didn't feel reached out to him or opened up 9 to him. And he had, from his first day of -- I 10 think they call it shadowing, when a student follows 11 some students who are attending the school -- he had 12 friends immediately.</p> <p>13 So from tenth grade to now -- he is a 14 first-semester senior -- it's just been a wonderful 15 experience, not only his learning and the teachers, 16 but the bonds with the friends he's formed, 17 primarily in the National Honor Society. He's now 18 vice president of the National Honor Society. He 19 won homecoming king, and, just, I think, last 20 weekend, he was selected for the All District soccer 21 team.</p> <p>22 So it's just like night and day for us. 23 And that's what I wanted to communicate, the 24 anonymity that he felt in a big public Santa Fe High 25 School and the intimacy and caring he has received</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">162</p> <p>1 at Monte del Sol.</p> <p>2 I wanted to mention one other thing,</p> <p>3 because I'm surprised it hasn't been mentioned.</p> <p>4 Monte seems to have a unique -- in the city or I</p> <p>5 don't know how wide it is -- but they have a</p> <p>6 required mentorship program. And that links every</p> <p>7 student who's going to graduate with a professional</p> <p>8 in the field of the student's choice. So it's</p> <p>9 really a great opportunity for young people to learn</p> <p>10 with professionals in a field they care about.</p> <p>11 My son chose fashion. And although I</p> <p>12 tried to get him a Hollywood designer, and I failed,</p> <p>13 the mentorship leader found him a great mentor, Dawn</p> <p>14 Bacon, a fashion designer here in Santa Fe. And my</p> <p>15 son, Exsel, just entered the Santa Fe Trash Fashion</p> <p>16 Show and won an Honorable Mention prize in that.</p> <p>17 So just from one parent to say that Monte</p> <p>18 has allowed him to thrive. And I didn't know much</p> <p>19 about the difference between public schools and high</p> <p>20 schools and size. But in our case, it's made a</p> <p>21 tremendous difference, and I wanted to thank Zoë and</p> <p>22 the team there and the teachers and all the students</p> <p>23 who just pitched -- I think it's absolutely</p> <p>24 necessary that their charter be continued, and I'm</p> <p>25 sure they'll do their end on the financial side.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">164</p> <p>1 previous speaker spoke about the mentorship program.</p> <p>2 But I also really support that unique program. It's</p> <p>3 a collaboration where students get to choose a topic</p> <p>4 of their interest. And it can be veterinary</p> <p>5 medicine. It can be leather-working. It can be</p> <p>6 trades, skills. And it really values the importance</p> <p>7 of lifelong learning.</p> <p>8 It's not just, you know, the four R's, but</p> <p>9 it's developing that whole self. And so the</p> <p>10 connection between the students and members of the</p> <p>11 community has just been really incredible. So I</p> <p>12 want to thank everybody for that. And I really</p> <p>13 appreciate the school.</p> <p>14 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Thank you. Next we</p> <p>15 have Natalie Fagan.</p> <p>16 FROM THE PUBLIC: Madam Chair and members</p> <p>17 of the Commission, my name is Natalie Fagan,</p> <p>18 F-a-g-a-n.</p> <p>19 And I have been attending Monte del Sol</p> <p>20 since seventh grade, and I am grateful to be part of</p> <p>21 this year's graduating class of 2025.</p> <p>22 And I'm grateful to be part of this</p> <p>23 community because of its approach to outside-the-box</p> <p>24 learning. And that partly is through our school's</p> <p>25 mentorship program.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">163</p> <p>1 Thank you.</p> <p>2 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next in the room, we</p> <p>3 have Amy Larsen.</p> <p>4 FROM THE FLOOR: Amy Larsen. L-a-r-s-e-n.</p> <p>5 Better? Great.</p> <p>6 I'm a parent of a student at</p> <p>7 Monte del Sol. And so thank you, Commissioners, for</p> <p>8 giving me the opportunity to talk.</p> <p>9 You know, our family has been super</p> <p>10 pleased with the level of academic support, the</p> <p>11 caring staff and administration, the amazing</p> <p>12 talented teachers, and, as you can see, the</p> <p>13 incredible students that come through the school.</p> <p>14 So in addition to that, I appreciate the</p> <p>15 school's IEP team, who has supported our student in</p> <p>16 getting them into the classes that really support</p> <p>17 their learning. That's been a huge plus.</p> <p>18 I appreciate the weekly newsletters</p> <p>19 that come out that help us know what's going on at</p> <p>20 the school, help us -- help the families be engaged</p> <p>21 and come to events that are -- that are happening.</p> <p>22 And I've also participated in the equity</p> <p>23 committee. So that's been a huge source of kind of</p> <p>24 collaboration both with the school and the families.</p> <p>25 And I won't go on too much. I think the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">165</p> <p>1 I know Mr. Trules mentioned the mentorship</p> <p>2 program. And I am so grateful for this program.</p> <p>3 I've done it for two years. I've done it through</p> <p>4 the Santa Fe Animal Shelter for both years. I</p> <p>5 worked in adoption. That gave me the skills of</p> <p>6 cooperation and communication that I use pretty much</p> <p>7 every day in my job right now. I work at the</p> <p>8 DeVargas Mall.</p> <p>9 And another way that Monte del Sol</p> <p>10 students are able to utilize their interests is</p> <p>11 through our faculty. The faculty at Monte del Sol</p> <p>12 is some -- like I've never seen before. They do</p> <p>13 everything they can to make sure you accomplish</p> <p>14 everything that you want to.</p> <p>15 I know I tried to be a very driven person.</p> <p>16 I try to take every opportunity that I can. And</p> <p>17 that includes being a captain of our varsity soccer</p> <p>18 team for the past two years. I've been on that team</p> <p>19 since the eighth grade. And I've also been able to</p> <p>20 be captain while being secretary of the National</p> <p>21 Honor Society and being a part of our student's</p> <p>22 welcome committee that welcomes in new seventh and</p> <p>23 eighth graders, as well as upper classmen each year.</p> <p>24 So having an understanding faculty that</p> <p>25 helps me prioritize my time and make sure I can be</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">166</p> <p>1 the best leader I can to my whole community, that 2 makes me feel very good. That makes me feel very 3 grateful. 4 And I just want to say thank you to Zoë 5 and Erica and all the other faculty, that Monte del 6 Sol has been such an incredible outlet for me and my 7 siblings, who also attend the same school, and my 8 other classmates for allowing us to express 9 ourselves creatively while still thinking about our 10 futures and our careers. 11 Thank you so much for your time. 12 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next we have Peter 13 Mitchell. 14 FROM THE PUBLIC: Good afternoon, 15 Madam Chair, members of the Commission. I come to 16 you in two capacities. 17 The first is I'm the chairman of the 18 governing council for Monte del Sol. And in that 19 capacity, I just wanted to recognize -- and I'm 20 really nervous coming after all these articulate 21 young people. Kind of intimidating. 22 But as a board member, I kind of came in 23 as president similar to what -- at a similar time 24 when Zoë came aboard. I initially came to serve on 25 the board.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">168</p> <p>1 the springboard for her being so successful 2 afterwards. 3 My son is a junior. He's on the 4 basketball team. And he recently got back from 5 Poland at the International Human Rights Council to 6 litigate posthumous war crimes. There's so many 7 things going on at the school. The team is so 8 superb. The team is great. I just wanted to 9 celebrate them all. 10 MS. MELISSA BROWN: I know you guys are 11 all nervous. 12 Elle Bustos. B-u-s-t-o-s. 13 FROM THE PUBLIC: Like I said, my name is 14 Elle Bustos, B-u-s-t-o-s. For me, Monte del Sol is 15 an example of innovative education. And so there's 16 just so many different paths that just kind of 17 spread out. And so I know we have our coding path, 18 and we have our gardens and that sustainability that 19 leads from it. 20 And if you're unsure, we have mentorship, 21 which is kind of like it gives you the experience 22 before you're even there, which is just so 23 practical. And from there, it just even connects 24 you with the community as more than just a kid, but 25 as just, like, a person, and you're preparing to go</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">167</p> <p>1 About a month after I was there, the 2 president said he was stepping down, and they wanted 3 me to take over. 4 They said, "It'll be really easy. You 5 won't have to do much. We'll support you with other 6 people on the board." 7 About two weeks after that, I got a call 8 from Zoë wanting to hold an executive session on a 9 Saturday morning to address our finance situation. 10 That was feet to the fire immediately. 11 But what it really showed, and it came out 12 very early in my chairmanship, is that we have a 13 wonderful team here: our faculty, our leadership, 14 our attorney, who's part of our expansion. 15 Everyone really works together here. And 16 it's been really refreshing as a board member to 17 have the support from all different angles of the 18 school. I just wanted to celebrate that for the 19 school. 20 And the second capacity I come in is I'm a 21 parent of two students; one, my daughter graduated a 22 couple of years ago. She's finishing her third year 23 in college at Anglo-American University in Prague. 24 She'll be graduating this fall. She has had a super 25 experience at Monte del Sol, and I think that was</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">169</p> <p>1 out in the world, and you're just learning all these 2 things. 3 And like I said about our gardens, we have 4 four gardens. And it integrates into our lunches, 5 which brings healthy lunches, which also then leads 6 into our culinary program. 7 Everything is just kind of connected like 8 a web in our community in a way. 9 But mainly sustainability is super 10 important to me. So I plan to go into agriculture 11 and architect after high school. And I think that 12 is so important to be able to be out in the world 13 becoming a thing. 14 What else do I have? That was about it. 15 Thank you. 16 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next we have Quinn 17 Manus -- Manus -- M-a-n-u-s. 18 FROM THE PUBLIC: Hi. My name is Quinn 19 Hanus. That's H-a-n-u-s. And Monte del Sol has 20 helped me raise my educations and abilities as a 21 person through our close connection with teachers 22 and staff. I've always loved talking and connecting 23 with my peers and fellow people and friends and 24 whatever not throughout my entire life. 25 So being able to enter a community like</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">170</p> <p>1 this, where I stepped in and was able to meet people 2 like my teachers, just as friends and as peers and 3 be able to see them just out in the hallways or just 4 out wherever, and just be, like, "Hi," and talk to 5 them and have a great conversation, completely 6 changed my education. 7 I've always kind felt like not excluded, 8 but kind of pushed away from the education around me 9 and, like, the teachers with, like Miss Whoever and 10 Mr. Whatever, and it felt like, "Dang, I'm just a 11 student. I didn't want to be there, and I didn't 12 want to do anything." 13 So to be able to step into a community 14 where I was excited to go and talk to my teacher 15 about whatever I learned about or this thing I did 16 on my own time was incredible. And it completely 17 changed just so much, just from this small little 18 thing about our community. 19 And I love that so much. And it's just 20 been a massive thing. 21 Even with our campus itself. Like, you 22 can see how our campus is a very open-air campus. 23 Like, you step out of a classroom to go to your next 24 class, and you get fresh air and trees and our 25 beautiful gardens and anything else, just the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">172</p> <p>1 be all. Thank you. 2 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Wendy Leighton. 3 Oh, you already spoke. Yes. We had a few 4 people that already spoke. That's all the public 5 comment we have. 6 THE CHAIR: And thanks to all the 7 students, especially for standing up. I know it's 8 difficult. So really appreciate the student voices. 9 Appreciate the adult voices, but it -- you 10 know, when the students are stepping up and 11 speaking, it resonates much more. 12 Commissioner Beck. 13 SECRETARY BECK: Yeah. Thanks to all the 14 students. It gives us a really good perspective. 15 It's -- not that the adults don't. Don't get me 16 wrong. But you guys really give us a great 17 perspective, so we thank you very much. 18 I'm sure there's going to be some 19 discussion about the financial situation. But I had 20 a few specifics that I wanted to go real fast. 21 I saw, on Page 16 of 21, in Part A, where 22 from fiscal year '22 to '23, on the financial 23 compliance, your enrollment went up from 360 to 368 24 from '22 to '23, but your staffing and full-time 25 equivalents went from 39.41 to 18.07.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">171</p> <p>1 ability to, like, not be stuck in a prison; right? 2 You really get to be in a place that lets you feel 3 like yourself and you're comfortable. 4 If you need a second, you can go walk and 5 look at our nice grapevines and this and that, and 6 all these things that are just so homey, so nice. 7 And all of these things are not just implemented, 8 either. 9 Every student has the opportunity to work 10 and help and build that community themselves. All 11 of our students are able to help out with planting 12 in the gardens and helping pick them and work with 13 the lunch people, and everything else to just really 14 build up that sense of community and that sense of 15 understanding and sharing, along with our mentorship 16 program, like everybody else has talked about. 17 It's been really important to me as well. 18 Because I've always enjoyed expressing my body, and 19 it's helped me do that in a lot of different ways 20 and I enjoy it a lot. 21 And that's about it. I just wanted to 22 highlight the community and the importance of our 23 school's, like, just openness and acceptance of 24 anyone, no matter what, and letting us really grow 25 to and thrive as, like, a community. Yes, that'll</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">173</p> <p>1 You went from 3.8 EAs to .75. 2 You went from 22.21 regular ed teachers to 3 10. 4 And you went from 2.67, other personal, to 5 zero. 6 Is that just a mistake? Is that a -- that 7 doesn't sound right at all to me. 8 DR. ZOË NELSEN: Commissioner Beck, what 9 page are you again? I'm sorry. 10 SECRETARY BECK: Page 16 of 21 in 11 Part A of your renewal. Part A, yeah. I'm assuming 12 there's an error there of significant magnitude, 13 because I -- well, let's just say I hope there is. 14 DR. ZOË NELSEN: Commissioner Beck, thank 15 you for that question. So... 16 MS. KATIE RARICK: I was not the business 17 manager at the time. But, traditionally, what 18 happens when we see these mistakes, this data is 19 uploaded into OBMS and the other State systems. And 20 so what happens is whoever was doing the reporting 21 at the time did not do accurate reporting. 22 SECRETARY BECK: So it's just a reporting 23 error. That's fine. That's all I needed. 24 Then on Page 17 of 21, which concerns me, 25 which is probably correct, is the operational cash</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">174</p> <p>1 balance, where consistently, over the last three 2 years, you're -- you have \$3.7 million in expenses 3 annually, and you're down to 9.26 days of operating 4 cash on hand. 5 That seems quite low and a little 6 concerning in terms of the cash balance. 7 So I don't know if you have any comment on 8 that. It just -- you know, obviously, you went from 9 fiscal year '21, for '21, and dropped \$300,000 for 10 those next three years. So... 11 MS. KATIE RARICK: Yes. I think the days 12 of cash on hand -- oh, because they're operational 13 days of cash on hand. 14 So I think if we added all the cash on 15 hand it would be much larger. And, in fact, we are 16 saving quite a bit of money for the new expansion, 17 over \$2 million, which we have right now. 18 So if you look at the entire budget for 19 days of cash on hand, last -- with the financials I 20 submitted, it was over 100 days. 21 But, yeah. 22 So I -- I am not as concerned about days 23 of cash on hand when I look at the financials 24 overall. 25 SECRETARY BECK: Okay. And I trust you.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">176</p> <p>1 So I'd like to know what specific program 2 or specific strategies you have. Specifically in 3 the math proficiency, what kind of professional 4 development is there, what kind of additional 5 outside training is there, what kind of tutoring 6 program is there, what kind of summer program would 7 there be. What do you have specifically to increase 8 that -- that number from 10 percent? 9 DR. ZOË NELSEN: Commissioner Beck, I'll 10 answer that, and then also handed it over to Erika 11 Penczer, assistant head learner, to talk about that. 12 So we've -- we've hired a new math chair 13 this year, who has worked at International 14 Baccalaureate schools and just has a wealth of 15 experience and really looks at math education 16 through a holistic and creative lens as a 17 mathematician, and so is really moving that 18 department forward in a cohesive manner. 19 We've also -- partially for staffing, but 20 partially so that we really hone in on math 21 instruction, we've taken a STEM-embedded department 22 and separate them. So we have a science department 23 and a math department. And that gives a chance for 24 the math teachers not to get forgotten or, you know, 25 kind of swallowed up with a larger department.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">175</p> <p>1 We have a lot of experience with you. So, okay. 2 MS. KATIE RARICK: Yeah. Yeah. I think 3 we're safe. 4 SECRETARY BECK: I'm sure other people 5 will talk about -- so it's obvious that you 6 concentrate significantly on social-emotional 7 learning. That's very apparent. 8 I want to talk about the academics a 9 little bit. 10 I was a 12-year teacher and in a 11 traditional public school, twelfth grade. 12 And I asked Dr. Russell before. With your 13 math proficiency at 10 percent, your reading 14 proficiency at 36 percent, how you could come up 15 with a Vistas score of 60.2. I don't quite 16 understand. But, you know, I know it's an algorithm 17 or some kind of bizarre thing. 18 But I'm concerned deeply about the math 19 proficiency. We want -- you know, I know there are 20 great success stories coming out of your school on 21 to college, et cetera, et cetera. But overall, with 22 a math proficiency like that, I'm concerned about 23 where students would go once they graduate and move 24 on to, you know, some college or even career 25 technical.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">177</p> <p>1 And I -- honestly, that's what's happened 2 over the last couple of years. We've excelled in 3 the sciences. And the math has been a little bit 4 more challenging, just in terms of the staffing 5 element. 6 And so bringing in highly qualified 7 teachers in the seventh grade and eighth grade -- so 8 this year we have one single teacher working with 9 all the seventh grade students, unless they're 10 accelerated in an eighth grade or an Algebra One 11 class, and then they'll take those other classes. 12 Next year, we'd like to do the same for the eighth 13 grade. So really providing some consistency across 14 the board. 15 Right now we've got a few different 16 teachers teaching eighth grade math. 17 We have, over the last -- 18 SECRETARY BECK: So I understand. 19 Previous to last year, you had one department, which 20 was called STEM, which included science and math 21 together. 22 DR. ZOË NELSEN: That's correct. 23 SECRETARY BECK: Whoops. Oh, okay. Okay. 24 I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Okay. 25 So now you've split it out; correct? And</p>

