



COLORADO
Department of Education

Colorado State Board of Education

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
BEFORE THE
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION COMMISSION
DENVER, COLORADO
February 12, 2014, Part 6

BE IT REMEMBERED THAT on February 12, 2014,
the above-entitled meeting was conducted at the Colorado
Department of Education, before the following Board
Members:

Paul Lundeen (R), Chairman
Marcia Neal (R), Vice Chairman
Elaine Gantz Berman (D)
Jane Goff (D)
Pam Mazanec (R)
Debora Scheffel (R)
Angelika Schroeder (D)



1 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Next item on the agenda
2 is Board member reports. Who would like to go first?
3 Does anyone have anything to report? I think Dr.
4 Scheffel had an interesting trip that involved a landing
5 on something floating in the middle of the ocean perhaps?

6 MS. SCHEFFEL: I was just going to say I had
7 an opportunity to go to Educators to Sea with the Navy,
8 and it was --

9 MS. NEAL: Are you on, your mic?

10 MS. SCHEFFEL: I think I am.

11 MS. NEAL: Pull your mic down please.

12 MS. SCHEFFEL: -- Educators to Sea with the
13 Navy, and it was a day of debriefing and then the flew us
14 out to an aircraft carrier --

15 MS. NEAL: You always do such --

16 MS. SCHEFFEL: -- 16 of us off the coast of
17 California. And we were able to observe STEM jobs as
18 they were -- as the ship was functioning, and then came
19 back and debriefed for another day. But making the point
20 of high school graduation requirements and readiness for
21 positions in the military and STEM and how it relates to
22 the guidelines that we have and other states have. So it
23 was very interesting. I really appreciated the
24 opportunity and it was a great examples of, you know,
25 what the workforce needs and how our education system



1 supports that.

2 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: And I've got a follow-up
3 question. So I want to know what it's like landing on an
4 aircraft carrier.

5 MS. SCHEFFEL: So it was a turboprop plane
6 and it's -- you're backwards and there's no light. You
7 can't see out the window. And so they go from 0 to 120
8 miles an hour in like two seconds, so it kind of leaves
9 your soul back. And it's an arrested landing and a
10 catapult launch, so it's very interesting, just
11 physically. It's kind of like a major -- major carnival
12 ride.

13 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Yeah. That's an E ticket
14 ride, as they say.

15 MS. SCHEFFEL: Yeah. Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Other reports? Pam.

17 MS. MAZANEC: My only report is both Paul
18 and I went to a School Choice event, a kickoff for School
19 Choice Week at the Thomas MacLaren Charter School in
20 Colorado Springs. What an amazing school that is. A
21 classical liberal arts school. All the kids do
22 orchestra. All 6 -- what is it, 6 through 8, or, I mean,
23 8 through 12?

24 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Yep, and all the kids do
25 all the classes.



1 MS. MAZANEC: Yeah. Latin -- I mean, it's
2 amazing. That orchestra was unbelievable. But that was
3 really fun. It was part of the kickoff for School Choice
4 Week and it was filmed -- I think it was broadcast in
5 Houston as well. So that was really fun.

6 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Yeah. All the important
7 people in Colorado Springs, all the celebrities were in
8 Houston.

9 MS. MAZANEC: Yeah. Ted Cruz and Sheila
10 Jackson Lee were in Houston.

11 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Yeah. They had quite the
12 lineup.

13 Other reports. Vice Chair?

14 MS. NEAL: Well, while they were doing that
15 I was in Washington, D.C., the Center of, I don't know
16 just what. I'm going --

17 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: And really cold
18 weather.

19 MS. NEAL: -- and it was cold, really,
20 really cold. I went there to participate in a study
21 session on rural schools, and found it very interesting.
22 We tend to forget how different we are, in one state --
23 you know, the different states. There was a young woman
24 from Arkansas on our panel, and she was talking about,
25 "Well, we just force them to consolidate." And I was --



1 you'd get hung in Colorado. And then she said they close
2 every district that has less than five -- they determined
3 that 500 students was the ultimate, and if you get less
4 than 500 students they just close them up.

5 So it was a very interesting -- other than
6 that, you know, pretty much the same things. How do
7 rural schools attract quality and keep quality teachers?
8 I know in Mesa County we're always accused of stealing
9 the teachers that come to teach at De Beque or Mesa or
10 somewhere, and then we -- you know, because it's very
11 hard for them to attract quality teachers. We just -- we
12 spent most of our time kind of identifying what we wanted
13 to talk about, and whether we wanted to study it -- as we
14 have mentioned many times, the issue of technology is --
15 is hard for many of the rural schools, and how do we do a
16 better job of that.

17 It was a very interesting session and I'm
18 going back in March to find out all the answers. I wrote
19 a brief report. Leanne is fixing it up for me and
20 deciding how we'll distribute it. But when we do, be
21 sure the Board Members get a copy of it too.

22 Not Leanne. I'm sorry. Janelle. I'm
23 going, well, one of those. She's looking at me. No,
24 Janelle is -- I had a kind of a prepared press release
25 that they sent, which she fixed up, and then I added what



1 my comments on it, and we'll make sure you all get a copy
2 of it. It was an interesting experience.

3 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Elaine?

4 MS. BERMAN: So, Marcia, you are going to
5 D.C. in March?

6 MS. NEAL: Just for the study session. I'm
7 not going for the --

8 MS. BERMAN: Not for the legislative --

9 MS. NEAL: -- legislative --

10 MS. BERMAN: -- just for the --

11 MS. NEAL: -- just, yeah.

12 MS. BERMAN: -- okay. Well, I also -- I
13 think four of us were back -- the majority of the Board
14 was back at the NASB meeting, each for different reasons.
15 Rural, and I was -- I'm on the Government Affairs
16 Committee. But most important, everybody, is that it was
17 at this meeting that our very own Jane Goff became
18 president of NASB and assumed her duties. So hear, hear.

19 (Applause)

20 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Congratulations.

21 MS. BERMAN: So that's a big deal, like it's
22 national and represents state boards from all over the
23 country.

24 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: You're keeping it
25 clean, saying that that's a big deal.



1 MS. BERMAN: So congratulations, Jane.

2 MS. GOFF: Thank you very much.

3 MS. BERMAN: It's going to be a great year,
4 great year.

5 And we had a great GAC meeting. We had
6 really good speakers on the eRate, on quality, early
7 childhood education. If people have looked at the agenda
8 from March you'll see that Secretary Arne Duncan is going
9 to be the luncheon speaker. So if you all have some
10 input or words you would like -- people that are going --

11 MS. NEAL: Arne Duncan wouldn't want to hear
12 my words.

13 MS. BERMAN: You never know. He's a pretty
14 open guy. He's pretty open. But anyway, so I just
15 wanted to make sure we highlighted Jane.

16 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Okay. Angelika.

17 MS. SCHROEDER: I'll try to be really quick
18 since I changed my mind. I'm on the study group for
19 deeper learning, and at this particular session we spent
20 part of our time learning about the brain and what really
21 makes you learn. When do you really learn? And the aha
22 for almost all of us was we think that as we're studying,
23 when we underline, when we take a lot of notes and re-
24 read them, when we read our materials, that that's how we
25 learn more. And the reality is that it's when we're



1 asked to retrieve what we've learned, that's the point at
2 which we have the deeper learning, which suggests that
3 assessments, done right, are critical to the deeper
4 learning that we want for kids. And so the job before us
5 is not to do away with testing but it's to figure out how
6 do we, in collaboration with the classroom teacher, use
7 assessments in a way that it creates that deeper learning
8 that we are trying to create.

9 This is why one of our criteria was
10 performance assessments, it's because we wanted kids to
11 be able to demonstrate and to retrieve what they had been
12 learning in a real meaningful way. It was a really
13 fantastic discussion.

14 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: That's great.

15 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Excellent.

16 So next item on the agenda is public
17 comment, but the first name on the list is apparently
18 back out in the foyer. So I will give the ground rules
19 while Bizy grabs the list so I can call the name of the
20 first person.

21 We are very glad you're here. We enjoy the
22 public comment section of our Board meetings. Ground
23 rules are three minutes. Because we have a large number
24 of individuals signed up today, and because this Board
25 has a commitment with the House Education Committee and



1 the Senate Education Committee coming up right after this
2 meeting, I'm going to move very quickly and I'm going to
3 hold very firm to the three-minute limit. I've got a
4 little handy-dandy clock here. It's going to chime at
5 you. You may finish your thought but that's all you may
6 finish when you hear the chime.

7 Jessica Cuthbertson. Please state your name
8 and if you represent an organization, what the
9 organization is, before you begin. Thank you.

10 MS. CUTHBERTSON: Sure.

11 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Welcome, Jessica.

12 MS. CUTHBERTSON: Thanks. Good afternoon,
13 Members of the Board. My name is Jessica Cuthbertson and
14 I am proud to call myself a seventh-grade English
15 language arts teacher from Aurora Public Schools, and a
16 teacher leader that is working with Colorado Education
17 Association and the Center for Teaching Quality.

18 I have been teaching adolescent literacy for
19 over ten years, and I've begun to think about my career
20 in two segments -- teaching and learning before the new
21 Colorado Academic Standards and Common Core state
22 standards and teaching and learning after the new
23 standards. And today I'd like to share a few before-and-
24 after examples with you, and as I do so I hope you'll ask
25 yourself the question, in which reality, before or after,



1 would I want my own child to be?

2 So learning lesson design before the new
3 standards. Before the new standards, I taught lessons
4 that aimed to meet students' needs without a clear
5 understanding of what was actually expected in any given
6 grade level. Lesson design after the new standards, I
7 still teach lessons based on individual student needs but
8 I now have a clear understanding of what seventh-graders
9 are supposed to know and be able to do and how this
10 differs from sixth-graders and eighth-graders.

11 Assessment design before the Core and
12 Colorado Academic Standards. I used to assign on-demand
13 writing texts that were decontextualized prompts to give
14 my students practice opportunities for things like CSAP
15 and TCAP. These prompts sounded something like "describe
16 the perfect friend" or "talk about a time you reached a
17 personal goal." These prompts rarely gave me new
18 information about my writers but they did tell me if my
19 students liked or hated the prompt.

20 Assessment design after the new standards.
21 Now I give my students contextualized prompts and
22 projects that require reading, research, and critical
23 thinking. For example, to launch this quarter's unit,
24 the task we asked students to do was to explain and
25 analyze Americans' First Amendment rights and how this



1 right differs around the world. Before they wrote their
2 response they were given the opportunity to read a
3 primary source, an audio clip, an infographic, and an
4 article on the subject. Then they were given time to
5 craft their response. In contrast, this assessment task
6 gave me lots of information about what my readers and
7 writers could do. It told me if they could read to
8 determine importance in a text, if they could compare
9 information across sources and synthesize that
10 information, and if they could think critically about a
11 meaningful topic, the First Amendment, which I am
12 exercising here today.

13 Learning before the standards. Before these
14 standards, my literacy instruction existed in a vacuum.
15 I have little time or opportunity to collaborate across
16 grade levels of content areas. Since the new standards
17 this looks very different. I now have an entry point
18 with my colleagues in other disciplines. They allow me
19 to -- the standards allow me to collaborate across
20 school, district, and even state boundaries. Not only
21 can I support my students in ELA class every day but I
22 can also teach them to read like a scientist or write
23 like a historian with my colleagues.

24 So I leave it to you to decide -- which
25 classroom would better prepare your child for life after



1 high school?

2 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you, Jessica.
3 Stephanie Rossi. Perfect timing. You should be a
4 broadcaster.

5 MS. ROSSI: Good afternoon to Board members.
6 My name is Stephanie Rossi. I am a social studies
7 teacher in Jefferson County. I've taught -- this is my
8 33rd year teaching. I still believe I have the best job
9 in the world.

10 I find it quite fortuitous that I'm here
11 today to have a conversation with all of you regarding
12 Senate Bill 14-136. After reading through the bill I was
13 reminded of how my school year begins every year when
14 sophomores enter my AP U.S. history class. They carry
15 those college-level textbooks that many think will be
16 better doorstops than actual textbooks. Their eyes are
17 fixed and their fears palpable as they silently wonder
18 "How can I ever read this book? How am I ever going to
19 read this book?"

20 Just last week I had three different
21 conversations with students who wanted to opt out of my
22 AP U.S. history course. The lamenting typically begins
23 with comments like, "The work is too hard." "The reading
24 is too hard to understand." Every year I have a few
25 students who would rather exit a challenging learning



1 situation rather than learning how to persevere and adopt
2 a self-defeatist attitude as the path they choose. I
3 want them to believe they can do the job and it's my job
4 to get them there, and thus my job begins.

5 Day one, I welcome students into an AP U.S.
6 history course and acknowledge the courage it took for
7 them to choose a challenging task. You accepted the
8 challenge of taking an AP course and I will help you
9 develop the skills to success. They will be reading a
10 college-level textbook for the first time and I will be
11 teaching them how to access material and comprehend it.
12 I have the awesome task of challenging their assumptions
13 about their own inadequacies and subsequently teaching
14 them how to endure, to persevere, and to ask more
15 questions, and to learn how to attack a difficult course,
16 a difficult book, and understand it. Teaching them to
17 recognize that struggling to understand in a new learning
18 is necessary and, in fact, a good thing to have happen.

19 I want them to understand struggling is a
20 good part of learning. Students are engaging their
21 brain. Their synapses are firing in different ways. I
22 don't want them to quit. I don't want them to transfer
23 out. I don't want them to fail. And you know what?
24 Those three kids stayed in my class.

25 The Common Core literacy standards provide a



1 vehicle that I can ground my teaching philosophy and best
2 practices in. I often wonder if my students will be
3 prepared to go into the workforce or college with the
4 skills necessary to comprehend complex texts. Will they
5 be armed with the skill set necessary to read and
6 comprehend independently of a teacher, and, furthermore,
7 be able to analyze, critically assess, and think about
8 the material they will be reading?

