



COLORADO
Department of Education

Colorado State Board of Education

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
BEFORE THE
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION COMMISSION
DENVER, COLORADO
March 12, 2015, Part 5

BE IT REMEMBERED THAT on March 12, 2015, the
above-entitled meeting was conducted at the Colorado
Department of Education, before the following Board
Members:

Marcia Neal (R), Chairman
Angelika Schroeder (D), Vice Chairman
Steven Durham (R)
Valentina (Val) Flores (D)
Jane Goff (D)
Pam Mazanec (R)
Debora Scheffel (R)



1 MADAM CHAIR: The meeting will come back to
2 order. Lieutenant Governor.

3 MR. GARCIA: Madam Chair, members of the
4 Board, Commissioner, it's a pleasure to be here. As you
5 noted, Madam Chair, I was not at your last Board meeting,
6 and it has been my goal, over the last four years, to try
7 to attend all of your Board meetings, to just speak
8 briefly to the Board and to talk about issues, both
9 issues of the administration, because I serve, of course,
10 as lieutenant governor, but also issues with the
11 Department of Higher Education, because I serve as the
12 executive director of that department, and because the
13 Department of Higher Ed and the Department of Education
14 work so closely together. That hasn't always been the
15 case but I am here, especially for you new Board members,
16 to let them know how critically important that has been.

17 We worked together -- and, in fact, we were
18 just talking about the time when we met together as the
19 Commission on Higher Ed, together with the Board of
20 Education, and I hope to have the opportunity to do that
21 again because, again, we have many goals, shared goals,
22 and what we are all very focused on, of course, is
23 improving the quality of education, from K through 12 and
24 beyond, here in Colorado, and to improve outcomes for all
25 Colorado residents.



1 And that's where we've been focused. We
2 work with the Department and our senior staff, and even
3 below that, work very hard to make sure that we're trying
4 to align the goals of the Department of Higher Education
5 with the goals of this Board and this Department.

6 And so, for example, one of the things that
7 we worked very hard on is addressing the remediation rate
8 for incoming college students. That is not something
9 that the Department of Higher Education can address by
10 itself. And we know that when we have as many as 40
11 percent of all Colorado students coming to higher
12 education needing remedial coursework, we know that
13 impacts costs, both for the state and for the student,
14 and it impacts outcomes, successful outcomes for those
15 ambitious college students who arrive but are not ready
16 to do college-level work.

17 So we have worked very hard, again, with
18 your Department to make sure that we're trying to, or at
19 least thinking about aligning graduation requirements
20 with admissions requirements. It seems like a natural
21 thing to do, but it's certainly not always been the case.
22 As we have worked, thinking about college and career
23 readiness, that's important to you, and certainly it's
24 important to the Department of Higher Ed, and it's
25 important to the state, again, because it affects not



1 just educational outcomes but because it impacts the
2 quality of our workforce.

3 Colorado, to sustain its economy, must have
4 a competitive workforce. It can't do that without having
5 high-quality academic programs at all levels.

6 That's particularly true -- oh, Madam Chair.

7 MADAM CHAIR: Can I ask a question about the
8 students that are not ready to go to college? Have you
9 ever talked about -- and I know there have been a few
10 examples of this -- if you have a college and a high
11 school in the same community, working together to get the
12 kids to take that course before they graduate, instead of
13 finding out when they go to school that they're not
14 competent and they've got to, you know, take that math
15 class?

16 I know that Mesa did that with Grand
17 Junction. I don't know if they still are. But it
18 suddenly really brought it home to the kids that, gee,
19 I've got to, you know, do this if I'm going to go to
20 college, which made them more likely to learn. So many
21 of them are sort of unconscious when they're actually in
22 high school and don't think that they -- you know,
23 they're wonderful.

24 So I think that would be a worthwhile thing
25 to have investigate, where possible, working together on



1 that instead of waiting until they get to college before
2 they have to take a class.

3 MR. GARCIA: That's an excellent point,
4 Madam Chair, and you're exactly right. Not just at
5 Colorado Mesa but many other schools are doing that,
6 working with local school districts so that students
7 know before they show up at college --

8 MADAM CHAIR: Yeah.

9 MR. GARCIA: -- whether they're ready. And
10 so that includes, for example, having some students as
11 early as ninth or tenth grade take the Accuplacer, just
12 to see whether they're ready, and if not, to help prepare
13 them.

14 We also, of course, as you know, see many
15 more students involved in concurrent enrollment so that,
16 again, students have the opportunity to determine whether
17 they're college ready and whether they can earn credits
18 at no cost to them. We know those students are far more
19 likely to move on to college and to complete more
20 quickly.