178	<p>1 so for eighth -- seventh through twelfth grade, how 2 many specific math teachers do you have? 3 DR. ZOË NELSEN: Let's see. Five -- five. 4 SECRETARY BECK: One per grade. 5 DR. ZOË NELSEN: Basically. I mean, in 6 the upper grades, there are -- yeah, it's more 7 split; so... 8 SECRETARY BECK: Go ahead. I'm sorry. 9 DR. ZOË NELSEN: So then to some of your 10 other questions around tutoring, this year, we're 11 working with Tutor Heros, and they're coming in and 12 providing tutoring during the school day. We've had 13 some after-school tutoring that we've offered for 14 years. And it's hard to get students there and get 15 them, you know, kind of connected, either on campus 16 or off campus. 17 So that has been successful over the last 18 couple -- couple weeks, really -- or couple months, 19 since I guess it's been about five weeks since 20 they've been -- 21 SECRETARY BECK: What part of the school 22 day do they have that tutoring? How does that work, 23 fit into the schedule? 24 DR. ZOË NELSEN: So they'll come in during 25 the class time.</p>	180	<p>1 ninth grade, et cetera, et cetera? 2 DR. ZOË NELSEN: Erika can speak to that a 3 little bit more, working with the curriculum 4 committee and what we've been implementing this 5 year. 6 MS. ERIKA PENCZER: Thanks. I will say 7 that this is the second year -- oh. P-e-n-c-z-e-r. 8 Erika Penczer. 9 This is our second year of having the 10 dedicated new math department chair. 11 And there have been some -- sorry -- there 12 have been some big initiatives in this department 13 because of the scores. 14 With -- so now they're meeting as a 15 department, and they can align vertically. 16 And I'll say that that is under -- oh, 17 geez. I see what you guys were talking about. 18 SECRETARY BECK: (Inaudible due to 19 simultaneous speaking) stop getting scared up here. 20 Believe me. And you have two minutes. 21 MS. ERIKA PENCZER: So, yeah. So they 22 meet -- it's roughly once a month. They meet to 23 align vertically. 24 SECRETARY BECK: Once a month, they meet? 25 MS. ERIKA PENCZER: About, yes. Also,</p>
179	<p>1 SECRETARY BECK: During the class time of 2 the math class? 3 DR. ZOË NELSEN: Either pushing in or 4 working with some students to kind of pull them out. 5 And what I learned just the other day with 6 one of our Algebra One classes, specifically, the 7 regular ed teacher is working with the majority of 8 the students, and the tutor is working with the 9 students -- the accelerated students. 10 I was, like, oh, that's wonderful, just -- 11 rather than pulling out the students who are 12 struggling, really providing that extra push for the 13 students who are accelerating, so that the other 14 students have more attention also. 15 Professional development, really, like, 16 leaning into MLSS, Tier 1 strategies, training all 17 of our teachers in a very -- you know, I think more 18 consistent and mindful way, starting this year and 19 looking forward to continuing -- 20 SECRETARY BECK: Do you do it vertically, 21 grade-level, or horizontally? Or both ways? 22 DR. ZOË NELSEN: It's vertically through 23 the grade level. 24 SECRETARY BECK: So they work with each -- 25 the seventh grade math works with the eighth grade,</p>	181	<p>1 about once a month -- oh, no. They meet every two 2 weeks. Once a month, all the department chairs come 3 together, and we talk about these things. 4 So, for instance, aligning the vertical 5 curriculum is something that this year, they're 6 really digging into, making sure that they're all -- 7 they do currently have -- and I wish I brought that 8 with me -- their -- their curriculum that they're 9 using right now, however they're about to just dig 10 into what is the best one to move towards that flows 11 beautifully from seven through twelve, especially 12 with the new legislation around Algebra Two and, you 13 know, where to go from there. 14 SECRETARY BECK: Right. 15 MS. ERIKA PENCZER: I would also add that 16 a bunch of our time has been taken up talking about 17 how to use the NWEA interim assessments to help with 18 the tutoring and to help with the differentiation 19 from the classrooms. 20 We've spent time as a curriculum committee 21 digging into exactly where do we find -- how do we 22 know which students, based on those results, would 23 be best served with that pullout or push-in tutoring 24 for support, as well as those who could use it for 25 the additional challenge.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">182</p> <p>1 And so we feel really good that that's all 2 being tied in this year in a better way. 3 We also use the MAP -- there's an online 4 tutoring that is connected to those NWEA results. 5 And it's -- it's called "My Path." And what happens 6 is we could all -- if we are the students in a 7 class, we could all log in to those. And then the 8 instruction and the support given is based on where 9 we fell with that test. So we could all be working 10 on very different things. 11 That is also being utilized, because we 12 can have some targeted supports in the math 13 classroom, but also for reading, which -- and our 14 teachers this year have had even more training on 15 this. The department chairs are using it at the 16 student level, at the class level. And then we, of 17 course, can look at it more at the school, the grade 18 level or -- 19 SECRETARY BECK: So the department chairs 20 meet with their respective faculty every two weeks. 21 MS. ERIKA PENCZER: Yes. 22 SECRETARY BECK: Okay. That seems like 23 you'd want a lot more than that, a lot more 24 interaction to me, from my experience as a teacher 25 for 13 years. We would meet actually twice weekly</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">184</p> <p>1 proficiency. And you're at 6.3 percent, 2 significantly weaker than that. Do you have 3 specific strategies employed or ready to go to 4 improve the ELL proficiency rate? 5 DR. ZOË NELSEN: So we've brought on, 6 like, an educational assistant. But, like, a -- not 7 an educational assistant, but a similar model with a 8 full inclusion to work directly with our EL students 9 that kind of push in and co-teach with content area 10 teachers, specifically focusing and targeting on 11 student supports for EL students. 12 We've had a couple of different models 13 over the last couple of years in terms of how we're 14 offering supports, if we're offering it in specific 15 ELD pullout classes based on level, or based on 16 grade, or, you know -- or proficiency. 17 And so we've been -- we haven't, like, 18 landed in an area that is -- feels like it's a 19 perfect fit for our school. 20 We do -- with our high special ed 21 population, we do have a lot of EAs. And so that -- 22 so we do a full inclusion model. And so that is a 23 viable option for us as we continue to move forward, 24 because it's -- teachers are already co-teaching, so 25 to speak, and bringing in other resources. And so</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">183</p> <p>1 as a department. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. We'd meet 2 Tuesdays and Thursdays I think it was. 3 And then do you analyze student work 4 during these times? Do you have time to analyze 5 student work and be able to assess weaknesses and 6 strengths based on that? 7 MS. ERIKA PENCZER: That is actually -- 8 it's funny that you said that. We had a training, a 9 full staff training this year for Layer 1 MLSS, how 10 to provide those supports, in that everyone brought 11 their assignment -- an assignment that they were 12 about to give. And we had time in the room together 13 to -- to differentiate it for three different 14 levels. 15 SECRETARY BECK: Right. Right. 16 MS. ERIKA PENCZER: But our next training 17 that's coming up in January is all about that. 18 We'll be -- we'll be bringing in assignments, kind 19 of grading together and making sure that that's all 20 aligned. 21 SECRETARY BECK: All right. Great. Thank 22 you. 23 Another area that concerned me was the 24 English Learner -- Language Learner progress. You 25 know, the state average is 17.5 percent to identify</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">185</p> <p>1 that's the area that we're pursuing. 2 SECRETARY BECK: Yeah. Okay. I'll just 3 end on this note. 4 Your numbers, based on all the other 5 schools I've seen, are not out of whack as compared 6 to the math proficiency compared to the reading 7 proficiency compared to the science proficiency. It 8 all seems to move together. 9 But yours are significantly lower, 10 significantly lower than most of the other schools, 11 if you get my drift on that. So it's not like, "Oh, 12 science is way up here, and/or reading is way up 13 here." 14 It falls in line, but it falls in line 15 significantly lower. So I have huge concerns, 16 still, about your academic programs and how your 17 strategies are going -- because you have things in 18 place. You know, things are going to be good. But 19 the proof is in the pudding, as they say. 20 And for your students and how great your 21 students are and how wonderful, you know, they 22 are -- boy, some of these guys were just incredible, 23 you know, espousing how -- and I'm sure your 24 community is tight. It's really great. I can see 25 that they are passionate about coming to school,</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">186</p> <p>1 which is wonderful.</p> <p>2 Your attendance is very good, which means</p> <p>3 kids like coming, which is really good. I like that</p> <p>4 a lot. That's a great starting point.</p> <p>5 But I'm concerned deeply about the</p> <p>6 academic side of it. So I'll leave it there.</p> <p>7 Thanks.</p> <p>8 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Burt.</p> <p>9 COMMISSIONER BURT: Thanks. Good</p> <p>10 afternoon. I definitely think, when I hear about</p> <p>11 your school, it reminds me of -- and I, like,</p> <p>12 actually remember reading this little kitschy thing</p> <p>13 in my elementary school principal's office one day.</p> <p>14 And it was, "It takes a village to raise a child";</p> <p>15 right? Like, super '90s normal, like, very popular;</p> <p>16 right?</p> <p>17 But it really is -- like, your school, to</p> <p>18 me, embodies that as, you know, it's not just the</p> <p>19 school itself. The amount of internships that you</p> <p>20 have throughout the course of your history, but</p> <p>21 every single year, those mentorship projects, all</p> <p>22 the -- like, all the external work that's done</p> <p>23 outside the classroom in order to raise, like,</p> <p>24 really productive members of society is really</p> <p>25 incredible for this school.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">188</p> <p>1 want to take a step back real quick, too. Because I</p> <p>2 do believe the students at your school, when I think</p> <p>3 about that, like, whole child education, they're</p> <p>4 getting a big piece of it.</p> <p>5 But I actually think a lot of times, you</p> <p>6 know, that program of arithmetic, numeracy and</p> <p>7 literacy, is assumed that that's happening,</p> <p>8 especially when so many other great things are</p> <p>9 happening that are really easy to see. And when</p> <p>10 kids are happy at school, it makes it easier to let</p> <p>11 those baseline things kind of slip under, and people</p> <p>12 don't necessarily complain about it, because they</p> <p>13 just trust that those things are actually happening.</p> <p>14 So I'm going to express the same level of</p> <p>15 concern that Commissioner Beck had about the</p> <p>16 academics, just the numeracy/literacy. And I</p> <p>17 actually didn't -- I didn't get a lot from your</p> <p>18 application as to -- I also have the same concern.</p> <p>19 It doesn't really seem like there's a really great,</p> <p>20 intensive urgent plan to really right-size those</p> <p>21 proficiency rates.</p> <p>22 And I'm really concerned about your</p> <p>23 students believing that they're ready for college,</p> <p>24 because you have this full program that tells them</p> <p>25 they are. But then if they're going into</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">187</p> <p>1 So it does seem like -- the way the</p> <p>2 students spoke about it totally makes sense, because</p> <p>3 it is -- it's way more than just a school. And I</p> <p>4 really appreciate that about your school.</p> <p>5 That being said, Commissioner Beck</p> <p>6 actually spoke on a lot of the things I had written</p> <p>7 down that I was going to ask questions about.</p> <p>8 I was going to ask more questions about</p> <p>9 financials, but because of your presentation, I</p> <p>10 think most -- most got answered. And then</p> <p>11 Commissioner Beck asking about those FTEs was the</p> <p>12 last kind of little spot there.</p> <p>13 So -- I mean, I am going to support a</p> <p>14 condition moving forward, because I haven't seen the</p> <p>15 data to show that it's really, like -- I would love</p> <p>16 to believe it's going to just look great moving</p> <p>17 forward. But until I see it, I would support a</p> <p>18 condition, just so that there's that additional</p> <p>19 monitoring of it. And, hopefully, in the next year</p> <p>20 or two, that can get removed, and you can move on</p> <p>21 past that.</p> <p>22 So that brings me to my two things that</p> <p>23 are left now to ask you questions about.</p> <p>24 Your graduation rate is also -- like</p> <p>25 Commissioner Beck just said -- okay. Actually, I</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">189</p> <p>1 remediation because they're not proficient in math,</p> <p>2 they're not proficient in reading, and they're going</p> <p>3 into remediation, it scares me for your kids.</p> <p>4 I hope that's a big focus in the next five</p> <p>5 years is keep all the community stuff you're doing,</p> <p>6 that extra work, keep doing that, please. Don't</p> <p>7 stop. Don't let off the gas on those things. All</p> <p>8 that incredible work you're doing, keep going, and</p> <p>9 ramp up the numeracy and literacy for your school.</p> <p>10 I also noticed the graduation rates seem</p> <p>11 to be something -- I'm sure they're not in a space</p> <p>12 where you all want to be. Can you talk a little bit</p> <p>13 about why we might be seeing lower graduation rates</p> <p>14 at this school, and what's been the process of</p> <p>15 trying to help those out? Why are they lower and</p> <p>16 then what's happening with them?</p> <p>17 DR. ZOË NELSEN: Yeah, Commissioner Burt.</p> <p>18 Well, our graduation rate for -- that was</p> <p>19 reported in Vistas for the last reporting is</p> <p>20 87 percent, which is higher than the district, and,</p> <p>21 I think, higher than the state. So we've -- we've</p> <p>22 increased our graduation rate.</p> <p>23 I think we had an anomaly one year where</p> <p>24 it dropped down to 58 percent. Part of that might</p> <p>25 have been reporting. I wasn't able to get to the</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">190</p> <p>1 bottom of it when it happened in terms of -- I mean, 2 I think you're familiar with all the different 3 validation processes and making -- we had a change 4 in the registrar's office. 5 And it was -- I had made some headway with 6 some -- an analyst. And then that person left. And 7 so I think that's just still hanging onto us. 8 I don't -- you know, I don't have a direct 9 answer. But we have steadily increased. I think we 10 were at 82 percent last year, and then, this last 11 reporting, 87 percent. 12 COMMISSIONER BURT: Okay. I do see that. 13 I think it was -- there was a -- yeah, 58 percent. 14 And then the five-year and six-year were really low 15 that same -- I guess it was all that same, maybe, 16 reporting. 17 DR. ZOË NELSEN: Yeah. And I would like 18 to say, just to talk about the academics, too, you 19 know, we also, in '22-'23 -- I mean, we don't keep 20 our level of growth in literacy. But we -- you 21 know, it was reported that 42 percent of our 22 students were proficient, while the Santa Fe Public 23 Schools was 37, and the State was 38 percent. 