9 Standard objectives have always guided my
10 instruction. My responsibility is to first assess their
11 content knowledge and skill proficiency. My teaching is
12 shaped around who they are, what they can do, and where
13 they must end up. I want to guide them to not only
14 academic success but also help them develop an intrinsic
15 voice that says even when my learning gets touch, I have
16 strategies I can use to figure them out, and the Common
17 Core helps me and the students get there.

18 You might think, of course, that it's
19 supposed to go on in an AP class, but that happens in all
20 my classes. I encourage all students to take the AP
21 class because all students will benefit, and those who
22 don't choose to take an AP class, they endure the same
23 encouraging, rigorous conversation. I use the Common
24 Core literacy standards to guide my instruction in all of
25 my classes because all students benefit from learning how



1 to construct a well-thought-out argument, learning how to
2 defend a historical position, and apply their learning to
3 current events. Constructing an essay, begin with an
4 introduction, organize complex ideas and concepts,
5 develop a position, use precise language, and end an
6 essay with a provocative conclusion.

7 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: And that's a good end.
8 Thank you.

9 MS. ROSSI: Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: We're going to move Carey
11 over here, a seat or two, so people can see the
12 timeframe. Thank you very much.

13 Angela Pera -- and typically I let people go
14 a little bit but we have so many people today I just have
15 to -- I had to cut you off. I'm sorry.

16 MS. PERA: Good afternoon. My name is
17 Angela Pera and I'm a 20-year veteran English teacher who
18 has also worked as an instructional coach, a department
19 manager, an instructional leader, a district content
20 specialist, a college instructor, and I'm here today to
21 advocate for the national Common Core standards.

22 When I left my seniors today they were
23 continuing their analysis of multiple texts which address
24 similar themes, in order to compare their approaches each
25 author or artist takes, and they can explain that



1 themselves too. They've read the myth of Prometheus,
2 *Frankenstein*, a college textbook excerpt defining the
3 elements of romantic literature, Byron's *Prometheus*, and
4 have viewed Rubens' *Prometheus Bound*. As a matter of
5 fact, they will be listening to Bach's *Symphony No. 3* in
6 which the composer tells the story of Prometheus.
7 They've been reading these texts to evaluate how each
8 version interprets the Prometheus myth and why the
9 authors would use them. They will write an argument in
10 which their claim will be developed, using appropriate
11 evidence and elaboration, and they do this in discussion
12 as well. This is not an atypical day in my classroom.
13 This is a typical day.

14 Last week, those same students conducted a
15 Socratic discussion on the recurring patterns or motifs
16 they have begun to notice while reading *Frankenstein*, and
17 making predictions about how Shelley uses these devices
18 to communicate meaning. They pose questions of one
19 another to clarify and deepen their understanding and
20 make connections to prior texts we've read in class, as
21 well as to their own lives. They discussed, without my
22 intervention or cuing, for 95 minutes. I've yet to tell
23 them what they must think, nor were the texts stipulated
24 by the Common Core.

25 The standards have been said to devalue



1 literature, that the reading of informational text
2 requires no critical thinking, as they merely state
3 exactly what the authors mean, and I beg to differ. In
4 my classroom I have a wide variety of students. Some are
5 strong readers and writers, scoring above college
6 readiness level on the ACT. Others are at or below this
7 score. Some have secure, supportive homes where they are
8 nurtured and encouraged to do their best. Others are
9 homeless or on the free-and-reduced programs. Some of
10 IEPs or ILPs, others have ALPs. Some plan to go to
11 community or trade schools, others to four-year colleges,
12 and a few have signed up for the military. They all are
13 challenged to achieve a high degree of rigor in my class.
14 My classroom is not watered down.

15 The standards are not watered down. It does
16 not set me or my department or my school to be
17 politically correct. We're not told which texts to
18 choose and to teach. We are able to choose based on the
19 rigor that's necessary to move all students in our
20 classroom. These standards challenge students to think
21 and write at a critical level. Maybe that's the real
22 concern. My students are not test subjects to be
23 incubated in my Colorado classroom. My students are not
24 science projects. My students are not test subjects.
25 They are deserving of a future and a good education.



1 Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you, Angela.
3 Isabella Woyteck (ph). No? Okay. Bob Wood, it looks
4 like. Bob Wood. No? Shelby Edwards. I guess you get
5 nine minutes then. No, I'm kidding.

6 MS. EDWARDS: Good afternoon, Chair and
7 members of the State Board of Education. My name is
8 Shelby Edwards. I'm a senior education fellow at the
9 Colorado Children's Campaign. Thank you for allowing me
10 the time today to urge your continued support of the
11 Colorado Academic Standards as well as setting high
12 expectations for Colorado students.

13 Although I believe you are all familiar with
14 the Children's Campaign, just a brief background. We are
15 a statewide nonprofit, nonpartisan research and advocacy
16 organization which, for the past 28 years, we have been
17 working to improve the well-being of Colorado children
18 across the state. We are an independent organization
19 that relies on data and research to guide our efforts.
20 We also have one guiding question, which is what is best
21 for kids?

22 So we often say, at the Children's Campaign,
23 what gets measured, gets changed. It is thorough,
24 thoughtful, reliable, and consistent data that we are
25 able to address the most pressing needs for children



1 across our state. Looking at our statewide data on
2 achievement there are some things that need to change. A
3 third of Colorado fourth-graders were not reading at
4 grade level in 2013. Nearly 1 in 4 Colorado high school
5 students do not graduate on time. Less than a quarter of
6 Colorado students met the 2011 ACT college readiness
7 standards in all four core subjects.

8 Too many of our kids are not getting the
9 quality education that they deserve. The Children's
10 Campaign supports the newly implemented Colorado Academic
11 Standards because they are designed to provide our
12 students with those 21st century learning skills --
13 problem-solving, creative thinking, real-world
14 application skills that are needed for success.

15 The new standards provide students,
16 teachers, and parents a clear understanding of what
17 students are expected to learn at every grade level.
18 This serves as a roadmap for a quality education, and we
19 really believe that this will yield greater outcomes for
20 kids because the standards provide consistent, high-
21 quality expectations for all students, regardless of
22 where in Colorado that they live. Through these
23 consistent standards and expectations we are able to
24 better identify struggling students, better provide them
25 with the interventions and the supports that they need to



1 ensure their success.

2 We are constantly making strides to improve
3 education and we appreciate the support of the State
4 Board of Education. We know, however, that there is more
5 to be done and we support this implementation and ask for
6 your continued support as well. Colorado has been
7 developing these higher standards since 2008, in a
8 collaborative effort, and every school across the state
9 has been implementing these standards this school year.
10 So it's not time to turn around. It's time to continue
11 our efforts in improving education in Colorado. Thank
12 you.

13 Not nearly nine minutes.

14 MS. NEAL: You get a prize.

15 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: You have eight seconds to
16 go. Terry Whitney.

17 MR. WHITNEY: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair,
18 Members of the Board. I just wanted to take a moment to
19 make sure that you are aware that yesterday your
20 communications folks issued a press release that had to
21 do with the 10th Annual AP Report to the Nation. We have
22 met with the Commissioner's staff and gone over this
23 report, as well as the state supplement, but if any of
24 you would like to personally have that information I'd be
25 happy to give it to you.



1 I do want to just share a couple of metrics
2 within the report that I think are very important. In
3 May 2013, Colorado public and private high school
4 students took a total of 40,285 AP exams that resulted in
5 scores of 3, 4, or 5. Based on students' opportunity to
6 earn at least a three -- based on students' opportunity
7 to earn at least three college credits for each AP exam
8 score of 3 or higher, this represents an estimated
9 120,855 college credits. At an average rate of \$303.20
10 per credit hour the total potential cost savings for the
11 state students and families was \$36,643,236. So I just
12 wanted to share that information with you in terms of the
13 value that AP has for students and families in the state.
14 Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you, Terry.
16 Maureen Welsh. No Maureen Welsh? Maureen Welsh, going
17 once, twice. Abby -- it looks like we've got a schedule
18 change here -- Ilana Spielberg (ph) wants to go first?

19 MS. SPIEGEL: Spiegel.

20 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Spiegel. I'm sorry.
21 Ilana.

22 MS. SPIEGEL: Members of the State Board,
23 Chair Lundeen, and Commissioner Hammond, thank you for
24 the opportunity to comment on your assessment plan and
25 the PARCC test. My name is Ilana Spiegel. I'm the



1 parent of four children in the Cherry Creek School
2 District -- one in high school, one in middle school, a
3 fifth-grader, and a first-grader. I'm here this
4 afternoon as a founding member of SPEAK for Cherry Creek,
5 a grassroots group of supportive parents, educators, and
6 kids that is growing across the state. I have been
7 meeting regularly with Democrats and Republicans across
8 the street at the Capitol about my concerns regarding
9 PARCC and high-stakes standardized tests. I have been
10 told, for what it's worth, that we are not the crazies
11 and that I should let you know that I am a Democrat.

12 Parents, educators, and kids, not just in
13 Cherry Creek, are tired of the over-the-top approach to
14 assessment in Colorado. To provide context for my
15 comments, and those that follow, in my other life I have
16 been an educator and an education writer. I came to
17 education via an economics major at Wellesley College in
18 Massachusetts. I have a master's in education from
19 Teachers College at Columbia University. I have taught
20 public and private school in both New York City and the
21 suburbs. I helped develop some of the first standards in
22 New York State.

23 For the 15 years I worked as a staff
24 developer at the Public Education and Business Coalition
25 here in Denver, my work for the PEBC provided me with



1 opportunities to work in urban, suburban, and rural
2 districts in Colorado and around the country. For the
3 past year and a half I have written for *Ed News Parent*
4 and Heinemann educational publishing about education and
5 education reform.

6 I share my resume with you today to let you
7 know that I am not just a parent voicing a fear or a
8 concern. I have a background in economics and
9 statistics. I have taught -- I have consulted around the
10 country, and I have watched firsthand what is happening
11 in the name of education reform, not just in other parts
12 of the country but in districts around our state.

13 I somewhat reluctantly took on this role of
14 educational activist because of the groundswell of
15 concern surrounding PARCC and high-stakes standardized
16 tests. I appreciate the comments many of you made this
17 morning regarding the need to get a handle on the
18 pushback around assessment. I would respectfully
19 disagree, however, that all people need is more
20 communication. We are here today because we are informed
21 and we are concerned for the education not just of our
22 children but all public school children in Colorado.

23 You may or may not have seen the Colorado
24 Superintendent's Letter that was delivered to the Capitol
25 yesterday, expressing a statewide dissatisfaction with



1 the use of the negative factor in inadequate school
2 funding. PARCC and high-stakes standardized tests are
3 one-size-fits-all, unfunded mandates that contribute to
4 the size of the negative factor.

5 In addition, contrary to the published
6 assessment calendars and reports, like the one
7 circulating from Teach Plus that look only at minutes
8 spent testing, I would argue that the culture in our
9 schools is moved away from teaching and learning,
10 creating and innovation, to testing, data, and
11 punishment.

12 We are here today as adults who are -- we
13 are not here today as adults who are uncomfortable with
14 change. We are here to express our grave concerns with
15 the changes that have been legislated and are going
16 forward --

17 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: And thank you.

18 MS. SPIEGEL: Thank you. And I'll leave the
19 letter in case you want to see it.

20 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you very much.

21 (Applause)

22 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Abby and -- thank you --
23 Abby and Ethan Goldsmith. Now you're Abby and Ethan
24 together?

25 MS. GOLDSMITH: I'm solo today.



1 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Okay.

2 MS. GOLDSMITH: So Ethan is at school, in
3 class right now.

4 Thank you, members of the Board, for having
5 me here today. Hello. My name is Abby Goldsmith. I
6 live in Greenwood Village and I'm here as a part of the
7 grassroots group, SPEAK for Cherry Creek. I'm a business
8 owner and I currently serve on our district's Special
9 Education Advisory Committee. I have three boys -- one
10 is in ninth grade, one is in seventh, and the other is in
11 fourth. Two of my boys have IEPs and one is on a 504.

12 As a mom, my position on the adoption of the
13 PARCC test for language arts and math and the addition of
14 required testing in science and social studies is a
15 continuation of ineffective education reforms that hurt
16 children with disabilities. Please help me understand
17 how raising this bar higher to establish a new baseline
18 is going to help my children who already struggle in
19 school. Help me understand so that I can help them
20 believe that they can succeed.

21 I would like you to hear firsthand how the
22 over-the-top approach to assessment feels as a student
23 with disability. These are the words of my son, who is
24 in school.

25 "Hello. My name is Ethan Seybold. I am 15



1 years old and a freshman at Cherry Creek High School. I
2 am dyslexic and have the IEP that includes many
3 accommodations to help level the playing field
4 academically. I am concerned about the PARCC test
5 because of the stress that this adds to my life, the
6 interruption to my education, and the failure that these
7 tests assume to know who I am. School has always
8 challenged me but I am lucky to be a student in Cherry
9 Creek High School. I have great friends and amazing
10 teachers all around me.

11 But things change this time of year when we
12 are all gearing up for these big tests. Even though
13 PARCC and the current assessments do not directly affect
14 my GPA, the stress that I feel from beginning preparing
15 through the end is horrible. The teachers are equally
16 stressed and constantly drill into us that we must do our
17 best. My teachers are great, dedicated people that I
18 know they love what they do, most days. Still, there is
19 just as much pressure for me to do well on these
20 standardized tests as I'm expected to do on my final
21 exams. I feel that I don't -- if I don't do my very best
22 on these tests I will never succeed in life. It's
23 embarrassing. It's easy for me to get wrapped up in all
24 this mindset and I feel like I'm getting set up for
25 failure.



1 "These tests interfere with the flow of my
2 classes. I now have my driving permit and I love driving
3 all over town, running errands. I understand the traffic
4 laws and now I'm learning all sorts of new skills --
5 driving at night, during rush hour, and in the snow. I
6 always have to keep my eyes on the road and be aware of
7 my surroundings. When I first get into the car there is
8 some adjusting I have to do to prepare for the ride, but
9 after the first mile I hit my groove. The standardized
10 tests, for me, are like having to stop in the middle of
11 the road at an invisible stoplight. The moment of my
12 drive is suddenly stopped and it takes a lot of work to
13 pick back up to get where I was rolling along before.

14 "During this block of days, testing at
15 school -- during the testing at school my regular
16 classroom education is stopped, which I cannot afford.
17 These tests are taken over several days and even longer
18 if I choose to use the extended time that I qualify for
19 in my IEP."

20 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Summary thought, quickly.

21 MS. GOLDSMITH: I asked Ethan what he would
22 like you to know about him, and this is what he said. He
23 said, "I am dyslexic. I am eager to learn. I am smart.
24 I am capable. I am not a test." Thank you very much.

25 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you very much.



1 (Applause)

2 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Mike -- Michael Mazenko.

3 MR. MAZENKO: Good afternoon, State Board of
4 Education. Thank you. My name is Michael Mazenko. I'm
5 an educator of 20 years, in both the United States and
6 abroad, in Southeast Asia, in both public schools and in
7 private, and I'm here to assert that Colorado should
8 withdraw from the PARCC consortium until the state has a
9 chance to publicly review, evaluate, and critique Common
10 Core standards and PARCC testing.

11 Other options include putting a moratorium
12 for at least a year on standardized testing, continuing
13 with the TCAP, or contracting with ACT, whose new Aspire
14 program is aligned with state standards and college
15 readiness measures and is available for grades 3 through
16 11.

17 The problem with PARCC is it is an unproven
18 standardized test created by a private consortium that
19 has provided very little information or transparency on
20 what their tests look like. I know what a TCAP looks
21 like. I know what an AP test looks like. I know what an
22 ACT test looks like. I have no idea, other than a few
23 samples, what a PARCC test looks like. While people are
24 confident about established tests like the ACT, no one
25 knows if PARCC questions or scores mean anything at all.



1 While proponents argue that PARCC offers a more rigorous
2 test of critical thinking, there is no comparison by
3 which to make that claim.

4 ACT scores are one of the primary measures
5 Colorado uses to rate schools, and colleges actually
6 trust and care about what ACT reveals. No college
7 intends to use PARCC tests.

8 In the fall, roughly 60 percent of adults
9 had little to no understanding of Common Core or PARCC,
10 and it's foolish to proceed with implementation before
11 the parties all involved fully understand. The reality
12 necessitates a time out.

13 While 45 states adopted Common Core
14 standards, as many as 17 are now doubtful. If that's the
15 case and states are bailing out of the PARCC consortium
16 then Colorado should certainly not accept the role of
17 guinea pig for an unproven test from a serious -- from an
18 organization with serious transparency issues.

19 Piloting the test this year for
20 implementation next year is irresponsible. The people of
21 Colorado need time, publicly, to review the tests, the
22 results, and any conclusions drawn from the data. The
23 problem with PARCC is it is a high-stakes test by an
24 entity that has no track record, no transparency, and no
25 connection to Colorado. Numerous states agree.



1 Kentucky, the first state to fully implement Common Core,
2 has withdrawn from PARCC, following Massachusetts,
3 Florida, Oklahoma, Utah, Alaska, Kansas, Pennsylvania,
4 Georgia, and Alabama -- all who have withdrawn from
5 testing consortiums and are pursuing alternative tests.

6 Additionally, the extent of testing under
7 PARCC is excessive. At the high school level, as many as
8 10 to 15 days could be lost due to testing. What does
9 that say about how we value classroom instruction?

10 We put great faith in tests like the ACT,
11 SAT, AP, the GRE, the NAEP, and internationally, the
12 TIMSS and PISA, all tests which take less than a day, and
13 we have drawn great conclusions from them and we put
14 great faith in them. So there is no reason for excessive
15 testing.

16 I'm the parent of two high-achieving
17 children. I accept the TCAP and I would put my faith in
18 the ACT. But if Colorado goes ahead with PARCC testing,
19 a test for which I have little faith, I would seriously
20 consider opting my children out.

21 (Applause)

22 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Paul Trollinger. Paul
23 Trollinger.

24 MR. TROLLINGER: Thank you very much for the
25 opportunity to speak. My name is Paul Trollinger. I'm



1 here as an educator representing SPEAK for Cherry Creek.
2 I'm also the math department chairman of Cherry Creek
3 High School.

4 First, I want to make clear that I am not
5 against assessment and I'm not against accountability. I
6 am for assessment and accountability, assessment and
7 accountability that make sense and are aligned with the
8 best interests of the students, something that PARCC
9 fails to do.

10 We have spent a great deal of time and
11 energy learning about and implementing the Common Core
12 standards and getting ready for PARCC. We have not sat
13 by idly hoping this would go away. We've been very
14 proactive as a school on this.

15 What we have found during this process is
16 extremely troubling. Students are not prepared to take
17 PARCC because they lack the requisite background. PARCC
18 assumes a K through 12 background not only in various
19 concepts at grade level but in also what's called the
20 Standards for Math Practice. Thus, we have instituted a
21 system whereby teachers are frantically trying to fill in
22 the gaps of students, all the while teaching them
23 material they should be learning this year.

24 The result of this has been a tremendous
25 increase in frustration for all parties and students who



1 once enjoyed math and now hate it. I'm afraid that we
2 have lost the trust of an entire group of kids who are
3 currently taking Algebra I, all in the name of getting
4 ready for an unproven and controversial assessment. And
5 what is the message that we have sent these kids that we
6 are frantically trying to prepare them? You do not
7 measure up. We're trying to fix you. What a harmful
8 educational model.

9 In addition, the PARCC test has not been
10 released, something that Mike Mazenko talked about. Once
11 we get a sample test what choice do teachers have for the
12 next year but to teach to the test? What a terrible
13 educational model.

14 Lastly, the PARCC test provides absolutely
15 zero added value to the student in their educational
16 career. This test isn't being mandated by colleges.
17 Students have no interest in taking this test, especially
18 the end-of-the-year PARCC assessment that conflicts with
19 AP exams, something that that gentleman just reported how
20 successful Colorado has been.

21 What will happen? A large percentage of
22 kids will be opted out of PARCC, and the rest who manage
23 to take the test will have little incentive to do so. It
24 is misguided to believe that this test will yield any
25 valid data whatsoever.



1 Cherry Creek High School is one of the
2 flagship schools in the state of Colorado. Our community
3 takes education seriously and our students perform well
4 on assessments, especially those that make sense. In my
5 opinion, PARCC does not even come close.

6 Why spend the money on a test that is very
7 controversial, it's not aligned with the students'
8 preparation to date, almost certain to yield poor
9 results, not a benefit to the students' educational
10 career, and takes significant amount of educational time
11 away from the classroom? This would be a colossal waste
12 of time and money. There has to be a better assessment
13 model that works for all parties involved, especially the
14 students. Thank you.

15 (Applause)

16 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Kelly Jarrod (ph). Kelly
17 Jarrod.

18 MS. JARROD: I'm sorry. I'm having a hard
19 time hearing you. Thank you for allowing me to speak
20 today. This is Isabella Gray (ph). She is my
21 granddaughter. It may be highly inappropriate to bring
22 her to this meeting but she's undoubtedly the cutest one
23 in the room, so she gets to come.

24 (Applause)

25 MS. JARROD: I have many things to say to



1 you guys. I know you've been listening all day. You've
2 been talking about this all day. And if you are human,
3 like me, it's starting to sound like a bunch of mush.
4 But I do want to say that I'm concerned about the testing
5 level.

6 My daughter is now on staff at NJC, which is
7 Northern Junior College in Sterling. She spent five
8 years in college to pass her four years, because she
9 doesn't test well. Thank God she had professors,
10 teachers all through school that recognized that she was
11 not a good tester, but, in fact, had the knowledge and
12 was -- when was helped through those testing processes
13 she was able to get A's and above on all of her grading.
14 What's happening with the testing now is not capable of
15 providing that kind of leeway for kids who are absolutely
16 capable of going further.

17 I also want to say that my son, who is 23
18 years old, is a pilot in the United States Army and he's
19 a warrant officer, and if you know anything, which I'm
20 sure you do, that is unheard of. He did that because of
21 help, not in the education system. Kiowa schools left
22 him far behind. We had to do a lot to get him where he's
23 at.

24 I'm not saying that education reform isn't
25 important. I believe that it is. I think that we have



1 far to go in our education system. But I'm not sure that
2 the Federal Government is the one to be in charge of
3 that. We are a state. We are not a federal republic.
4 So I'm asking you to -- since you are the ones that get
5 to make the decisions about what the people are saying,
6 I'm asking you that the accountability at the end of this
7 is yours. And so I'm asking you to look at all the
8 levels with this program, it seems like it's got so many
9 tiers to it.

10 I've been studying this for so long and I
11 feel like I know nothing about it. So I'm asking you to
12 not allow money and interests to determine what's going
13 to happen with the education of our children, your
14 children, your grandchildren, but please allow parents
15 and teachers to be the people who are setting the
16 standards, and not the Federal Government.

17 That's all I have to say and I am asking
18 you, please, to be considerate of the fact that the
19 people have asked you to allow for this to happen. We
20 don't want Common Core. And we recognize that there are
21 steps to all of this. I'm asking you, and I thank you.

22 (Applause)

23 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you. Melissa
24 Scully. Melissa Scully.

25 MS. SCULLY: Good afternoon --



1 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Good afternoon.

2 MS. SCULLY: -- and thank you for your time.
3 I appreciate it.

4 My name is Melissa Scully. I'm a resident
5 of Greenwood Village and a parent of three young
6 children, ages 4, 6, and 8. When it came time for us to
7 enroll our oldest child in kindergarten we researched a
8 variety of public and private school options, and then
9 specifically chose to move to the Cherry Creek School
10 District because we felt it would offer our children a
11 phenomenal education.

12 My husband and I are proud products of the
13 public school system and have had every opportunity for
14 success due to that education, and we believe in the
15 importance and value of strong public schools.

16 I'm here today because I'm alarmed by what I
17 see happening in our great public schools. Because my
18 children are still quite young we have not yet been
19 exposed to the inordinate amount of testing that's now
20 the norm. This year my daughter who is in second grade
21 started taking MAP testing for the first time. That's
22 three times a year she spends her entire media class
23 taking MAP testing for up to an entire week. That's
24 about 50 percent of her media class time during the
25 school year. I was shocked to learn that next year I



1 should expect her to lose 15 to 20 days of classroom
2 instruction to be taking standardized tests, the majority
3 of which will come at an incredible cost -- in actual
4 dollars spent in administration, in loss of instructional
5 time, in more time spent teaching to the test, and a lot
6 of the joy of learning, and an opportunity to engage in
7 creative learning, and an increase in student stress
8 levels.

9 I like to think I'm a good parent because I
10 limit the amount of time that my kids spend in front of
11 the computers and other screen time. But now kids are
12 going to be expected to be expert keyboarders and
13 technology users just to be able to demonstrate the
14 knowledge that they have. In many ways, these new tests
15 are more a test of a child's technology skills than they
16 are of just a child's knowledge, and especially when we
17 think about those young learners, those third-, fourth-,
18 and fifth-graders, to expect them to be highly proficient
19 at keyboarding. Where's that instructional time going to
20 come from, just to prepare them to be able to take the
21 test to show what they know?

22 I'm not saying there's no place for
23 assessment. Clearly there's a role for responsible
24 assessment. But PARCC testing takes us farther down a
25 path of over-assessment of our children. And it's not



1 too late for us to say that this is wrong and it's bad
2 for our kids and it's bad for our schools.

3 I used to work in market research for a very
4 successful Fortune 500 company before I became a mom, and
5 before we launched anything new, whether it was the
6 smallest product upgrade or a brand new product, we spent
7 just countless hours and dollars spent on qualitative and
8 quantitative research to determine, first, whether people
9 would want it, and second, whether it would work in the
10 way that we thought it would.

11 So let me ask you this -- where's the data
12 that PARCC testing is effective, and where is the data
13 that it's good for our schools and good for our children?
14 I haven't seen that data and I have spent a lot of time
15 researching this, and the majority of the data I've seen
16 shows that it's harmful. So I ask you, please help us
17 withdraw from PARCC immediately and find a better way to
18 test our children. Thank you.

19 (Applause)

20 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you. Don Bott
21 (ph). Don Bott.

22 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Members of the Board of
23 Education, my name is Don Bott (ph). I'm a retired
24 teacher from Cherry Creek Schools, here on behalf of
25 SPEAK for Cherry Creek. I'm presenting evidence why



1 standardized tests hurt our children's education.

2 First, standardized tests are biased.

3 Recently, the *Denver Post*, Robert Suverin (ph), pointed
4 out that school ratings based on test scores directly
5 correlate not to the quality of the staff or the ability
6 of students but simply to family income. Donald Orlich,
7 a professor at Washington State University, found a 9.7
8 correlation between student test scores and parental
9 income. One study finds that with every additional
10 \$20,000 of family income, student test scores rise. This
11 is an indictment not of schools but of the tests
12 themselves.

13 Test language is often ambiguous for
14 students. For example, one item asked students to, quote
15 "take a position," end quote, on a topic. One student
16 seriously asked me if he should sit or stand. Many
17 students are concrete thinkers and test designers are
18 unaware of students' developmental stages.

19 Two, standardized tests are poor indicators
20 of future success. According to Clifford Adelman, a U.S.
21 Department of Education researcher, the main determiners
22 for college success are the quality of students' high
23 school courses and grade point average. In Paul Tough's
24 book, *How Children Succeed*, he concludes that, quote,
25 "Grades are often better indicators of college success



1 than standardized test scores."

2 Three, tests affect instruction. One study
3 of two schools found that test preparation and testing
4 absorb 19 school days in one district, and a month and a
5 half in another. A Harvard study underwritten by Bill
6 and Melinda Gates Foundation found that, quote, "Heavily
7 weighing a single measure may incentive teachers to focus
8 too narrowly," end quote. A Rand Corporation study
9 concluded that tests cause, quote "teachers to focus on
10 test preparation strategies in lieu of better teaching of
11 the underlying content."