24 So we had quite a bit of growth in 25 literacy. And we, you know, fully recognize the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">192</p> <p>1 doesn't quite match up for me, you know. 2 Like, when I think of how you all are 3 functioning as a school and the things that you're 4 promoting for your students, the way your students 5 are coming and articulating for themselves, it 6 doesn't match what I see as the data we're 7 receiving. 8 I also wonder if, you know, moving into 9 the next contract term, if you all are considering 10 giving additional data outside just the state 11 performance, if that might help show more your story 12 as well. 13 But it is just -- I want the best -- I 14 know you want the best for your students. We want 15 the best for your students. So it's not -- I'm not 16 going to sugarcoat the places where it's not as good 17 as it should be. 18 So don't take it as -- you're not doing 19 anything -- you're doing incredible work, incredible 20 things. Your students are incredible. But we want 21 to do perfect for them. 22 Okay. Which, actually -- so the other 23 thing. I'm assuming at some point 25 years ago, it 24 was a good idea to start in seventh grade. And I'm 25 wondering if you all have talked about getting</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">191</p> <p>1 area for improvement that we've been discussing. 2 But I do want to highlight where we 3 were -- you know, had a -- received a Designation of 4 Excellence in ELA within this contract. So don't 5 want the celebration to go unnoticed. 6 COMMISSIONER BURT: And I appreciate that. 7 And it's not that -- I don't want to -- once again, 8 it's not trying to minimize. But that's also over 9 half your students are not proficient. So it also 10 is hard, like -- comparing ourselves to other 11 schools in New Mexico is not probably the right bar 12 for the leadership to be setting themselves on. 13 So I do see -- I appreciate that that's 14 higher. But also, at the same time, there's -- 15 there's a lot -- those are real kids -- right? -- 16 that aren't -- that's a kid; right? It's not 17 enough. 18 And so it just -- the school -- I'm 19 actually surprised by the lower levels of 20 proficiency at this school because of all of the 21 exceptional things that are happening. 22 So that's why I'm bringing it up, because 23 it doesn't sit right with the mission of the goal -- 24 with the mission of the school, with the way that 25 the school performs in so many other ways, it</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">193</p> <p>1 sixth-graders into your school, because I also just 2 wonder and imagine how many kids have to start out 3 middle school in sixth grade and leave that middle 4 school to come to your school. 5 DR. ZOË NELSEN: Santa Fe, middle school 6 starts in seventh grade. That's more traditional. 7 Elementary ends in sixth. 8 COMMISSIONER BURT: Got it. Okay. That 9 makes sense then. 10 I don't have any more questions. 11 DR. ZOË NELSEN: Thank you. 12 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Ingham. And then 13 I'm going to go. 14 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: Okay. So I'm the 15 nonacademic person in this room. And so when I read 16 through -- and I have to say, when I read your 17 application, I was pretty frustrated and not very 18 happy about it. 19 And I just said I will listen to the 20 presentation. And I have to admit your students are 21 a compelling case. They have helped my attitude a 22 whole bunch. 23 But I have to say that I don't understand 24 why we have academics like you're showing -- why 25 that is not a condition that we should put on a</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">194</p> <p>1 school. Because what I saw -- and I know we are not 2 supposed to compare '22-'23 to '23-'24, because 3 they're different. But everything is going on a 4 downward trend, not on an upward trend in 5 proficiency. 6 And I -- I think if my proficiency was at 7 15 percent, my hair would be on fire and that I 8 would be really having a -- you could put it this 9 way. It would be a time to really do some 10 soul-searching about, "We gotta -- we have to be -- 11 we can't be making small little improvements." 12 And that was at 15 percent. And then it 13 goes down to 10 percent. That's just a bad trend. 14 That's an awful trend. 15 And so I read all that stuff. And I can't 16 really comprehend a lot of the -- you know, the rest 17 of the B portion of the application. 18 But all I can say is that I feel like 19 10 percent of your students being not proficient 20 with math is -- is such a deplorable state that I 21 really feel like we have to do -- we have to take 22 some steps to ensure that your hair is on fire with 23 this problem, that it -- in my estimation, we can't 24 have schools with that level of proficiency. 25 And, like Bekka said, with the --</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">196</p> <p>1 And I would never not support renewal of 2 the school. I mean -- did I say that right? Okay. 3 I started to hear it, and I wasn't sure whether that 4 came out right or not. 5 But I do have some significant concerns. 6 I'm not sure -- I need a little 7 clarification. 8 When you were talking -- answering 9 Commissioner Beck, I wasn't sure whether I got the 10 clear answer. 11 Are you doing more pullout? Or is it all 12 push-in during the academic classes? 13 Are you pulling out for supports for 14 academic classes, non- -- not a kid who's -- it's 15 not in their IEP for pullout? 16 DR. ZOË NELSEN: We've been doing both. 17 THE CHAIR: Okay. I'm going to say, from 18 my experience, when -- have tried to do that, the 19 comments from students, "Well, I missed that because 20 I wasn't in class yesterday." 21 So the push-in -- and I was -- I taught 22 inclusion. And I thought it worked remarkably well 23 for the special ed kids. I was the regular ed 24 teacher, but never found pullout certainly as 25 successful.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">195</p> <p>1 comparing ourselves to the state and the district is 2 not -- I mean, our charter school movement, we need 3 to be significantly above the deplorable state of 4 our state in education. And to not be even getting 5 to the district level is really upsetting to me. 6 So I would advocate -- and I'm not asking 7 questions. I'm just saying -- I would advocate that 8 we come up with some conditions that would -- that 9 you could have to come back to us and show us that 10 your academics have -- that you have taken steps 11 that are really going to make a difference, not 12 maybe they're going to make a difference. 13 That would be my perspective. That's all 14 I have. 15 THE CHAIR: So thanks once again. I mean, 16 we really do appreciate these conversations, 'cause 17 they're important, because so often, we don't -- 18 we're removed from day to day of the school. And 19 this certainly brings -- you know, bringing the 20 students in, I -- people often talk about the new 21 community school movement that the State is doing. 22 And it's, like, well, that's what your charter 23 schools have been. They've been those community 24 schools. They've been serving the families and -- 25 and I really do appreciate that.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">197</p> <p>1 But, you know, it may be working. I don't 2 want to say that. But -- in your application, you 3 talked about -- I think it was either -- I think 4 it's this year -- doing -- doing professional 5 development to help to read and learn about data. 6 But then it said -- but in '24-'25 -- 7 maybe it was '25-'26. I don't remember. 8 But, anyway, you were doing professional 9 development to learn about data. And then for the 10 next year, the comment was, "Well, we've decided not 11 to do the professional development for data." 12 And it's, like, what happened? 13 So to me, there's this tension that 14 happens. You're trying to find the right mix. But 15 there doesn't seem to be this urgency in trying to 16 find the right -- it's, like, "Well, we're going to 17 have professional development that's going on in 18 January. We'll talk about that, and maybe we'll get 19 it done." 20 And you want to support innovation. We 21 want schools to not stick with something that isn't 22 working. But it seems to me, on paper, and a lot of 23 what I've heard is there's a lot of changes in what 24 is taking place. 25 And I don't know if there's been a lot of</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">198</p> <p>1 introspection about why that didn't work and why 2 we're going to -- and it wasn't explained in the 3 application. "This didn't work, because... But now 4 we did some research, and this looks like it's going 5 to work for us, and this is why we're going to move 6 to this." 7 Because at the end of the day, kids have 8 that year. And as we continue to experiment and 9 change, there's loss in that that's going on with 10 every year that there's change with what's happening 11 with -- so I have a concern about a lack of -- sense 12 of urgency. 13 And from what I've read, it didn't -- like 14 I said, it didn't seem like there was -- there was a 15 lot that went into reasoning why we've changed this. 16 You know, we're doing this -- and -- because we're 17 not -- now we're not doing that. 18 And it's, like, what happened? And 19 where -- where was the decision made, and why was 20 the decision made, and what went into trying to 21 figure out why you're going in this pathway? 22 So that -- that worries me. Because I 23 think that's reflected in -- you know, I get it 24 every year, you're not seeing the results that you 25 want. But I don't know whether there's the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">200</p> <p>1 I do have one question of the Division. 2 The performance framework rated a Workings 3 To Meet on their facilities. Or it might have 4 actually been the -- and I have an astigmatism. 5 DR. BRIGETTE RUSSELL: Chair Gipson, yes, 6 there was a Working To Meet on facilities. Let me 7 look at the explanation for that. 8 Safety concern raised that visitors have 9 to walk through the campus to get to the main 10 office. 11 THE CHAIR: Okay. Okay. Yeah. Okay. 12 All right. Thanks. 13 I just -- I wasn't sure what that was. So 14 I appreciate that. 15 Okay. Commissioner Carrillo. 16 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: So I would echo the 17 concerns that you've heard. And I -- when Chair 18 Gipson says she has high hopes, (audio distortion) 19 is not a strategy. 20 And so that always kind of, as much as 21 you'll never (audio distortion) working on, hope is 22 not a strategy. 23 So a couple of things that were mentioned. 24 Very troubled, as Commissioner Beck said, 25 the trend happened, that Commissioner Ingham said,</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">199</p> <p>1 introspection as to the why and where we're going 2 with our planning. 3 That's what -- that's what I'm worried 4 about. So that's why I think there has to be some 5 very specific guidelines in terms of conditions on 6 academics. 7 On finances, I have to support -- I 8 absolutely hope that you're right. But if I go back 9 to the last renewal application, every year looked 10 the same in red as well. So now we're almost on 11 Year 10, where every year there is a Does Not Meet 12 on finances. 13 So, you know, I'm looking at, once again, 14 you know, where is the fire lit to say, you know, 15 ten years -- if you were a business and you had ten 16 years of abysmal finances, you wouldn't be in 17 business any longer, you know? 18 So that's -- that's where, you know, I 19 haven't -- there hasn't been any -- there has been 20 no change. In fact, it might have actually gotten 21 somewhat worse. Not 100 percent sure. 22 But there's been absolutely no change out 23 of the red. So that -- that worries me. I have 24 hope, but I can't always hinge my trailer on that 25 one.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">201</p> <p>1 around -- I've got to move that like that or Cindy 2 is going to bite my head off. 3 It went 19 to 15 to 10, not in the right 4 direction. 5 Vistas score -- I often don't understand 6 how the Vistas scores work, because, oftentimes, 7 they don't reflect what's going on. 8 Like, this is in attendance at some of 9 these schools is 60 percent, I know there's some new 10 system and everything else. Well, then, don't 11 publish it at 60, because that's what the public 12 sees. It's irresponsible. It makes it seem as 13 though nobody is going to school. We have a lot of 14 attendance problems in New Mexico, but it's not that 15 bad. 16 The -- I liked -- you took time, after 17 2021, Ms. Nelsen, "settling into our roots." 18 I just made a note on that. 19 Next on this little page of notes, I'm 20 curious as to why -- I know it happens in district 21 schools, and I know it happens in Santa Fe Public 22 Schools. But in your school, if there are trends, 23 or if there is a teacher that is not meeting -- that 24 Does Not Meet expectation -- right? -- because 25 there's Does Not Meet, Meets, and Exceeds. And I</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">202</p> <p>1 remember -- and you remember, Ms. Nelsen, when Joe 2 came to the district, Joe Boyd, when you'd go to a 3 school and look at the files of teachers, and there 4 would be nothing in there except Meets Expectation, 5 literally -- using the word "literally" correctly -- 6 nothing in the file except Meets Expectation, which 7 means the head learner of the particular school or 8 district simply wasn't doing any follow-up with 9 their teachers, because the school was kind of 10 failing.</p> <p>11 I'm wondering at your school, when you 12 have a teacher -- first of all, I want to know how 13 teachers are evaluated at your school, because 14 you're a charter and you don't have to do what the 15 district does. When a teacher is Does Not Meet, 16 what do you do about it in terms of a performance 17 plan?</p> <p>18 DR. ZOË NELSEN: We work with -- if that 19 teacher has a mentor, we talk with, you know, the 20 mentor teacher.</p> <p>21 Teachers are -- have an opportunity to 22 meet -- they've been mostly with Erika getting 23 support. And then also, you know, if the issue is 24 like classroom management versus content area, you 25 know, it would -- the plan might be different.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">204</p> <p>1 the year, we came to that conclusion. So it wasn't 2 a "You're fired" situation. Midyear, I haven't had 3 that situation. But those are a couple of examples.</p> <p>4 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: You haven't had to 5 escort people out because they weren't the right 6 fit. Or perhaps -- because if you're not having the 7 results you want, and it's been five years, clearly, 8 I assume at some point, people go on a performance 9 development plan. And if that's not working, 10 they're out.</p> <p>11 That's kind of the way life works when 12 you're in a job -- right? -- in the private sector 13 or any sector. Okay. Thank for you answering that 14 question.</p> <p>15 Okay. Same concerns about financial 16 management. Very glad you have Axiom Analytics on 17 board. I've worked with Kimberly a lot. And it's 18 nice to see you, Katie.</p> <p>19 So for me, personally, I get really tired 20 of schools telling us, "Oh, we're taking this action 21 and this action, this is pending, we're planning on 22 this, we're planning on this."</p> <p>23 Where is the fire; right? Where is the 24 fire? I can't tell you how often, as a Commission, 25 we hear from schools about all their grand plans.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">203</p> <p>1 So in a recent example of Erika doing an 2 observation in a class where a teacher just did not 3 meet -- the lab experiment was awesome, but students 4 were not paying attention and were kind of off-task.</p> <p>5 And as a new teacher this year, we have in 6 place a classroom management sort of step guide for 7 this teacher. And they'll work with one of our 8 support staff specifically over -- you know, over 9 the course of the next quarter, so to speak, over a 10 set period of time, looking at different classroom 11 management strategies, looking at relation 12 strategies, different bell ringers, and, again, just 13 to bring the class together.</p> <p>14 So a lot of it is coaching, as we work 15 towards improvement.