12 To give an example of wasted time, last year
13 at my school a special needs coordinator was livid that
14 she and her aides had to administer test to students in
15 wheelchairs, some with cerebral palsy, who struggled to
16 communicate. By law, these students had to listen to
17 each test question three times. Then aides would record
18 "no response" and move to the next question. This went
19 on for three days.

20 Tests -- fourth, tests sap resources.
21 Instead of creating effective lessons, teachers spend
22 countless hours redesigning assessments so they resemble
23 state tests. Some administrators' primary task is to
24 coordinate the giving of tests. Substitutes are hired so
25 teachers can proctor tests. President Obama has said,



1 quote, "One thing I never want to see happen are schools
2 that are just teaching to the test," end quote, and
3 because of SB 191 this is exactly what is happening. We
4 have heard enough empty rhetoric about 21st century
5 college and career readiness. Test-taker is not a
6 marketable skill.

7 (Applause)

8 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: I believe Riley Farrow
9 (ph) and Luke Ragland had spoken earlier today. Am I
10 correct? Yes. Catherine Porter.

11 MS. PORTER: Good evening, or afternoon.

12 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Close to evening.

13 MS. PORTER: My name is Catherine Porter.
14 I'm here as a parent. My background is in special
15 education, and that's the group that I'm here to advocate
16 for today. And, by the way, this is my first time
17 testifying, because Common Core is hurting our kids, and
18 there's so many people that don't seem to realize this.
19 And I want to -- I want to remark that this is a
20 bipartisan movement going on around the country, and this
21 state doesn't seem to wake up and get that.

22 Let me give you a couple of examples. Dr.
23 Gary Thompson, he's a clinical psychologist from Utah, he
24 went over to Wisconsin to testify about the testing that
25 they're doing there. And one of the things that he said



1 in his testimony, he said, "For 95 percent of my life I
2 voted for Democratic candidates," and there he was
3 testifying against the assessments that they're using in
4 Wisconsin. Ed Flint is an attorney representing a family
5 in Utah regarding a case where the CC classroom is
6 violating idea. This is what is said about him. "He is
7 so liberal that he makes President Obama look like
8 Senator Mike Lee."

9 We have Representative Brian Higgins from
10 New York. I was listening to him on a radio show the
11 other day. He said that he would support a pause on the
12 Common Core -- again, another Democrat. And, of course,
13 you probably all know of Diane Ravitch, a Democrat
14 adamantly opposed to Common Core.

15 So I want to clarify that this is a
16 bipartisan issue, and wherever you stand, please look at
17 this for the kids, not the politics.

18 So I want to talk about the impact on our
19 special education students. Number one, these -- these
20 standards are copyrighted, so that means special
21 education teachers have little freedom to help children,
22 the most vulnerable population, our struggling learners
23 learn what they need to learn. Because it's copyrighted
24 they have to include 100 percent of those standards in
25 their classroom and they only have 15 percent freedom to



1 help their students. They can add another 15 percent but
2 that's it. Otherwise, they're out of compliance. What
3 are we doing to our special education teachers here?

4 What happened to differentiated,
5 individualized instruction, as required by federal law,
6 Ms. Berman? Thank you. For the testing, where are the
7 peer reviews? Where are the validations based on
8 professional standards? Where is the validity regarding
9 our children with special needs?

10 Maybe some of you have seen, in the news,
11 some of the stories going on in Florida with the
12 standardized testing that's gone on. Have you heard
13 about that? We have children who are blind, and they're
14 taking standardized testing there, and they're asking
15 these blind children, "Look at the pictures of these
16 animals. Tell me which one is the monkey." How about
17 the child with a G-tube that needs to be fed through his
18 stomach? And the standardized test question says, "Tell
19 me what a peach tastes like." What are we doing for
20 these kids? This certainly isn't a measure of their
21 intelligence.

22 I have so much more to say. I don't have
23 the time to say it. But I do want to get through to you
24 that what we're doing to our kids on the special needs
25 spectrum is deplorable. And so on their behalf, on our



1 most vulnerable population, I implore you to support the
2 pause on Common Core. Thank you.

3 (Applause)

4 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Cherry Keister (ph).
5 Cherry? Oh, there you are.

6 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Good afternoon, Board.
7 Thank you for having us here. I hope that you're able to
8 listen with your hearts and with your ears as well. A
9 lot of the things I'm going to say are probably something
10 I've said before, so I apologize if it's a repeat.

11 Common Core is a very controversial issue,
12 as witnessed by -- not 25 anymore -- 27 states that
13 currently have legislation to delay or oppose Common
14 Core. Additional now, 18 states have entirely withdrawn
15 from PARCC or SBAC tests that are part of the mandated
16 testing consortium, as you know. Seven United States
17 Senators have joined together to ask the U.S. Department
18 of Education to repeal Common Core across our nation.

19 I ask you, with those powerful numbers, does
20 that not tell you this needs to be looked at?

21 Senate Bill 136 is simple. It is not asking
22 to not have Common Core. It is saying take a break. How
23 much does Common Core and PARCC cost our state of
24 Colorado? There has been no cost analysis, but estimates
25 from Pioneer Institute are \$231 million to implement, for



1 Colorado alone. That needs to be looked at. Regardless
2 of if this bill passes, that needs to be looked at.

3 To review it we need to take one year to
4 review PARCC and Common Core. That's all we're asking.
5 Keep the current TCAP test, keep the curriculum. You do
6 not have to take away any work that schools have done to
7 implement. However, I will say some districts have
8 implemented must differently than other districts, and
9 you will find that if you look across the state. Some
10 are better prepared. Some are still struggling, and
11 they're going to be taking these CMAS tests and they
12 don't have anything in place because they don't know
13 what's required. And I fear -- and I think rightly so --
14 that that will be what happens with PARCC. And really
15 all this bill is asking is for time and a cost review.

16 States that have already piloted PARCC tests
17 have a long list of problems with the test, including
18 multiple hurdles with the technology alone. Teachers are
19 also saying the PARCC questions are very ambiguous, the
20 tests are too long, and children are simply giving up and
21 timing out. A new study actually says that PARCC widens
22 the achievement gap -- and I have sent that to you -- and
23 it is biased towards the wealthy, also what you have
24 heard today. PARCC mandates that all children take the
25 test on computers which require the districts to purchase



1 these tests, or the computers, and the bandwidth for the
2 computers.

3 And because it's longer than TCAP, meaning
4 it's going to be taking more time away from teaching, and
5 it's going to be administered multiple times per day. I
6 have a problem with that, as a parent whose school
7 teaches to this test, and we have started studying for
8 TCAPs in January. I'm the parent that had the 147-page
9 test prep packet sent home on spring break. I do not
10 look forward to that multiple times a year with PARCC.

11 The computers used for standardized test-
12 taking also will be collecting data. That has not been
13 brought up here today but I have a huge problem with not
14 being able to opt my child out of getting data collected
15 on him, and shared, and sold. Data is stored in a cloud
16 and there can be data breaches, and I'm done.

17 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Summary thought.

18 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Sorry. Please consider
19 just taking a break. That's all we're asking. Please
20 consider it.

21 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: thank you.

22 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Thank you.

23 (Applause)

24 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Amy Randall.

25 MS. RANDALL: Hi. My name is Amie Randall.



1 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Oh, Amie. Excuse me.

2 MS. RANDALL: It's okay. Everybody does it,
3 even my grandparents.

4 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: I try to be exceptional.

5 MS. RANDALL: It's okay. Thank you so much
6 for the time to come and talk to you today.

7 Everyone wants to talk about trust. In
8 2010, a version of this Board voted to adopt the Common
9 Core state standards and the debate was hotly contested.
10 I've listened to it a few times. It was so contested
11 that the Board received, I think it was 610 letters --
12 597 of those were against adopting the standards and 12
13 were for it. I don't understand this. I really don't
14 understand how this came into our state when there was so
15 much opposition from the very beginning. That was an
16 example of parents exercising their own local control
17 over their own children, in talking about how they want
18 them raised, how they want them educated.

19 It's been five years now that we've had
20 legislation passed, one after another, that responds to
21 the Race to the Top grant program, and we're seeing a
22 culmination of all of these decisions that were passed
23 down to us from the U.S. Department of Ed, to the state,
24 to our local districts. The local districts are tasked
25 to enforce these, funded or not, popular enough.



1 I am a concerned parent, and every time I
2 talk to a district I am told the same thing -- local
3 control is not under threat. But if that's true, why
4 does our reform legislation in Colorado so clearly mirror
5 legislation in Washington State, in New York State, in
6 Kentucky, in Georgia, all the states? Why does my school
7 district tell me things like, "We value courses like
8 drivers ed but right now our budget priorities are
9 elsewhere." While I sit in those meetings, the budget
10 priorities are on assessments and teacher effectiveness.

11 Somewhere there's a disconnect. Coloradoans
12 all over sense it. Districts are literally falling apart
13 under this. They know that there's dishonesty somewhere.
14 They're blaming each other. They're fighting. I don't
15 need to tell you about that, but it's painful to witness.
16 I can tell you that. I submit that this dishonesty is
17 coming from these state-led reforms that were implemented
18 at the behest of the U.S. Department of Education. Our
19 children are suffering while we fight this out -- we
20 adults fight this out, behaving like children.

21 I really want high standards for our kids.
22 My children attend a school that has the highest
23 standards. My daughter is actually on a full-ride
24 scholarship because of those standards and I'm a fan. I
25 want that for every student in Colorado. But we need to



1 take some time and step back and make sure that the
2 reform that's on the table right now is really going to
3 get us there.

4 We need to know we can trust each other, we
5 need to know we can trust our legislators, we need to
6 know we can trust our administrators, and we need to know
7 we can trust our educators. That's why SB 136 is so
8 important right now. It's going to give us that time we
9 need for civil discourse. Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you.

11 (Applause)

12 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Stephanie Pico.

13 MS. PICO: I thank you. My name is
14 Stephanie Pico and I am a testing coordinator for the
15 Cherry Creek School District. I'm not here representing
16 the school district. I'm here representing myself and my
17 concern for the technical aspect of this test.

18 I've been administering the MAPS test for
19 the last four years in my school -- it's an elementary
20 school -- and I can tell you that testing three times a
21 year, for all the kids from ages second grade to fifth
22 grade, is a very disruptive part of our day. But that
23 said, that is the choice of our local school to do that
24 test, and our teachers appreciate the information that
25 they get from that test.



1 We also, though, experience technical
2 difficulties in administering this test on a daily basis.
3 I had, even this January, in giving the test, I had to
4 received an email from NWEA, the administrative company
5 for that test, saying we weren't allowed to test in a
6 certain week because of the storms out East, and their
7 system was overloaded because of all those kids trying to
8 make up testing from the East Coast. So if this is going
9 to happen on a regular basis with just NWEA, which is not
10 as many children taking the test, I can't imagine that
11 the PARCC test can be ready for all of the students in
12 the country to be taking the same test.

13 We're supposed to take the CMAS test on
14 April 14th. It starts the window. We have not received,
15 at our level, in the schools, any instruction on how
16 we're actually supposed to administer this test and what
17 parameters are necessary for the technology in order for
18 it to work -- how timing is going to be on the test, how
19 much -- how many kids are going to be able to take the
20 test at the same time with our systems in place in the
21 classroom. We have the ability to give the test. I have
22 confidence that the Cherry Creek School District is doing
23 everything that they can to make it possible.

24 But there will always be a technical aspect
25 to this test that makes it very difficult for a teacher



1 to proctor their own test without some type of support in
2 the building. And there's no funding in Cherry Creek
3 schools even for a technician in an elementary school.
4 I'm funded by our PTO. So it's a choice in our school to
5 have somebody there to help out with technology. It's a
6 local control issue for that, and it doesn't allow for
7 the district that doesn't have the resources to apply
8 that for every school in the district. We're fortunate.

9 So I would ask you that you delay this test.
10 Look and see how it does with the CMAS in April. We will
11 know a lot of the information about how that test
12 actually produces itself in April when we do it. They're
13 doing the field tests now for PARCC. We don't have any
14 information on how that's even going to work or if it's
15 even being processed. They haven't even told us how
16 we're supposed to take care of the data that's leaving
17 the building.

18 So I'm just asking that you delay this so
19 that we have the opportunity to make sure that the
20 systems that are in place, that will work and will
21 support this testing environment, because it's a
22 completely new environment for us. Thank you.

23 (Applause)

24 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Laura Lan Flavey (ph).

25 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Hello. Thank you for



1 letting me talk today, and please excuse my nervousness.
2 This is my first time to talk in front of you, and I'm
3 scared about our future, and I know that it's in your
4 hands.

5 I'm here on behalf of my son, Samuel, who is
6 a junior at Dougherty; my son, Andrew, who is a freshman,
7 and he's doing online school through D11; my son, Conner,
8 who -- and my daughter, Lil (ph), who go to D49, the
9 Rocky Mountain Classical Academy homeschool portion.
10 And, as you can see, I think that having the ability to
11 look at each kid individually and educate each kid at
12 their level, and on their -- what their strengths and
13 their weaknesses, is vital to the kids all across
14 everywhere, all across the state. And I'm afraid, with
15 the implementation of the Common Core, that they're going
16 to -- that we're going to look, as we go forward in
17 implementing this, that a lot of the freedom to educate
18 kids on how they need to be educated is going to be taken
19 away.

20 I'm also here -- my friend, Nisa Tran (ph),
21 who is a beauty queen, and she travels all over to -- in
22 -- to speak about things, you know, in her state, that --
23 that are important. But she also is like a -- she
24 travels across the country in dance and competitions, and
25 they are the national champions in dance, and she's



1 having to pull away from her work as a beauty queen and
2 from her work in dance because of the stress that she's
3 under. And her family is suffering because of the stress
4 that they're under to try to meet the standards that are
5 place on them on the tests, and she's no longer -- my
6 son, my Samuel, feels like they're no longer being
7 educated, trying to learn these other things to be tested
8 on, instead of learning the things that they're going to
9 need when they go into the world to be a constructive
10 community citizen.

11 So I really appreciate you considering this
12 pause bill, to look at the implementation of Common Core
13 in our community. Thank you very much.

14 (Applause)

15 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you. Natalie
16 Adams.

17 MS. ADAMS: Good afternoon. I'm Natalie
18 Adams from Jefferson County. Thanks for the opportunity
19 to speak with you today. I'd like to address two topics,
20 student privacy and the PARCC test.

21 First I would like to address PARCC. One
22 can spend hours, even days, addressing all the flaws and
23 problems of PARCC, as seen by all the people here today.
24 However, I will just focus on one of the items that I
25 recently became aware of, which is that students will not



1 be allowed to have or use any paper or pencil with them
2 while taking this work -- test, excuse me. All work has
3 to be done on the online notebook attached to the test.

4 I discovered this at a recent school
5 accountability meeting and was completely shocked. My
6 husband is an engineer. He works with other talented
7 engineers who develop complex software systems. Do they
8 do this all on a computer? No. They spend hours around
9 whiteboards, developing the systems, working out
10 problems. To think that writing things out is going to
11 the wayside I would say is very ignorant.

12 I will, though, not try to debate you on
13 whether typing or writing is better for learning. But it
14 is an indisputable fact that there is a difference in how
15 one's brain processes information, depending on whether
16 you are typing or writing. Frank Wilson, a well-
17 respected neurologist and author, has stated that any
18 theory of human intelligence which ignores
19 interdependence of hand and brain function, the
20 historical origins of that, or the impact of that history
21 on the developmental dynamics of modern humans is grossly
22 misleading and sterile.

23 Whether you believe that students learn
24 better one way or another is a mute point. You cannot
25 argue that fact -- the fact that children are individuals



1 who learn and process information differently. Now,
2 however, we are forcing children into an even narrower
3 box by essentially penalizing children who learn better
4 by working things out on paper. If you want them to
5 click the correct answer on a computer or type out an
6 essay, fine, but how do you justify not letting them have
7 real paper and pencil to work out problems or to organize
8 their thoughts for an essay?

9 Children spend all day working out math
10 problems on paper and drawing webs to organize their
11 thoughts for essays. But now, for our recent high-stakes
12 tests, we are -- that we are tying teacher evaluations to
13 and making many conclusions about our children from,
14 students are being tested differently than how they learn
15 every day in the classroom. What sense does this make?
16 Of all the faults of PARCC, this would be an easy one to
17 rectify and by so doing acknowledge that our children are
18 not robots and learn and process information differently.

19 Second, I would like to address student
20 privacy, which you will be discussing in detail tomorrow.
21 CDE's information security and privacy policy is lacking
22 in various ways. But one of the most glaring
23 deficiencies in your policy is that you do not require
24 parental permission to share personally identifiable
25 information. Privacy experts around the country,



1 including the ACLU, recognize the importance of requiring
2 informed parental consent before you share student
3 records.

4 The PowerPoint presentation that will be
5 given tomorrow states that a school district shall not
6 release education records of a student to any person,
7 agency, or organization without prior written consent of
8 the parent or legal guardian of the student, except as
9 provided by FERPA. However, in 2008 and again in 2011,
10 the U.S. Department of Education changed the regulations
11 in regards to FERPA, expanding the definition of school
12 official and authorized representative. That is allowing
13 highly personalized data to be shared with just about
14 anyone without parental consent.

15 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you.

16 (Applause)

17 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Cindee Will. Cindee
18 Will.

19 MS. WILL: Hi. My name is Cindee Will and I
20 come with gifts in the form -- two forms. I have
21 prepared notebooks for each of you today and I also have
22 some apple pie, sliced, ready to go. If we can hand that
23 out I'd love for you to enjoy that, okay? It's been a
24 long day, I'm sure.

25 Again, my name is Cindee Will. I am a co-



1 developer of our James Irwin Charter Academy in Colorado
2 Springs, where I'm also the principal. At our school we
3 have signs everywhere posted, "What is best for
4 students?" This is our guiding light when we make
5 decisions for staffing, curriculum, and policy. So I
6 ask, what is best for Colorado students? My answer is
7 for students to be literate for cursive writing.

8 I'm very concerned about the cursive writing
9 illiteracy that is fostered by Common Core. National
10 Common Core standards lead to national assessments.
11 National assessments lead to national curriculum. One of
12 my concerns about Common Core is a required proficiency
13 in keyboarding and emphasis on computer education and
14 assessments. More and more schools and states are
15 eliminating cursive writing.

16 In participated on an NPR Wisconsin radio
17 program discussing the elimination of cursive writing
18 across the country, and at that time 40 out of 50 states
19 were getting rid of cursive because of the Common Core
20 emphasis on keyboarding. Schools do not have time to
21 teach both handwriting and keyboarding so they switched
22 to keyboard lessons to prepare students for the new
23 computerized test. In so doing, are we contributing to
24 the new form of illiteracy in America, cursive
25 illiteracy? Elementary-age students learn keyboard at



1 the expense of cursive. What is the impact of cursive
2 illiteracy on our citizenry?

3 A key prosecuting witness in a nationally
4 televised court case, Rachel Jeantel, held some of the
5 most critical information about the Trayvon Martin,
6 George Zimmerman murder case, when she was asked to read
7 a letter she had signed and sent to the victim's mother.
8 She finally admitted, on national television -- stunned
9 everybody -- "I cannot read cursive." Rachel is cursive
10 illiterate. Rachel dictated and signed the letter that
11 her friend wrote on her behalf. However, on national
12 television she went from superstar witness to train
13 wreck. Why? She was considered untrustworthy, based on
14 her inability to read and write her own cursive letter.

15 Another impact of cursive illiteracy on our
16 citizenry is high school teachers and college professors
17 are complaining more and more students entering classes
18 cannot read what the professors are writing on the boards
19 or the notes on their papers. They can't read cursive.
20 They can't write cursive. They can't read the primary
21 source of historical documents like the Declaration of
22 Independence, which I included in the folder too, and we
23 have kids standing with pictures in front of them.

24 Remember, the neuroscience of learning
25 concludes that the writing by hand engages the brain.



1 Dr. Virginia Berninger says students who learn to write
2 by hand learn better. The finger movements from writing
3 differs from typing. They activate the large regions in
4 the brain and they actually close the circuits between
5 the right and left hemisphere, which helps the
6 development of language and working memory and thinking.

7 In conclusion, we need reliable assessments,
8 and the computerized assessments are far from the paper
9 and pencil that kids are writing with and learning with
10 every single day. Please do what's best for students in
11 Colorado. Pull out of the Common Core consortium
12 assessment -- excuse me. My time's up. Please pull out
13 of the Common Core assessment consortium, and if we're
14 not able to do that right now let's give it a pause and
15 let's vote on Senate Bill 136 until we can do so. Thank
16 you.

17 (Applause)

18 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Liz Richard. Liz
19 Richard.

20 MS. RICHARD: Hi. Thank you for having me
21 today. My name is Liz Richard. I've been in education
22 for 27 years. Of my 27 years I've served 16 years in the
23 classroom, 11 as an administrator, and my last 5 as
24 principal of Monument Academy in Lewis-Palmer School
25 District 38. Lewis-Palmer is the highest-performing



1 school district in the state of Colorado and the lowest
2 dropout rate in the state of Colorado, and they did all
3 that without Common Core or PARCC assessments.

4 (Applause)

5 MS. RICHARD: My passion is education and
6 daily I carefully weigh important decisions knowing the
7 impact they will make on individual lives. It's causing
8 tremendous concern to watch my ability, and other
9 educators in our state slowly losing their privilege to
10 choose what is best for our own children.

11 In 1965, the Elementary and Secondary
12 Education Act said "nothing in this act shall authorize
13 any federal office to mandate direct or control schools'
14 curriculums." In 1970, the General Education Provision
15 Act stipulated that "no provision of any applicable
16 program shall be construed to authorize any federal
17 agency or official to exercise any direction,
18 supervision, or control over curriculum, program of
19 instruction, or selection of instructional materials by
20 any school system."

21 And then in 1979, federal law creating the
22 Education Department "forbids it from exercising any
23 direction, supervision, or control over the curriculum or
24 program of instruction of any school system." It was
25 later amended to say "no education department funds" --



1 imagine that -- "may be used to endorse, approve, or
2 sanction any curriculum designed to be used in grades K
3 through 12."

4 The Common Core standards are forcing a
5 standardized conformity in instructional methods and
6 materials and completing the spectrum by adding national
7 assessments. This goes against local control of district
8 and school boards to decide what is best for our
9 students. The parents and dedicated professionals who
10 invest their lives into children's education are the ones
11 best equipped to make standard-based and curriculum
12 decisions for our Colorado students.

13 We, furthermore, are best equipped to assess
14 them, to interpret the data, and to differentiate the
15 instruction and curriculum-based decisions for their
16 performance and to better their performance. No one in
17 Washington, D.C., has the ability to help those who are
18 struggling in my school in Monument, Colorado.

19 How did we get here so fast? It happened by
20 a vote taken in haste, in December of 2012, with the
21 Common Core standards not even released to we educators
22 until April of 2013. The only bargaining chip on the
23 table is the promised Race to the Top money from the 2009
24 stimulus. Forty-five states embraced the initiative.
25 Since that time, 17 states have now called a halt.



1 I'm asking that the State Board of Education
2 give the control of Colorado's children, children's
3 education back into the hands of educators in our state.
4 Thank you.

5 (Applause)

6 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you. Wesley Jolly.

7 MR. JOLLY: Good afternoon. My name is Wes
8 Jolly and I serve as the director of academic services at
9 The Classical Academy public charter school in Colorado
10 Springs, the largest charter school in the state of
11 Colorado with approximately 3,500 students, and one of
12 the top-performing schools in the state.

13 It is a distinct pleasure to be able to
14 address you today as an educator concerned about the
15 impending impact of Common Core implementation upon
16 schools within Colorado. First let me be clear. Our
17 charter school does not fear standards or testing, and we
18 have proven that fact in the results our schools -- our
19 seven schools have achieved during our 17-year existence.
20 We do not view the issue in political terms but rather in
21 the terms of what is best for our children. My goal
22 today is to cover the highlights in just one area of
23 significance - the testing methodology and its impact on
24 our schools.

25 Technology and pedagogical concerns are



1 major elements of our opposition to the implementation
2 methodology of the Common Core. The costs for charter
3 schools especially will be substantial when considering
4 hardware, professional development, maintenance, and
5 future upgrades. Such unfunded costs will be a
6 significant burden to our schools and will funnel money
7 from the educational choices we deem locally appropriate.

8 We have significant concerns regarding
9 testing implementation, especially in the lower
10 elementary grades. The mandated technology use for
11 assessments will cause a significant departure
12 pedagogically for classically oriented schools. Lyndsey
13 Layton, writing in the *Washington Post*, noted that
14 keyboarding for kindergarten students is sending tremors
15 through the nation's elementary schools.

16 We believe students should be tested in the
17 same manner in which they are instructed. For most
18 elementary schools that involves pencil and paper
19 testing, not computerized assessments. Pushing
20 technology earlier, even into kindergarten, is not
21 developmentally appropriate, in our opinion. Yes,
22 technology is a significant influence in our world today
23 but that does not mean we need to start keyboarding so
24 young. There is enough time to prepare students for such
25 skills later, at a more developmentally appropriate age.



1 The impact on instructional time of the new
2 assessment regimen is also of significant concern. While
3 the overall average testing time per grade level is
4 fairly consistent between the old and new testing
5 criteria, the computer assessment methodology will
6 dramatically impact scheduling. Grade levels will not be
7 able to all test on the same day as in the past.
8 Overall, the time away from normal classroom instruction
9 will be of greater impact than indicated by the total
10 testing hours, due to the constraints caused by the
11 technology piece. Adjustments are being made in schools
12 to account for the increased testing time needed from
13 March to May of the school year. Is this the way that we
14 want to proceed just for the convenience of
15 computerization, which many are starting to realize will
16 not have the quick turnaround on results as has been
17 projected?

18 Ultimately, it is our belief that content
19 standards at a national level will drive conformity
20 instead of innovation, and mediocrity instead of
21 excellence. We as a state can do better. Common Core's
22 implementation and assessment strategy ultimately will
23 prove detrimental to the goals we should be pursuing as a
24 state, and we therefore, urge our officials to alter the
25 path upon which are journeying. The future of our kids



1 depends upon it. Thank you.

2 (Applause)

3 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you. Deborah Seal
4 (ph). I believe it's Seal. Deborah Seal? No. Having a
5 little difficulty reading this. Deborah Seal? No?
6 You're not Deborah Seal. I know you. It could be Cole
7 (ph). I'm sorry.

8 MS. COLE: Mr. Chairman and the Board, my
9 name is Deborah Cole, and I am a founder of Cheyenne
10 Mountain Charter Academy in Colorado Springs, and a long-
11 time consultant with James Irwin Charter Schools, also in
12 the Springs.

13 Today I would like to address the Board on a
14 subject that has not been brought up, that I'm aware of,
15 the subject of STEM and the Common Core. One of the
16 stated goals of the Race to the Top is to promote
17 science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
18 proficiency in our students. But there is a paradox at
19 the heart of this goal, because, in fact, the Common Core
20 standards in math, which undergird all the other
21 disciplines of the STEM spectrum, are likely to reduce
22 the flow of students through the STEM pipeline and
23 depress the rigor of STEM instruction along the secondary
24 and postsecondary continuum.