</p> <p>16 And in -- just thinking if, in my time, we 17 have -- we've also coached a couple of teachers who 18 are not the right fit. You know, we've -- we've 19 moved to an agreement where, like, "This isn't 20 working," you know.</p> <p>21 We did that two years ago with a science 22 teacher. And, just, the -- more than anything, it 23 was just a lot of power struggle happening with 24 students and the teacher, you know.</p> <p>25 And then over the -- over the course of</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">205</p> <p>1 And then five years later or two years later, it's 2 an eddy going on a downward spiral.</p> <p>3 So I have a lot less faith in that. And 4 relative to that -- 'cause I want to get back to 5 this one thing -- and Chair Mitchell, you're going 6 to be in the hot seat in a minute. Peter.</p> <p>7 So -- I don't think it's a hot seat.</p> <p>8 And so I'm very happy to hear, Ms. Nelsen, 9 about what you're doing on math, separating STEM and 10 giving math its own sense of importance within 11 everything. I think that's going to make a big 12 difference.</p> <p>13 Having full inclusion with the ed 14 assistants, I think is going to make a big 15 difference.</p> <p>16 I'll call on -- if it's okay, I'll call on 17 Mr. Mitchell, too, because I'm curious.</p> <p>18 You're the board chair. So one of the 19 things that we've been focusing on as a Commission 20 is boards, because when -- I'm not saying your board 21 is going south. I'm not even close to saying that.</p> <p>22 But when boards start to go south, schools 23 plummet south. Generally, it's because of board 24 oversight. So, Chair Mitchell, I would ask how do 25 you see your role in terms of board oversight in</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">206</p> <p>1 terms of holding Ms. Nelsen and her staff 2 accountable for the results that we're going to need 3 to see? 4 In your board meeting, do you have a 5 section on academic analysis every time the board 6 meets? 7 MR. PETER MITCHELL: We do not, 8 Commissioner Carrillo. Our board meetings are -- 9 when I came in initially, the responsibilities were 10 fiscal management, which I think we've been very 11 aggressive about addressing. And managing our head 12 learner, taking care -- or overseeing our head 13 learner and her performance. 14 But we do have periodic reports on 15 academic strength and weaknesses within the board. 16 But that is not a monthly item on our board to 17 oversee performance reviews of the students, to 18 answer your question. 19 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Okay. I personally 20 think it's a good idea. Even if it's a standalone 21 item on your board meeting, and you're not going to 22 have anything on that item, it's a good idea -- I 23 mean, you're autonomous, just having it on there as 24 a standalone once a month. Do it or not. But have 25 an academic check-in with your head learner, see</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">208</p> <p>1 of theirs -- it was Tierra Adentro -- they're doing 2 amazing things, even when kids may graduate in five 3 years or six, just to make sure that that diploma is 4 not a piece of paper that said "Time Served." 5 It doesn't say, "I just got D's all the 6 way through so I can feel good about myself." 7 Thank you, Peter. It's always great to 8 see you, too. 9 Ms. Nelsen, does the school keep any 10 records about what seniors end up needing 11 remediation as they go on to community college or 12 university? 13 DR. ZOË NELSEN: We don't have that 14 specific data on remediation. 15 THE CHAIR: You can check with the 16 community college, Marco, the head guy there, 17 relative to that. Because I know, very 18 unfortunately for Santa Fe Public, over 80 percent 19 of the kids needed remediation that left -- not 20 ATC -- but that left either Capital or Santa Fe. 21 So that speaks volumes as to what's going 22 on at the lower level. It might be something you 23 might want to look into. 24 The -- I love the program that you're 25 doing there in mentorship. So many of the students</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">207</p> <p>1 what's going on. 2 MR. PETER MITCHELL: I agree entirely. 3 And it's -- I'm learning, too. I've been in this 4 role about a year. And we won't get into the school 5 board experience. 6 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Ay-yi-yi. Yeah, we 7 have -- 8 MR. PETER MITCHELL: But it is -- again, 9 I'm learning as fast as everyone else. I come from 10 the economic development background. So it is 11 critical to me to have the skilled workforce, 12 because whenever I -- in my career, the only thing 13 that holds New Mexico back is the skilled workforce. 14 And that starts now. That starts in 15 elementary school. And so this is a critical 16 component. And I appreciate you bringing that up, 17 and I certainly will put that in the line item for 18 each board member. 19 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: I'm really happy to 20 hear you say that. The first school that spoke 21 today spoke about how they have kids coming in 22 in seventh grade -- not just one or two but enough -- 23 at a first-grade level. 24 So somewhere -- the system has just been 25 failing these kids. And their whole -- an emphasis</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">209</p> <p>1 spoke about mentorships. 2 So is there anyone here that could speak 3 to the mentorship program that's -- or that's 4 online? Okay. Do you want to speak to it? I 5 know -- I can say I know this, because we're dear 6 friends. I know Giselle Piburn is in the audience. 7 She's part of the mentorship program. 8 Can you talk a little bit about that and 9 how you find the matches? 10 FROM THE FLOOR: One of the things -- oh. 11 I'm Judy Herzl. Last name is spelled H-e-r-z-l, 12 only one vowel. 13 What I'd like to say, I have been at Monte 14 since 2015 as the assistant director of the 15 mentorship program. 16 And what I'd like to say about the program 17 is it's like -- it brings the school out into the 18 community, but it brings the community into the 19 school. 20 And, in fact, we just had a student that 21 transferred. Her grandfather was a mentor in 22 welding last year. And he was so impressed by the 23 spirit, he came to our Festival of Learning. We 24 have a three-day festival at the end of the year, 25 where every student -- which is usually between 100</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">210</p> <p>1 and 110 -- each present on what they learned in 2 their mentorship, evidence of learning. 3 And it's an all-school -- it's a very 4 all-school event. The whole school closes schools. 5 And one day, we're at Monte. One day we're at IAIA. 6 One day we're at the Lensic for the more 7 performance-like mentorships. 8 But he was so moved that he called me and 9 said, "I need to transfer my granddaughter. Tell me 10 what to do." 11 So there -- and, actually, another -- a 12 horse mentor we had also enrolled her daughter into 13 Monte out of her experience of mentoring. 14 So I feel very positive about the exchange 15 that happens in that way. 16 How we find mentors, it is unbelievable 17 all the ways we find mentors. 18 I mean, I found a jewelry mentor. I was 19 looking for months. And then I remembered that a 20 dear friend of mine had died who was a jeweler. 21 And someone came and got all her equipment 22 and gave it to a friend who was a jeweler. 23 And I called my friend, and I said, "Who 24 was that person that got all the equipment?" 25 And she has become a mentor, and she loves</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">212</p> <p>1 question when you don't understand something. 2 And, honestly, to some of the questions 3 you've had, I feel like mentorship is honestly about 4 learning to fail. And it doesn't matter if it's 5 rock climbing or baking or performing a dance, it 6 always is harder than it looks. Always. 7 And then they realize that their mentor 8 failed over and over in the same way, and that if 9 their mentor is this good, it's possible that they 10 could be that good. 11 And so I think there's a resilience 12 aspect. And this is the time of year where we have 13 to, like, infuse more of it, because they've -- the 14 honeymoon period is sort of over, and now it's, 15 like, "Oh, this is going to be -- this is going to 16 take more," you know. 17 But I think once students get over that 18 hump and go through the year, they can feel like, 19 "Wow, I really did this," you know? 20 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Yeah. Thank you. 21 No, that's great. And I love that your mentorship 22 program is so robust. And I know that right now -- 23 I just read something recently, you probably read it 24 as well -- how Santa Fe Public Schools is trying 25 very much to emulate what you're doing relative to</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">211</p> <p>1 it so much. She has thanked me. So it's all 2 different ways. 3 Are there specific questions that I can 4 answer about the program? 5 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: No, I was just more 6 curious about just what you spoke of. Because I 7 know there's tremendous success at the school with 8 mentoring. I know there's an organization -- I 9 think it was called just Mentoring Kids Works, 10 that's in Santa Fe. I can't remember the 11 gentleman -- Buchsbaum, Bill Buchsbaum -- was an 12 organization they had. Because it does work. 13 And the inclusivity that students feel 14 when they're in the community and then vice versa. 15 There's no question the joy that a great 16 mentor gets from being a mentor and guiding a young 17 person. 18 FROM THE FLOOR: Yeah. And I think the 19 other important thing I often have noticed is that 20 often a mentor is the first adult that a student has 21 a relationship with that isn't from church, extended 22 family, or teacher. 23 So it's a -- it's an adjustment. It's a 24 real adjustment to find the courage to talk to an 25 adult that you don't really know or to ask a</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">213</p> <p>1 mentorships. So that speaks volumes as well. 2 I'll echo what Chair Gipson said. There's 3 no circumstance under which I would not renew your 4 school, or even consider it. I would agree with 5 Chair Burt (verbatim) relative to conditions. 6 I don't know how others feel. But I 7 would -- so because there's -- because, Ms. Nelsen, 8 you mentioned the things that we're trying out now, 9 planning that we're doing on the academic side, and 10 you mentioned -- want to get your name right -- 11 Katie. I just wanted to call you Ms. -- wanted to 12 be more formal -- because you mentioned, and 13 Kimberly and I talked about the different steps 14 you're taking on the financial side. So I 15 appreciate very much all these steps that are being 16 taken. 17 But it's for that reason. They're steps. 18 So I've become, in my years on the Commission, much 19 more amenable when there's certain red flags like 20 this to have a three-year contract with conditions 21 rather than on five. And I say that -- it's not, 22 like, a -- it's not like punishment or anything. I 23 say that coming from the private sector, where you 24 don't get five years. 25 I can't remember who it was on this side</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">214</p> <p>1 that said if -- like, if your books -- or -- Chair 2 Gipson, you were saying that relative to finances. 3 If you have ten years of lousy books, you're out of 4 there. No questions asked. We're bringing in 5 somebody new; right? 6 I know that turnaround models -- I don't 7 know if the feds are doing this still. But 8 turnaround models, they were typically three years. 9 Like, Ramirez Thomas is the -- up here, anyway, the 10 school that I point to the most. That was a 11 successful turnaround. But they got three years. 12 That's it. 13 I come from that school of thought. That 14 comes from having been on this Commission now for 15 three years and two weeks. Yeah, three years and 16 two weeks. Then it's going to be another four. I 17 almost didn't fill in the dot for myself. 18 That's where I'm coming from. Because I 19 want to see -- I want the fire. I want what 20 Commissioner Ingham spoke of. And I think that 21 sometimes, even though we might not have all the 22 data we want in three, sometimes I think telling 23 somebody three is the fire. It lights the fire. 24 So that's where I'm coming from on this. 25 And -- I meant three years and whatever -- three</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">216</p> <p>1 failed a class, you're on a -- a real strict thing. 2 And we're talking about putting conditions 3 on you, which is kind of the same thing. That's 4 like -- kind of like having to come to school after 5 class. I think your students have to hear that, 6 too, that it's unacceptable to not put the effort in 7 to get a passing grade and to get the concepts. 8 They have to -- just like anybody else. 9 They have to be -- they have to have that sense of 10 urgency also. 11 And I know they love your school. That's 12 really clear. So if they love your school, then 13 it's on them to put the effort in to -- and it's on 14 you to -- to encourage them to the degree that they 15 understand that urgency. 16 That's what I wanted to say. And I was 17 really impressed that they -- their kids come after 18 school if they have to. 19 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Brauer. 20 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: Thank you, Madam 21 Chair. Thank you, school. It's great to see you 22 again. And I just really appreciate the students. 23 They're not here -- they're not even here anymore, 24 really. But it's just awesome to have us close out 25 with your young people here speaking with us as</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">215</p> <p>1 years and 11 and a half months. Okay. Clearly, I'm 2 having a math challenge as well. 3 And -- no. Okay. There you go. 4 Well, Stewart said you had to have 90 -- 5 Tim and I laughed, because it's 90 percent not 6 proficient. 7 And I would agree with the others who said 8 when you use the State as a benchmark that we want 9 to reach? That's the bar? That's not okay; okay? 10 And while the district here is doing much 11 better, still not okay, because those bars in 12 New Mexico -- and I've been here long enough. I've 13 been here 34 years, so you can't say, "Carrillo, go 14 home." 15 No. I've been here long enough to know 16 that the bar is too low. On the charter school 17 side, we aspire to so much more. 18 So that's all I have for now. 19 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: It came to me that 20 one of the schools this morning said, concerning 21 tutoring, that if you failed a class, you didn't get 22 an option. You did do some summertime work. You 23 did do after-school work, and you didn't get an 24 option as to doing it or not, that they felt so 25 strongly that if you're -- if you're -- if you</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">217</p> <p>1 well. And the courage that that takes and the 2 leadership that that takes. So thank you very much. 3 I -- I am -- I'm not going to make any 4 motion or anything. But I just have a few thoughts. 5 I agree with a lot of the conversation 6 around we do need to do a little bit more of a 7 profound next step with you all. I do believe -- I 8 will be in favor of discussing conditions, 9 especially around financial health, especially 10 around academic performance, and making sure that 11 we're -- we're going to see, you know, just a good 12 plan for what you're going to do with your young 13 people. 14 I am -- Commissioner Carrillo, I think the 15 idea of a three-year term, I know we've done that 16 once since I've been here. We've done that a couple 17 of times since I've been part of the charter world. 18 A three-year term really isn't three years. It's 19 not really -- like what you just shared was three 20 years to get things moving forward. That's more 21 like a five-year charter plan. 22 Like, one -- a three-year term for a 23 charter is a very extreme -- like, "We need to see 24 change, like, immediately." 25 I feel like we need to see change</p>

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1 immediately from a lot of our schools.
 2 I'm not as inclined to be, like, in favor
 3 of shortening the five-year term, because five years
 4 are really -- it's basically three and a half years.
 5 I'm not a mathematician, either.
 6 But one year -- a three-year term --
 7 basically, this year is a wash, because they're on
 8 this application. So data we receive at the end of
 9 this year doesn't really impact. And they have to
 10 complete -- in a year three of a charter
 11 application, they're starting to do their renewal in
 12 June of that said third year. And so really that
 13 turns out to be not very long.
 14 And so it -- I think we hamstring schools,
 15 rightfully so, when we pick a three-year term. I
 16 think, if we really want to see progress of this
 17 school, I think our better approach is to have --
 18 and I'm not just talking to you, Commissioner
 19 Carrillo. The first part, I was talking to you.
 20 I would be much more in favor of a
 21 five-year term and we get super clear about what the
 22 school needs to demonstrate. I feel like I've heard
 23 a lot from different Commissioners on what we're
 24 thinking about.
 25 I think that's a better mechanism for us

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1 to really see change, and to do that in a way that's
 2 going to be appropriate for our -- for seeing this
 3 school continue to change.
 4 So that's where I'm at.
 5 Thank you for the work. I know that you
 6 all know that you need to see improvement. We want
 7 to work with you all to do that.
 8 I just think we just need a traditional
 9 amount of time to make that happen and to see true
 10 change for students.
 11 THE CHAIR: So I move that the Public
 12 Education Commission approve the renewal application
 13 from Monte del Sol School for a five-year term with
 14 the following conditions:
 15 **A. That the school demonstrates that it**
 16 **is improving its fiscal processes with a goal**
 17 **towards reducing audit findings and repeat audit**
 18 **findings.**
 19 **B. That the school's record of**
 20 **performance demonstrates improved student academic**
 21 **growth in math and English Learner progress,**
 22 **beginning with specific immediate action as outlined**
 23 **in the school's negotiated contract.**
 24 **And, C. That the school identify a robust**
 25 **strategic educational plan to improve student**