25 Here's why. The Common Core math standards



1 top out at an Algebra II level, and a relatively weak
2 Algebra II at that, because some standard Algebra II
3 topics are omitted. It's a fact that a high school
4 student who graduates with this level of math under her
5 belt is virtually precluded from pursuing a STEM major.
6 The gap between where she is when she graduates high
7 school and where she needs to be, out the gate, in
8 college, is simply too great. Although it can happen,
9 the odds are daunting. Only 1 out of every 50
10 prospective STEM majors who begin their undergraduate
11 math coursework at the precalculus level or lower will
12 earn a bachelor's degree in a STEM area.

13 For all the talk of rigor, the Common Core
14 standards writers admit that the math standards are low.
15 In 2010, Jason Zimba, a lead writer of the math
16 standards, acknowledged that the standards are, quote
17 "not for STEM." He added, "It's not only not for STEM,
18 it's not for selective colleges." He said, "It's a
19 minimal definition of college readiness."

20 Professor James Milgram, the only actual
21 mathematician on the validation committee of the Common
22 Core standards, refused to sign off on them because he
23 said math standards would not produce students who were
24 college ready, as he understood the term.

25 A further consequence of the mediocre Common



1 Core math standards is that they will depress college
2 standards as well. Top (ph) consortium member states
3 have agreed to exempt students who have passed a college-
4 and career-ready exam as juniors from remedial classes in
5 public universities. This is one way to solve the
6 problem of so many high school graduates being placed in
7 remedial classes in college but it can hardly be
8 described as raising the bar. Either underprepared
9 college freshmen will now be receiving credit for courses
10 that were previously deemed to be below college level or
11 without the option of noncredit-bearing bridge courses
12 they'll be placed in courses to advance for them, or they
13 will not be able to take math in college, period.

14 There are no other options. I cannot
15 believe that this Board will accept this scenario as good
16 enough for Colorado students. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you.

18 (Applause)

19 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Elizabeth Berg.

20 Elizabeth Berg.

21 MS. BERG: Good afternoon, State Board of
22 Education members, Mr. Chairman. My name is Elizabeth
23 Berg. I'm principal at James Irwin Charter Elementary
24 School. I've been there for nine years. We have a broad
25 demographic of students there. We have 42 percent free



1 and reduced lunch, 57 percent minority students, and 79
2 of our 539 students qualify for English language
3 services.

4 Our students have shown achievement,
5 accelerated achievement and growth over the last nine
6 years with our core knowledge, direct instruction school.
7 James Irwin Charter Elementary School has received the
8 John Irwin School of Excellence Award three times and one
9 time the Governor's Award.

10 We are a pencil-to-paper school and we use a
11 very active method of instruction that allows us to teach
12 more in less time. I'm just showing a brief graphic. Is
13 this okay? Can I do this? This is -- these are writing
14 scores, fifth grade, for the last three years. The blue
15 bar are our students. I do this not to tell anything for
16 me but for students. They have achieved at high levels.
17 What is harder to teach than writing, with all the
18 complex mental activity involved with organization, the
19 right word choice, syntactic and grammatical expression?
20 It is the most difficult topic that we do teach in
21 elementary school.

22 But we also, at James Irwin, we have
23 carefully designed flexible performance groups in reading
24 and math that meet between 60 to 90 minutes each day.
25 Students in each grade level go to smaller groups in



1 reading and math for differentiated instruction,
2 providing scaffolded support and structure appropriate to
3 their needs. These groups can be as small as 4 to 5
4 students, up to 15 students. Teachers and instructional
5 assistants have rooms and curricula specifically assigned
6 to them so that we can provide instruction that answers
7 the guiding question -- what's best for students? The
8 way we teach more in less time -- frequent responses,
9 callbacks, and lively group responses.

10 The scheduling of the proposed PARCC test
11 will greatly interfere with instruction and continuity of
12 both classroom subjects and our very successful
13 differentiated reading and math groups. The schedule is
14 cumbersome, disruptive, burdensome, and it will prove --
15 it will provide unreliable data for students who were
16 taught pencil to paper.

17 When we look at just the March PARCC
18 assessments alone I have three third-grade classes, three
19 fourth-grade, three fifth-grade -- nine classes who each
20 need to take five tests. That's 45 testing sessions. I
21 cannot do it with our computer lab more than one session
22 in the morning, because you have to plan for that time to
23 get there, the setup, practice questions, as well. So
24 from 8:30 to 10:30 we can have one test session for one
25 class, 44 to go. But there's a problem, too, with the



1 other two fourth-grade classes. They can't have contact
2 with these students.

3 What I propose is a step forward in
4 technology that all 240 of the students can start the
5 test at the same time, with a pencil, that we do not have
6 the PARCC testing. Thank you so much.

7 (Applause)

8 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you. Steven
9 Hatcher. Steven Hatcher. Belinda Seville is on deck.

10 MR. HATCHER: Thank you. My name is Steve
11 Hatcher. I'm a parent. I would like to thank you for
12 your service to the citizens of the great state of
13 Colorado. As elected officials each of you took an oath
14 of office to uphold the Constitution of the United States
15 as well as Colorado.

16 The Common Core standards that were approved
17 have resulted in bribery and bullying by President Obama
18 and the U.S. Department of Education and is a direct
19 violation of the U.S. Constitution's Tenth Amendment and
20 multiple federal statutes. You accepted a bribe of
21 additional funding through President Obama's stimulus
22 package that required you to blindly accept the Common
23 Core standards in its entirety, even though they were not
24 written.

25 Now, the state of Colorado and the



1 Department of Education define bullying in House Bill 11-
2 1254. In part, it says "bullying is prohibited against
3 any student, for any reason, including but not limited to
4 such behavior that is directed towards a student on the
5 basis of his or her academic performance." Since the
6 passage and implementation of this course in illegal
7 policy the Colorado State Board of Education has now
8 become the bully.

9 Let me tell you how this affects my family.
10 My son is a ninth-grader at ThunderRidge High School.
11 He's on an IEP for math. His IEP declared that he takes
12 Algebra I over a two-year period. I got a letter two
13 weeks ago, on January 21st, stating, "Parents:
14 ThunderRidge will no longer be offering Algebra I, Part 1
15 or Part 2, next year. Thanks. Mrs. Geyer."

16 I did not take this lightly. This results
17 in my son wasting one year of his math requirements for
18 high school because his IEP is no longer -- his IEP plan
19 is no longer valid. Why didn't the State Board of
20 Education require all IEP plans to adhere to their
21 mandated Common Core standards beginning this year?
22 Could it be you were afraid of the backlash for your
23 illegal actions?

24 I met with his -- with my son's IEP teacher,
25 counselor, who is also his math teacher. She was very



1 apologetic and apologized for it. She said -- she told
2 me that the new standards only allowed a student to be
3 taught Algebra over a one-year period and they had to be
4 taught to the test, not the concepts.

5 Sorry. I've lost my place.

6 She apologize for the disservice to my son
7 and, however, because of the actions of the Colorado
8 State Board of Education she must do what she is told.
9 Otherwise, she may lose her job.

10 My son's IEP was changed based on your
11 mandates. I want you to tell me why you are forcing my
12 son to be taught a test on Algebra I instead of the
13 concepts. Now he will have to be taught at an
14 accelerated pace for an IEP, which defeats the IEP
15 concept. You require -- you have set my son up for
16 failure as well as stealing one year of math requirements
17 from him. This is a direct contradiction to the U.S.
18 Department of Education's No Child Left Behind policy
19 that you are no longer required to adhere to as part of
20 the bribe to accept Common Core.

21 I request that you explain and apologize to
22 my son, in writing, for your lack of concern for his
23 education. It appears that some of you don't believe in
24 the oath of office that you took. Your covert actions
25 have violated my family and kept the citizens of Colorado



1 in the dark until now. We will not stand by and allow
2 illegal policies to be adopted by the people that were
3 elected to represent us. Therefore, each of you may --
4 each and every one of you must examine your intentions
5 for being in the office that you hold.

6 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Summary thought, Steven.

7 MR. HATCHER: Okay. Just a couple of
8 sentences.

9 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: No, one sentence.

10 MR. HATCHER: If you cannot or will not
11 adhere to the oath of office that you took then I ask
12 that you resign today or face potential recall. We will
13 at least make sure that this is your last term of office
14 in this position.

15 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Belinda Seville.

16 MR. HATCHER: And --

17 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you, Steven.

18 MR. HATCHER: Thank you.

19 (Applause)

20 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: And Angelique Matthews is
21 on deck.

22 MS. SEVILLE: Did y'all get that apple pie?
23 Oh, I think you should pass it out.

24 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: No. We've got another
25 meeting we've got to get to, so we're going to stay with



1 the matter at hand.

2 MS. SEVILLE: Well, I'll hurry. I am brief
3 today.

4 Chairman, Commissioner, School Board, thank
5 you for your time. My name is Belinda Seville. I am a
6 former teacher, both in the state of Texas and
7 Connecticut. As I stand before you I know we all share
8 the same vision. The goal is for Colorado to operate
9 within a vibrant and thriving educational reform that
10 outperforms all other states. I believe it's imperative
11 that we keep this in plain view, with all decisions that
12 come before this board.

13 Recently I contacted a long-time math
14 teacher in Aurora. I asked him to comment on Common
15 Core. Unfortunately, he did have to stay anonymous in
16 his reply, but I have made copies for your reading. This
17 closet evaluation is one reason why I'm asking you all to
18 stand and support Senate Bill 136 in order to give
19 schools, teachers, legislators, parents, and boards of
20 education, all of whom were omitted from the validation
21 committee, time to see if this is the vehicle to truly
22 move Colorado to the top of the list academically.

23 In business we call it proof of concept, my
24 husband reminds me. Let's evaluate before we implement
25 something of this magnitude. To date there has been no



1 proof of concept for Common Core or PARCC. Perhaps this
2 year could give us the proof that we are all looking for.
3 Thank you.

4 (Applause)

5 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you. Angelique
6 Matthews, and Matt Pickering is on deck.

7 MS. MATTHEWS: Good afternoon, Board.

8 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you.

9 MS. MATTHEWS: Thank you so much for
10 allowing me to exercise my voice today. I'm going to
11 recommend that we find another room next time, because
12 we're coming back with more people.

13 I was born and raised in Johannesburg, South
14 Africa, where people didn't have a voice, and I came to
15 love this great country because of the protection and the
16 rights that America puts on the individual.

17 I understand the difficult position that
18 you're in. You're in a very difficult position. I
19 empathize with your position. You have parents on the
20 one side who are angry. You have the Federal Government
21 on the other side who is pushing their agenda. You have
22 big money being pushed down your throats, and who
23 wouldn't want to take it? I -- I'd be -- I'd be just as
24 uncomfortable as you probably are.

25 I'm not going to go through my notes. I am



1 against Common Core, but I'm not going to go through my
2 notes. You've heard this entire room explain to you why
3 we think this is a total disaster. But I am going to say
4 to you -- please look at me. Please look at me. I want
5 to know that you're listening to me. You're the
6 gatekeepers to our education. You are the people that we
7 trust our kids to. You are the people who have our back.
8 But if we can't trust you, where do we go? What do we
9 do, as parents, who have a voice and are speaking out
10 clearly in numbers? We're coming back next time with
11 larger numbers, not because we want to scare you but we
12 want our voice to be heard. Common Core needs to go.

13 (Applause)

14 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you. Matt
15 Pickering.

16 MS. MATTHEWS: I'm not finished, sir. May I
17 --

18 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Oh, I'm sorry.

19 MS. MATTHEWS: That's okay.

20 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: You still have time.

21 MS. MATTHEWS: Thank you. Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: That was a good place.

23 MS. MATTHEWS: I didn't know anything about
24 Common Core up until about a month ago, and I came to the
25 last Board meeting not knowing a whole lot. I came to



1 discover knowledge on Common Core. And in this last
2 month I've gone to meetings. I've discussed with
3 teachers ad -- ad nauseum. I've spoken to parents. I've
4 read through documents ad nauseum. And what I have
5 discovered is shocking. How did it -- how did it get
6 through this far? How did we get this far down the road?
7 How? I know you can't answer me. This is not that kind
8 of forum. I -- I -- but I want to tell you, I am shocked
9 at what I see.

10 I come from a world view, having grown up in
11 South Africa, knowing that the government can do terrible
12 things to people. I think Americans think that could
13 never happen in their country.

14 And so I want to -- I want to just say to
15 you, please, please, the Federal Government should not be
16 in our education. Please support the Moms' Bill. Please
17 slow this thing down so we can be fiscally responsible,
18 that we can be good stewards of what we've got, that we
19 can investigate. This thing is unproven. Please support
20 the Moms' Bill. Thank you.

21 (Applause)

22 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you. Matt
23 Pickering, and Amanda Novak on deck. Matt Pickering? No
24 Matt Pickering? Amanda Novak, and then Sheila Brown is
25 behind Amanda Novak.



1 MS. NOVAK: Good afternoon. My name is
2 Amanda Kudron Novak and I'm a ninth-grade humanities
3 teacher at West Generation Academy, on the West Campus in
4 Denver.

5 First of all, I want to say that I was
6 really lucky to have two of my former teachers here --
7 Michael Mazenko is one of them, at Cherry Creek High
8 School. I was a 2007 grad as well as student body
9 president. And coming from Cherry Creek I think I
10 learned a lot, and one of the things I learned is that
11 not everybody has the same opportunities, and, quite
12 frankly, I don't think that our standards are set high
13 enough. And so I'm here to ask you to continue
14 supporting Common Core.

15 So a little bit more about me, a little bit.
16 So I came from Cherry Creek. I witnessed firsthand what
17 I believe are standards that are varied, too varied, and
18 create more of an achievement gap in our state, but also
19 in our country, as a whole. And I think Colorado, in
20 general, has had standards that are too low.

21 I have taught with the Common Core and I've
22 seen incredible growth in my classroom. I do have
23 technology in our school, which is 98 percent Hispanic as
24 well as 98 percent of our students receive free and
25 reduced lunch. Our ELL percentage is more than 50



1 percent. Most of our students are bilingual. Some of
2 them are monolingual Spanish speakers. The growth we've
3 seen is incredible.