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1 **outcomes and appropriate staff professional**
 2 **development related to content instruction.**
 3 **With regard to Items B and C above, the**
 4 **school will provide an update to the PEC in June of**
 5 **each year until the performance is identified as**
 6 **satisfactory performance.**
 7 **The specific immediate actions needed**
 8 **above will be outlined in the school's negotiated**
 9 **performance framework.**
 10 **The first Annual Report will confirm**
 11 **completion of the items listed above, or, if the**
 12 **concern is not corrected, will identify the**
 13 **uncorrected, unsatisfactory performance on each item**
 14 **that will be subject to further PEC action.**
 15 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: Second.
 16 THE CHAIR: There's a motion by
 17 Commissioner Gipson and a second by
 18 Commissioner Brauer.
 19 Commissioner Carrillo.
 20 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: I would ask to --
 21 the whole friendly thing -- I don't even get that
 22 anymore. Friendly amendments, that's a phrase we
 23 always used. And now, like, two meetings ago, I
 24 said, "There's nothing in Robert's Rules about an
 25 amendment being friendly or not."

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1 And so I would just like to amend your
 2 motion to make that three years instead of five.
 3 THE CHAIR: I'm going to decline that.
 4 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Is there a second
 5 for my amendment request? Because then we could
 6 vote on my amendment request. Is there a second for
 7 a three-year?
 8 (No response.)
 9 THE CHAIR: No. There is no second.
 10 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Okay. It is what it
 11 is.
 12 THE CHAIR: Okay. Commissioner Burt?
 13 COMMISSIONER BURT: Yeah. I mean, I'm
 14 going to support this either way. I just wanted to
 15 bring up -- I'm just -- I'll support it no matter
 16 what.
 17 But I wonder about putting the June of
 18 each year as the reporting date to the PEC. I'm
 19 just concern- -- like, by June, we won't have the
 20 State assessment results. We won't -- I mean,
 21 there's a chance we -- I guess we could just have
 22 the internal assessments, if that's what the school
 23 chooses on to go through.
 24 But I'm more of a fan of keeping things a
 25 little bit more flexible on scheduling so that the