4 We do take tests online often, and we don't
5 have the greatest bandwidth but we somehow make it. We
6 take tests about -- this STAR test, for instance -- about
7 four times a year. In my classroom -- here's just a
8 little snapshot of the growth that we've seen -- because
9 we know our data and because our students are able to own
10 their data in my classroom, one of my classes has average
11 1.8 grade-level growth in their reading and writing.
12 That's just from August until now, 1.8 grade levels.

13 I've moved five students to proficiency and
14 six to partially proficient from unsatisfactory this year
15 so far, based on DPS interim tests. I do believe in the
16 Common Core. I believe that it has really stepped up the
17 game and that our students are focused on our skills and
18 critical thinking, rather than the prescribed knowledge
19 that they've been given in the past.

20 To say a little bit more about the, I quote,
21 robust and relevant standards that are relevant to the
22 real world. They are skills-based in critical thinking.
23 My students run the classroom. They own it. We do lit
24 circles, Socratic seminars. No longer are they just
25 simply reading a book, talking about plot, talking about



1 setting, but they're really talking about their
2 experiences and how their lives are going to be affected
3 by what we're learning. It's very experiential.

4 So one thing I have to say about Common Core
5 is it is not a common curriculum. However, it is a
6 standard bar of excellence for our students.

7 An example I wanted to give about my
8 students, like I said, they run the classroom. They
9 really own it. The student talk is incredible. Very
10 little teacher talk. A lot of student talk. Just
11 recently, Tom Boasberg came into my classroom and he was
12 able to listen to a Socratic seminar that we were having
13 on *To Kill a Mockingbird*. My students, who are
14 historically discriminated against -- and by historically
15 I mean every single day still discriminated against --
16 were having a conversation about advocating for
17 themselves and their family and their community, based on
18 the themes of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, including courage.
19 And having that conversation was thanks -- in my opinion,
20 thanks to the Common Core and the freedom I had as a
21 teacher to interpret those standards and set my kids at a
22 higher bar. Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thanks, Sheila.

24 MS. NEAL: Thank you. Are we going to
25 applaud for her, everybody?



1 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: So I may have -- I'm
2 sorry. Amanda, Sheila? Who -- Amanda, did you just
3 finish speaking?

4 MS. NOVAK: Yes, I did.

5 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Okay. Sheila Brown. I'm
6 sorry. Thank you.

7 MS. BROWN: Good afternoon, Board. Thank
8 you for letting me speak. I'm here -- I'm a parent of
9 three sons that I raised up in Jefferson County schools
10 in Arvada. I still have a son who is a freshman at
11 Arvada High School, and I'm fully against Common Core.
12 Everything that's been said here I fully agree with,
13 except the last person that just was here. Everything
14 else, though, I totally agree with -- the expense, the
15 unproven testing, and the data collection, which is
16 clearly a violation of our Fourth Amendment right under
17 the Constitution of the United States of America.

18 Many teachers have already spoken out here
19 in this room today, you know, telling you how they're not
20 even allowed to teach kids and how it's become a testing
21 playground and that's all they're doing is testing. That
22 really disturbs me.

23 But one thing I have not heard today, and I
24 want to say that also opposed to the dramatic changes
25 that are going to take place in the curriculum. Reducing



1 the classic literature and replacing it with
2 informational government texts, like the EPA Handbooks,
3 killing the level of reading in our children, completely
4 just killing it because who would want to read that? I
5 mean, they're going to replace *Moby Dick* and *Where the*
6 *Red Fern Grows* with an informational text on the EPA, for
7 our kids to read. I think that's appalling.

8 And I am also here representing a teacher
9 from Jefferson County who just recently, at the end of
10 2014, quit her job because of this testing, because of
11 the excessive pressure that was put on her to just test.
12 Her name is Andrea Gilmore. So I'm going to read her
13 statement, and so just keep in mind this is not me. I'm
14 reading for Andrea.

15 "I'm here today to share my story. I worked
16 as an educator in JeffCo for 13 years. I believe in
17 JeffCo and its vision with all of my heart. Like most
18 teachers that I know I worked my tail off to improve
19 student achievement and to learn more myself so that I
20 could individualize my instruction, making the content
21 meaningful to each and every student sitting in front of
22 me.

23 "And then one day something happened. I was
24 no longer happy. I thought long and hard about why that
25 was. After all, I was doing what I loved and, boy, did I



1 have a talent for it. Well, I talked to other teachers
2 in my building and guess what? No one was happy. Every
3 one of us was stressed out beyond belief. Some of the
4 wonderful teachers wanted to leave the profession
5 altogether, and probably would if they were not stuck.
6 You see, they need PERA and they need health insurance,
7 and they don't want to lose their pensions. Many say to
8 me, 'I just need my 20 years and then I'm out of here.'

9 "For many years I stayed stuck. Well, that
10 voice in my head, my conscience, began to bother me more
11 and more. I was disgusted with all of it, sick of a new
12 curriculum every other year, tired of new laws mandating
13 more and more testing and more and more data collection.

14 "All I wanted to do was teach. All any
15 teacher wants to do is teach. Public school teachers
16 spend their days testing, collecting data, inputting
17 data, and analyzing data. There is no time left for us
18 to come up with a plan to change that data. That is
19 insanity. The definition of insanity is doing the same
20 thing over and over again and expecting a different
21 result.

22 "You ask any teacher and they will tell you
23 new standards and new assessments will not increase
24 student achievement. A good teacher and good
25 instructional practices are what will improve student



1 achievement, and all of your good public school teachers
2 are burning out and leaving.

3 "A year ago I decided I couldn't do it
4 anymore. I no longer believed that what I was doing was
5 right -- not right for kids, not the right thing to do.
6 I left the public school. I took a huge pay cut --

7 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Your summary thought.

8 MS. BROWN: -- and I gave up my pension to
9 teach at a local private school."

10 She just finishes going -- just saying that
11 Common Core and PARCC are not really about student
12 achievement and to say that they are is a lie.

13 (Applause)

14 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Bernadine -- Bernadine
15 Reese (ph).

16 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: My name is Bernardine
17 Reese and I come from a long line of -- I'm a Denver
18 native. My mother and my uncle were very instrumental in
19 creating the Head Start program for kids, and very
20 influential in the PTA meetings that we had in our Denver
21 Public Schools. I was -- I am a Christian education,
22 bachelor of arts in Christian education person, and I was
23 in charge of 12 Denver public middle schools with the
24 SOAR program. That was a \$1.5 million grant that was
25 given from the Denver Rockies when we came into Colorado



1 a few years back, and I dealt with a lot of high-risk,
2 inner-city youth.

3 I was also with the Parks and Recreation at
4 Denver elementary schools -- Columbine Elementary School,
5 Barney Ford, Valverde, Schmitt. I was in charge of three
6 rec centers -- La Alma Park -- La Alma, Harvey Park, and
7 Montbello. I was the instructional designer for that
8 program and I have come through a lot of different
9 oppositions.

10 I think it's really important to know that
11 what's happening right now and with this Core -- the Core
12 is not a good program. It's not a good fit for Denver.
13 I do fully support Moms' Bill, SB 14-136, and I think
14 with the number of things that you've heard I think it's
15 very important that you slow down this process, that we
16 can gather the information that we need.

17 I am a Jefferson County teacher. I coached
18 at Alameda, Jefferson County, and Columbine High School.
19 I'm a Columbine graduate. I've been instrumental in
20 helping youth in the private sector and public sector. I
21 appreciate your positions here as the School Board. This
22 is the first time I've had an opportunity to speak to
23 you.

24 With the different things that are happening
25 with this bill I understand it to be, just like the



1 Obamacare bill that was pushed across the board before
2 people knew everything that was involved in it, it's kind
3 of the same process I understand is happening here, and
4 I'd like for you guys to just totally slow down this
5 process, take a look at everything that you have, take a
6 look at everything that people are saying, our parents
7 are saying, our teachers are saying, and just know that
8 I'm very community oriented. I served as an election
9 judge at the Denver Commission for over 10 years.

10 I do everything that I can to help our kids,
11 and I just appreciate your time and understanding that we
12 do not support this program here and we do support, and
13 I'd like for you to take a look at SB 14-136, the Moms'
14 Bill, and just allow that to be supported. And I
15 appreciate your time and your patience and your ability
16 to listen to the folks in Denver, in all of these school
17 districts. Thank you for your time.

18 (Applause)

19 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you. Jack
20 Matthews. Jack Matthews.

21 MR. MATTHEWS: Thank you, Board. Thank you
22 for listening to me today. I know it's late so I'll try
23 to keep this as a fast as I can.

24 My name is Jack Matthews. I'm an
25 individual, a business owner in the Denver area. My wife



1 and I own and operate a scientific laboratory here in
2 Denver, so we're interested in STEM students. That's
3 primarily our goal. We're also interested, of course, in
4 the wellbeing of Colorado since we live here.

5 I unfortunately don't have any children so I
6 can't come to you as a parent, but as a future employer,
7 hopefully, of some of the products of your school system
8 I am interested in what is going to take place in the
9 future.

10 We did not understand much about Common Core
11 since we don't have kids in school. Obviously this day-
12 to-day school stuff we're not familiar with. However, we
13 do have a lot of friends, thankfully, who have problems
14 and issues with kids, and we try to be there to support
15 our friends because kids are sometimes issues, right,
16 especially the teenagers. I was one of those.

17 However, the thing that I'm most curious
18 about is how our students are going to be trained and the
19 methodologies used to teach them, primarily mathematics,
20 since that's a favorite of mine. I am a material
21 scientist and a chemical engineer, so those things are
22 near and dear to my heart. And so I just took a look to
23 find out if I could help the students, or the children of
24 my friends, and if this was going -- Common Core and
25 PARCC were going to be an issue for them, or if this was



1 just kind of blown kind of, you know, out of proportion,
2 as sometimes we can do, especially with social media
3 nowadays.

4 And in investigating the -- the standard as
5 well as some of the assessment samples that were sent out
6 there were some concerns that I had that I thought were
7 worth really evaluating, primarily the -- what I would
8 consider the disconnect between natural numbers and
9 natural learning of numbers, and some of the abstract or,
10 I guess, alternative methods for training addition,
11 multiplication, things like the lattice process, which I
12 know -- I mean, I learned those things as well, but they
13 were curiosities. They were not standard instruction for
14 me.

15 My instruction was basically based in Saxon.
16 I think most of you are familiar with that particular
17 rigor. But I'm also very fond of Singapore. I think
18 that's also a very rigorous standard. But I -- I'm very
19 concerned that the Common Core methods that are being
20 used are going to leave our students, our future STEM
21 students with a severe disconnect. You and I think about
22 the multiplication table and we carry that around in our
23 mind every day. I'm afraid that for them that may not be
24 a possibility because they're going to be carrying around
25 a particular methodology in their mind. And that gives



1 me reason for pause and concern. You might find a way
2 around that, and that's fine if you do. But I'm
3 concerned that those methodologies are endemic within the
4 Common Core system.

5 So I would like to -- I would like to ask
6 you to consider two things, wherein technology does not
7 necessarily -- oh, my time is up. Let me skip to the
8 last page.

9 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Summary comment?

10 MR. MATTHEWS: Here it is. I would ask you
11 -- my demand action, I guess, of the -- of the Board is
12 to write, craft, and send a letter to the Colorado
13 General Assembly asking them to pause on PARCC and asking
14 them to stop Common Core, or at least for a year, until
15 we can get public assessment. Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you.

17 (Applause)

18 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: So that is the end of the
19 list of people who had signed up to speak. I know that
20 Senator Marble had come into the room. I don't know
21 whether she has an interest in speaking at all, or -- no?
22 Okay. But I would offer the opportunity for other
23 individuals who are interested in speaking. If we could
24 get another list going, it appears. We need to keep
25 moving because, as I've said several times, we need to



1 move on to another event, but, sir, if you'd state your -
2 -

3 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: (Indiscernible.)

4 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: I'm not going to cut off
5 public comment.

6 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Can we have public
7 comment tomorrow afternoon? I don't want to cut off
8 public comment. Do you?

9 MS. NEAL: Well, the legislators --

10 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: How many people have --
11 well, the legislators will, in fact, be waiting for us.
12 How many people have -- would like to speak and have not
13 spoken before? So we've got three or four that have not
14 spoken before. Because I would -- you know, people have
15 made the trip. I would like to give them the
16 opportunity.

17 Sir, if you'd -- we'll take the people that
18 would like to speak and have not spoken before. Okay.
19 Thank you.

20 MR. TIMOTHY: Well, I know the time is late.
21 My name is -- I appreciate it, State Board members,
22 Commissioner Hammond. My name is Al Timothy. I'm a
23 concerned citizen here to voice support for the Colorado
24 Academic Standards, which this Board passed a number of
25 years ago, and the recent improvements that you made to



1 them.

2 I recently retired from MillerCoors Brewing
3 Company after 30 years, where I served as vice president
4 of public affairs there. I can tell you that the
5 business community, as a whole, understands both the
6 moral and economic urgency to improve our public
7 education system. It's the feeder system for our future
8 workers and our customers.

9 But I can also speak to a critical issue
10 that probably needs more attention than it's getting.
11 I'm not sure our state -- I'm not sure our state, a lot
12 of our high school students, in particular, are really
13 taking note of the rapidly changing education-to-
14 workforce pipeline. It's -- it used to be that a young
15 person could graduate from high school and land a secure,
16 well-paying job in the manufacturing field, a place like
17 MillerCoors, without going to college or having the
18 required technical training.

19 Those days are pretty much gone. The
20 manufacturing process is so technically advanced now, and
21 as a result, the work environment relies on critical
22 thinking and resourceful problem solving. The
23 manufacturing jobs of today and tomorrow pay high wages
24 but also require high skills. So employers expect K
25 through 12 education to align with the knowledge and



1 skills that our young people need to be ready for college
2 and career in an increasingly competitive global economy.

3 I see Colorado's recent adoption of higher
4 academic standards as a crucial step in the right
5 direction. It moves us towards a more rigorous and
6 relevant way to educate our kids for the realities of the
7 21st century.