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1 PED and CSD can make that determination when it
 2 makes most sense and when all the data is available
 3 each year.
 4 So that's my only concern is that June of
 5 each year seems restrictive. And so just -- I'd
 6 like to know what other people think.
 7 THE CHAIR: I've been struggling with
 8 this, because I would really -- I mean, this year,
 9 they don't -- and this year, they're in the old
 10 contract.
 11 I would really prefer it to be just the
 12 Annual Report. And they get the unsatisfactory -- I
 13 struggle with that June reporting, because it's --
 14 you know, maybe this year, we get the strategic
 15 plan, because that, they can do. They don't need
 16 outcomes for that. It's, like, "Here's the plan
 17 that we have."
 18 But then going forward with everything
 19 else, it's the Annual Report. And that's where, you
 20 know, I -- I also -- not only is it the information
 21 part -- and I know that's important. But it's,
 22 like, "There's one more reporting I have to do,"
 23 when what are we doing with the Annual Reports,
 24 which is one of the reasons -- I'll just reflect
 25 back a little bit -- I don't support the three-year,

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1 because we've got a very robust performance
 2 framework and Annual Report that doesn't -- this is
 3 not a guarantee of five years.
 4 Every year, you're up for a mini-review,
 5 your performance framework and the Annual Report.
 6 And we have the opportunity, through the
 7 Intervention Ladder, to move in. So that's why I'm
 8 willing to work with the process we've created.
 9 Commissioner Brauer -- Beck -- sorry. It
 10 was a "B" word.
 11 SECRETARY BECK: Close enough. We're both
 12 B's.
 13 In the motion, I would approve June for C,
 14 not B. But for C, I'd like to hear them come in
 15 June and talk about their strategy, what they've
 16 done, what their professional development is, what
 17 their tutoring is. That -- I don't need to see the
 18 B part, which is the Record of Performance. That
 19 comes in the Annual Report. You know, that'll be
 20 there. We don't need that.
 21 But C, I would like to really know, you
 22 know, how that's developed, because, you know, if
 23 you do that right, the outcomes will come. They
 24 will come. And I'd like to see that part. Not B.
 25 Just C.