8 I'd be remiss if I didn't acknowledge what I
9 consider a grim reality. Your decision to adopt higher
10 standards which are aligned to Common Core has
11 unfortunately become the center of much controversy and
12 acrimony. All of us know that many of the claims made
13 about Colorado academic standards -- they're Colorado
14 academic standards, not federal standards. They're not
15 brought to us by the Federal Government. You all
16 developed these, throughout the state.

17 They're -- all -- a lot of these claims are
18 simply untrue. So the State Board and all stakeholders,
19 including the business community, have to help parents,
20 students, teachers, and the general public really
21 understand these new standards. We have to educate
22 Coloradoans about the importance -- this important step
23 in the right direction. Raising academic standards for
24 students, at every grade level, is difficult, obviously,
25 and the testing issue I understand is a tough one. But



1 it's necessary to undertake and here's why.

2 Last comment. In business there is a
3 fundamental principle that says what gets measured gets
4 done. It's accountability that drives the continuous
5 improvement in business, and the same is true for our
6 schools. Highly rigorous standards and assessments are
7 critical to delivering quality education. The heightened
8 expectations embedded in Colorado academic standards --
9 not federal core standards -- Colorado academic
10 standards, that you all put together, after years of
11 work, these are needed and are critical in delivery
12 quality education.

13 The heightened expectation embedded in the
14 Colorado academic standards are the right thing for
15 students, and make no mistake about it, they're the right
16 thing for teachers. The business community appalls the
17 adoptions of the Colorado academic standards and to
18 include them as a part of academic standards -- it would
19 -- I am incredulous to think that we would walk away from
20 these standards, and the business community needs
21 students who can achieve to them. Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you very much.

23 Cami Hewlett (ph), and then Barbara Hewlett (ph) follows
24 Cami.

25 MS. HEWLETT: I am a senior in high school



1 and I am a part of a parent-guided program that turned
2 charter this year. And this year I was put into an AP
3 comp -- composition class, and in the very first class
4 the teacher told me that she didn't expect any of us to
5 pass the test at the end of the year and that she would
6 not be teaching what would be on the test.

7 Also, when I took the ACT last year, I --
8 first of all, I do not do well with tests. And so when I
9 got my ACT score in the mail I had to stand at the table
10 for a little bit and tell myself that my score did not
11 define me or define what I know, or let it discourage me
12 from what colleges I wanted to attend.

13 And so please support the Moms' Bill. Thank
14 you.

15 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you.

16 (Applause)

17 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Barbara Hewlett.

18 MS. HEWLETT: Thank you, Mr. Lundeen. We
19 drove all the way from Montrose, so thank you very much
20 for --

21 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you for making the
22 trip.

23 MS. HEWLETT: -- allowing us this time.

24 I am so saddened that this has become a
25 political issue. As I researched every page of 212 and



1 191, both parties were involved. It set us up for Common
2 Core. I just got off the phone, just yesterday, with my
3 superintendent, with her assuring me that Common Core was
4 the floor, not to worry about Common Core. It was the
5 floor. So when we talk about these wonderful standards,
6 remember Common Core is the floor. But it's much, much
7 deeper than that.

8 This is not about politics. It's about our
9 children, parents, and citizens, of which you all have
10 been elected to be our voice. As parents, we have worked
11 on this bill -- Democrats, Republicans, non-affiliates,
12 and independents -- and guess what? It was never a
13 political issue. It was about our children. Because we
14 didn't make it about politics, we continued to make it
15 about our children.

16 The unfortunate part about Common Core and
17 PARCC is it about -- it is about the money. 212 had to
18 set that ground work to get Race to the Top money. If
19 you read all of 212, all of 191, and the Phase 3
20 application for Race to the Top money you will understand
21 why I make this statement.

22 Now back in -- when I copied it I didn't
23 copy the date, but last summer I sent a letter to CDE,
24 and I don't think that each one of the members got it.
25 But I asked for the bandwidth, and I never received --



1 all of those questions that I asked about the computers,
2 the cost, the bandwidth. And also as I studied Race to
3 the Top I see Melissa Colesman's name. I would like to
4 know if she has funded her position to support Common
5 Core, if that position is funded by Race to the Top
6 money. I would also like to know if Kerry Markel's (ph)
7 position is funded by Race to the Top money.

8 Now I can do a quora on this, or --

9 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Well, let me save you the
10 time. No.

11 MS. HEWETT: Neither one. So were those
12 positions before?

13 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Yes.

14 MS. HEWETT: Okay. Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Absolutely.

16 MS. HEWITT: Okay. Thank you. Please
17 support our Moms' Bill. We all worked on it, all
18 parties. This isn't about politics. It's about our
19 children. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you.

21 (Applause)

22 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Anita Stapleton.

23 MS. STAPLETON: Thank you, Commissioner
24 Hammond, and State School Board for this opportunity to
25 speak. Last month I shared -- and I'm Anita Stapleton



1 from Pueblo County -- last month I shared with the Board
2 that I was discouraged and dismayed. Today I am here to
3 tell you I am encouraged and revived. I'm going to share
4 a piece of non-approved, non-Common Core literature. No,
5 it does not have profanity or pornography. Joshua 1:9 --
6 Have I not commanded you be strong and courageous? Do
7 not be frightened and do not be dismayed, for the Lord
8 your God is with you wherever you go.

9 Every month I try really hard to articulate
10 some profound words that will stir an awakening in this
11 elected Colorado School Board, something to lift the
12 smoke so you all can see the continuous demise of our
13 education system as a result of committing to the Common
14 Core for the bribe money and all of its mandates. I
15 graciously apologize, as I am reminded it is not me who can
16 do this but God.

17 Today I can see God moving. We are gaining
18 more grassroots citizens coming together to voice the
19 concerns over Common Core. Homeschool parents and
20 students raising their concerns as they see that soon all
21 curriculum will be driven by the test, whether that be
22 assessments or college entrance.

23 Today I have with me letters of opposition
24 to Common Core to enter into evidence. The first month I
25 did this we had 84. Today I have 437, with a total of



1 901 letters. Each day I receive more from concerned
2 Coloradoans. This is God moving through our state.

3 I also see God moving through the country.
4 Out of 46 states who committed to Common Core 30 -- 30 --
5 are actively working to either pause the implementation,
6 repeal it, or pull out of one part or the other, whether
7 it be the data-mining or the testing. Nine of 25 states
8 have pulled out of PARCC, with 7 currently working to do
9 the same. This will drive the cost of PARCC up. It
10 takes 15 to meet that consortium criteria. Smarter
11 Balance is losing ground as well. Alaska, who joined
12 Smarter Balance in April of 2013 and adopted the math
13 standards, is now wanting out.

14 I urge this School Board to support Senate
15 Bill 136. Colorado needs to develop an appropriate task
16 force not influenced by special interest groups or
17 bureaucrats. We need educators who have spent time in
18 the classrooms and can bring their experience to the
19 table. All levels of education need to be represented.
20 Parents need to be part of this process as well. The re-
21 evaluation of the standards and the assessments needs to
22 be done, keeping students, teachers, principals, and
23 parents a priority. Colorado also needs to be more
24 fiscally responsible. By performing a thorough cost
25 analysis of the standards and assessments and any



1 instructional tools aligned.

2 I have two demands for this Board. First, I
3 want to know where did the \$5 million go, the funds that
4 were designated to establish administrative positions to
5 help districts make smooth transitions to Common Core. I
6 want evidence, factual dollars that have been spent. I
7 also want to know what districts have received mentorship
8 and which have not. Where are those cadres? I know some
9 districts have been coddled and I know my district,
10 Pueblo 70, has not. I am furious that my students'
11 introduction time -- instruction time has been cut by 30
12 minutes each day out of a four-day school week so
13 teachers can do their professional development -- and I
14 am just about done.

15 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Summary thought.

16 MS. NEAL: No, you are done.

17 MS. STAPLETON: I am told that the union
18 down in Pueblo has restrained the school and that they
19 want \$25 an hour to the teachers to finish their
20 professional development.

21 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you.

22 MS. STAPLETON: Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Dr. George Walker.

24 (Applause)

25 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Three minutes, George.



1 MR. WALKER: I'd like to react to some of
2 the things I've heard here today.

3 First of all, I'm George Walker, CU
4 graduate, fourth-generation graduate. I've been told I'm
5 the first or only person of black and Cherokee Indian to
6 run for governor. I ran as a Republican in '94.
7 Colorado Public Radio this morning said this was a
8 Republican effort that probably wouldn't go anywhere.
9 Well, people are denying it's a Republican effort.

10 First of all, to the best of my knowledge,
11 we joined the consortium because the funds were not
12 available to develop all these tests on our own. Second
13 of all, if you want to delay the test, I think that might
14 be a good idea if the Republican Party would pay for the
15 extra time and money that would take, because keep in
16 mind the Republican Party defeated the measure in 2011,
17 by Senator Heath, and it defeated 66 last fall, and it
18 defeated Lobato. If those measures would have passed we
19 would have had enough money to do this right.

20 So my opinion is, you know, talking about
21 it's not a Republican effort, I haven't noticed any other
22 people black in this room except for myself. I'd like
23 to, tomorrow, and be closely monitoring talking to Ryan
24 Cole (ph), the chair of the Republican Party, about how
25 many blacks, Native American Indians, Latinos, and Asians



1 support calling back Common Core or delaying it for a
2 year.

3 Let's say if this has been made into a party
4 issue, let's see if it's a racial issue, because I've
5 been talking to you for four years, since 1910, telling
6 you, ever since 1920, blacks, Latinos, Native American
7 Indians have been telling you these tests are not valid,
8 they're unfair, they're reliable because of the same
9 groups of people end up on the bottom and the top. We've
10 been telling you that but you haven't listened -- nothing
11 personal -- you haven't listened for 100 years. And now
12 that Anglos are discovering that maybe they won't be able
13 to control the curriculum and agenda like they used to
14 because the numbers of people of color is going up,
15 they're getting scared.

16 I respect their saying we want our culture
17 and our people recognized and valued. I like Ernest
18 Hemingway. I met him in 1960. I took two semesters of
19 Shakespeare. When you're passing for (indiscernible),
20 that's how I got in the same university medical school
21 (indiscernible) graduate work. I learned the game. If
22 you want to pass for white, go to operas, symphonies,
23 ballets, the classics. But I'm saying that isn't all
24 there is. And so I'm going to try to push for let's
25 rescind this. Let's do it right. But Republicans, let's



1 have some responsible funding. You're asking for
2 champagne on a beer budget. We are still in the lowest
3 quartile in this nation when it comes to state funding.
4 So if you want it help up for a year, pay for it.

5 Great-granddad George Washington Walker was
6 the first black millionaire out of slavery in Kansas oil.
7 He used to say all the time --

8 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: I've got to cut you off.

9 MR. WALKER: -- it takes money to buy land.
10 Come up with the money.

11 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you, Dr. Walker.
12 Deborah Singer. And Deborah is our final speaker today.

13 MS. SINGER: I want to say thank you for all
14 of you that stayed here, because I figured I wasn't going
15 to say anything. I'm a concerned grandmother and mom.
16 Colorado is my home. And I was a teacher's aide back in
17 Hillsborough County in Florida, many years ago. I got a
18 chance to work with elementary school children and high
19 school children. And one of the things that really
20 struck me -- I'm a creative individual. I've been a
21 massage therapist for 21 years. I was a nurse's aide for
22 13 years.

23 And during that time there was a term we
24 used -- and I switch subjects very quickly because I know
25 I want to get through this -- there's a word we use,



1 contraindicative. It means that when you're in the
2 medical profession or in the massage therapy industry you
3 ask questions about conditions a person has. Why?
4 Because you don't want to hurt them. You want to make
5 sure that the treatment or the massage you give them does
6 them good. They get off the table, they leave the
7 doctor's office, the hospital, whatever it is, that they
8 are better for the treatment or massage they received.

9 I personally, after investigating and
10 reading and attending seminars about Common Core
11 curriculum, the data-mining and the PARCC testing, I
12 think it is contraindicative to the wellbeing of the
13 children in our schools here in Colorado. And not of
14 Colorado but I'm concerned about our nation. I love this
15 country. I love the freedoms. I've spoken to people who
16 come from other nations and they're shocked at the
17 violation of our freedoms that are taking place at this
18 time and date.

19 And you know what? I have a deep respect
20 for every one of you. You're valuable people. You do
21 something. You have something in you that obviously you
22 want to serve this state and its educational excellence.

23 I beseech you from my heart to consider
24 every person who has spoken -- those that are pro and
25 those that are against Common Core curriculum. I think



1 you have a conscience in all of you, and I say thank you
2 for listening to your conscience, and to your heart, that
3 you realize -- I can't imagine any of you, if you're not
4 parents you know people that are. Grandparents, parents,
5 aunts, uncles -- and you care for the children of this
6 nation.

7 I have a ten-month-old grandbaby. She lives
8 in Georgia with her mom and daddy, my son and daughter-
9 in-law. My son has served 12 years in the United States
10 Air Force. And I've got tell you, I'm concerned about
11 her in Georgia as well as the kids here in Colorado.

12 God bless all of you and may you sleep well
13 tonight. And enjoy that apple pie too.

14 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: Thank you very much.

15 (Applause)

16 CHAIRMAN LUNDEEN: And unless there are
17 other speakers we're going to call it a day with that, so
18 thank you all for coming out. We appreciate you coming
19 and sharing your opinions.

20 We will stand in recess until 9 a.m.
21 tomorrow morning.

22 (Meeting adjourned)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Kimberly C. McCright, Certified Vendor and Notary, do hereby certify that the above-mentioned matter occurred as hereinbefore set out.

I FURTHER CERTIFY THAT the proceedings of such were reported by me or under my supervision, later reduced to typewritten form under my supervision and control and that the foregoing pages are a full, true and correct transcription of the original notes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 15th day of February, 2019.

/s/ Kimberly C. McCright
Kimberly C. McCright
Certified Vendor and Notary Public

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