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1 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: I don't like, in B,
 2 the word just "performance improvement," because
 3 that's so incredibly vague. And I'm remembering a
 4 time, before probably any of you were at Monte, when
 5 they were considering -- when we were considering
 6 renewal, and at the district.
 7 And somebody came to us. And they were --
 8 you know, they were boasting how much -- oh, it was
 9 Mr. Jessen? -- yeah -- where they were boasting
 10 about their improvement in a certain area.
 11 And they were saying, "Well, we improved
 12 by 25 percent in this area." We'll just say
 13 20 percent for the sake of numbers.
 14 If you have something that's 10 percent
 15 and it goes to 12, yeah, of the 10, that's
 16 20 percent. And it's, like, "Come on, man. We can
 17 all do math up here; okay?"
 18 Even though it wasn't a requirement to be
 19 on the school board, we can do the math. You
 20 improved by 2 percent, you know.
 21 But it's just the way he kind of fudged
 22 numbers. I don't like the word just "performance
 23 improvement." I'd like to quantify it in some way.
 24 That's in keeping with my desire that there be a
 25 fire lit, something that has to happen. Immediate

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1 math interventions and interventions in other areas
 2 where you see challenges.
 3 That's not for me. Are you waving hi to
 4 me, Missy? I know. Someone's hand is up.
 5 So I don't know about your thoughts about
 6 that, Chair Gipson, about quantifying that in some
 7 way.
 8 THE CHAIR: I want to let Commissioner
 9 Burt, because her hand has been up. Commissioner
 10 Burt.
 11 COMMISSIONER BURT: Thanks. Yeah. I
 12 mean, I'm just going to piggyback off of Chair
 13 Gipson. We did set up the performance framework and
 14 Annual Reports and the rule to support additional
 15 oversight. Like, we have a process in place if we
 16 use it.
 17 So we sent out a letter of Unsatisfactory
 18 Performance already to the school, based off the
 19 last Annual Report. We have very clear guidance in
 20 our rule, next steps to come forward.
 21 I do not think -- I will not support
 22 putting a specific thing into the -- into the
 23 condition, other than that they need to have not
 24 Unsatisfactory Performance. They need to have
 25 Satisfactory Performance on our performance

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1 framework.

2 There are business rules that explain what
3 Satisfactory Academic Performance is in the Annual
4 Report. There are plenty of documentation,
5 processes, procedures of what Satisfactory Academic
6 Performance looks like, year over year, for every
7 single school.

8 So I'm not worried about that. I don't
9 want to come up with some arbitrary numbers right
10 now. That's what the negotiations are for, for the
11 contract. But I still -- once again, I just think
12 we do have something in place that gives specifics
13 for how additional oversight occurs. I feel like we
14 should follow that.

15 And, actually, I know -- I would
16 actually -- I feel like I was more open to being
17 like, oh, yeah, I'll support the June addition. But
18 now, the more I thought about it, I don't want to
19 do -- I really don't want to do it. It is just --
20 it's just extra. And for what?

21 I mean, I support the idea behind it of,
22 yeah, we need -- actually, I would say, if I'm
23 looking at the motion -- what I heard Commissioner
24 Beck say was it wasn't B, which B is actually due
25 before March, before the contract negotiation. So

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1 really understand it. I would need a lot of help
2 from the Deputy Director on that to be confident
3 that I could put a number in here that would be a
4 benchmark for the school to meet.

5 And that's why we've got the performance
6 framework. We've set that all in there. And it is
7 set up as to what our guidelines are for what is
8 Satisfactory Performance, Unsatisfactory
9 Performance, and it's reported to us.

10 The Commission has an opportunity to
11 review all the data from the Annual Report, and to
12 provide that input that goes in the letter to the
13 schools on whether they've made Satisfactory
14 Performance or they've got identified Unsatisfactory
15 Performance.

16 And if it's not met by the next Annual
17 Report, then we have the opportunity to put them on
18 the Intervention Ladder.

19 And that process, it -- I don't want to go
20 outside that process, because we've worked hard to
21 try to get that process going.

22 So anything that would stray from that, I
23 hesitate, because I want to continue with my
24 confidence in the work that we've done.

25 Commissioner Carrillo.

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1 that C, honestly, to me, should also be, probably,
2 by the contract negotiation, and it should be in the
3 contract what that looks like.

4 But I'd be open, if that's outside of the
5 contract, and it's just a condition as an amendment
6 to the -- or, you know, just an attachment to the
7 contract. Then C could be done by June -- that's
8 fine -- instead of March.

9 But then I would delete all of the last
10 paragraph that says that happens -- that needs to
11 happen every year. I don't think that's
12 appropriate.

13 So I'm open to, like, C being said, that
14 that needs to happen by the June PEC meeting. B, it
15 already says it'll happen by the contract.

16 So then after that, our Annual Reports and
17 continuous oversight and additional oversight, based
18 on the conditions, will fall into place. And we
19 have a very thought-out, well-written rule that
20 supports what that process looks like.

21 THE CHAIR: So, yeah, I think -- I think
22 I've made myself clear. I could not, at this moment
23 in time, pick an arbitrary number to say, "Oh, well,
24 I want to see student improvement of 10 percent,"
25 you know. I would need to dig into that data and

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1 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: I'm fine with that.
2 The challenge I have sometimes with the Intervention
3 Ladder -- and I hear what you're saying,
4 Commissioner Beck -- is it seems like every time we
5 want to do something it takes 30, 60, 90 days, and
6 all of a sudden it's like, holy smokes, and a
7 semester has passed. That's the challenge I have
8 sometimes.

9 I understand we've set this system up,
10 that we need to use it. We need to follow the
11 rules. I just get very impatient at the snail's
12 pace at which things move.

13 THE CHAIR: So let me take a second and
14 review this.

15 SECRETARY BECK: While you're doing that,
16 just a point of reference. Going from 10 percent to
17 12 percent is actually a 20 percent increase.

18 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: That's what I said.

19 THE CHAIR: So, Commissioner Burt, I need
20 your help. So I thought I heard that we were saying
21 that we take out B., because it's in the annual
22 report; correct?

23 COMMISSIONER BURT: No. I think -- so I
24 think every -- for my ideal, it would be -- so I
25 would -- I do think having it as a condition, having

<p style="text-align: right;">230</p> <p>1 it be added as a condition into the Annual Report, 2 you know, an attachment to the contract, I think is 3 important.</p> <p>4 I think the part that needs to be removed, 5 basically, is the paragraph underneath C. But then 6 I also think that C needs to be a part of -- I mean, 7 it needs -- either -- if we're articulating in the 8 motion that it's a part of the negotiated contract, 9 then we need to do that for -- I mean, it's A, B, 10 and C is all of it, because the condition is part of 11 the negotiated contract.</p> <p>12 So I don't know exactly how to do that. 13 But, yeah, that their plans -- they're going to 14 create plans. C is the only one that's a plan. The 15 rest are more outcome-based. And those are the 16 Annual Report things.</p> <p>17 So C, I don't know if we need to say that 18 the C -- that the plan needs to be presented at 19 contract negotiations, or if that's one where you 20 want to create a different timeline for that one to 21 be presented outside of the contract negotiations 22 into the PEC in some other different way.</p> <p>23 THE CHAIR: Well -- and, honestly, I would 24 think that C, the March deadline, is -- is a better 25 deadline, because that's also budget season. So</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">232</p> <p>1 Commission approve the renewal application for 2 Monte Del Sol School for a five-year term with the 3 following conditions, as negotiated in the school's 4 contract.</p> <p>5 A. That the school demonstrates that it 6 is improving its fiscal processes with a goal 7 towards reducing audit findings and repeat audit 8 findings.</p> <p>9 B. That the school's Record of 10 Performance demonstrates improved student academic 11 growth in math and English Learner progress.</p> <p>12 And, C. That the school identify a robust 13 strategic educational plan to improve student 14 outcomes and appropriate staff professional 15 development related to content instruction.</p> <p>16 The specific immediate actions needed 17 above will be outlined in the school's negotiated 18 performance framework.</p> <p>19 The first Annual Report will confirm 20 completion of the items listed above, or, if the 21 concern is not corrected, will identify the 22 uncorrected, unsatisfactory performance on each item 23 that will be subject to further PEC action.</p> <p>24 SECRETARY BECK: Second.</p> <p>25 THE CHAIR: There's a motion by</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">231</p> <p>1 you'd have to have that in your budget plan, as 2 opposed to June, where budgets's already created. 3 So -- you know.</p> <p>4 COMMISSIONER BURT: Yeah. That's what I 5 would say. Remove that last paragraph. And then -- 6 if you want to add back into it, Julia, like, what 7 you had put about that B was part of the contract -- 8 if you want to put that into C instead, that would 9 probably make most sense, unless it's implied.</p> <p>10 It already says, "as outlined in the 11 school's negotiated contract."</p> <p>12 So, yeah, I think it's -- that you need to 13 remove that last paragraph is the only thing.</p> <p>14 THE CHAIR: About the June there.</p> <p>15 COMMISSIONER BURT: Or, sorry. The 16 paragraph before the long one.</p> <p>17 THE CHAIR: Oh, got you. Yeah. Yeah. 18 Okay.</p> <p>19 Yeah. If you scroll down, there's an 20 amended motion.</p> <p>21 Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. So the amended 22 motion, I think, fixes it. Yeah. Okay.</p> <p>23 So I will -- so I'm now going to do an 24 amended motion.</p> <p>25 I move that the Public Education</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">233</p> <p>1 Commissioner Gipson, a second by Commissioner 2 Carrillo -- Beck. Sorry.</p> <p>3 SECRETARY BECK: That's close. 4 Commissioner Burt.</p> <p>5 COMMISSIONER BURT: Yes. 6 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Manis. 7 COMMISSIONER MANIS: Yes. 8 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Brauer. 9 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: Yes. 10 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Ingham. 11 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: Yes. 12 SECRETARY BECK: Vice Chair Carrillo. 13 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Yes. 14 SECRETARY BECK: Chair Gipson. 15 THE CHAIR: Yes. 16 SECRETARY BECK: Secretary Beck, yes. 17 There is seven votes for, zero votes 18 against. The motion passes. Congratulations. 19 (Applause.) 20 (A discussion was held off the record.) 21 THE CHAIR: We are in recess till tomorrow 22 at 8:00. 23 (Proceedings in recess at 4:21 p.m.) 24 25</p>

1 BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION
2 STATE OF NEW MEXICO

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