21 So that is our goal in this state, is to
22 have those linkages where there's not this bright line
23 between high school and college but where there's really
24 sort of a fuzzy line which allows students to either get
25 the remediation earlier, if they need it, or take



1 college-level classes if they're ready for it.

2 MADAM CHAIR: And it saves us money because
3 if they wait until they get to college they've got to pay
4 for their classes.

5 MR. GARCIA: That's right. The remediation
6 rate, Madam Chair, dramatically impacts costs, to the
7 student and the state. Right now we spend about \$50
8 million a year providing remedial coursework for
9 students, and those students are paying tuition, they're
10 spending time, they're not earning college credit. Those
11 students are far less likely to graduate and certainly
12 less likely to graduate on time.

13 MADAM CHAIR: Well, thank you. I was glad
14 you are paying attention to that.

15 MR. GARCIA: The other issue, Madam Chair,
16 that we are very focused on is our degree attainment gap.
17 We've all heard about the Colorado paradox for many
18 years, that we're a very well-educated state and yet we
19 don't do an above-average job in sending our own students
20 on to college. Many of our college graduates come from
21 outside of Colorado.

22 We see that particularly clearly when we
23 look our minority and rural populations. So while we
24 have a very high rate of adults with a postsecondary
25 credential, when you break it down by demographic groups



1 we see that we have some dramatic gaps. In fact,
2 Colorado has about the biggest gap in the nation between
3 its white majority and its minority groups, in terms of
4 college credential attainment -- four year, two year, or
5 certificate. And that's not because our minority
6 students do that much worse. It's because, frankly, our
7 white adults are so much better than the national
8 average.

9 But the gap is significant, and so we know
10 it's an issue for the State of Colorado and for our
11 economy, because we also know that as a state we are
12 number one or two in the nation in terms of the
13 percentage of jobs that will require a postsecondary
14 credential. So we need to do a better job of reaching
15 those populations, and the way to do that is, again, have
16 that linkage between higher education and the K-12 system
17 so that we're making sure students arrive at college
18 ready.

19 And let me just give you one quick piece of
20 data. That's what our department is about. It's really
21 about providing useful information to help establish
22 policy.

23 I asked our data staff this week, "Tell me,
24 what happens if we look at 100 Hispanic ninth-graders in
25 Colorado." So going back five years, we look at 100



1 Hispanic ninth-graders. Sixty-seven of those 100
2 graduated in four years. Of course, you know the
3 Hispanic graduation rate is lower than the overall
4 graduation rate. Of those 67, fewer than half, 28, went
5 on to college the next year. Most of those required
6 remediations, and of 28 going to college, only 20 came
7 back at the beginning of their second year, and of those
8 20, only 10 -- we're talking about 10 of those original
9 100 -- graduated with a credential within 150 percent of
10 time, that is, earned a four-year degree in six years or
11 a two-year degree within three years. That's not
12 significant just to those students or just to that
13 community. That's significant to our entire state and to
14 our economy. That's what we want to work on.

15 That's what we want to work on with you, and
16 I just want to thank you for the opportunity to be here
17 and present. You'll see me at most of your Board
18 meetings. I'll try to be brief, but I'm also here to
19 answer any questions you might have about the
20 administration's position or initiatives or those of the
21 Department of Higher Education.

22 Thank you, Madam Chair.

23 MADAM CHAIR: Thank you for your time.

24 Anybody with comments? Angelika.

25 MS. SCHROEDER: I'm curious, what



1 legislation, if any, for higher ed do you see across the
2 street or expect to see that's going to help get our kids
3 in and through? I guess it's our job to get them in, but
4 to get them through?

5 MR. GARCIA: Madam Chair, Madam Vice Chair,
6 the biggest issue is our budget. We are seeing -- we are
7 making a significant ask in terms of an increase in our
8 budget. After many years, the Department of Higher
9 Education getting cut, which results in dramatically
10 higher tuition for students, and thus limits access, we
11 are asking for another 10 percent increase. It could be
12 as much 12 1/2 percent increase in general fund operating
13 for the institutions.

14 But what's really key here, as a result of
15 the legislation passed last year, that money is going to
16 be allocated according to a formula which relies on
17 performance. Performance is a factor in that. So that
18 the degree to which an institution is successful in
19 moving students through graduation will impact the amount
20 of funding they receive, and even beyond that, the amount
21 of funding they receive per student will be impacted by
22 the number of low-income and minority students, so that
23 institutions will get a slight increase for working with
24 those harder-to-reach students. The students don't get
25 more money but the institutions do. So that's really



1 key.

2 And the other big piece I'd like to mention
3 is we're looking at not legislation this year but
4 something called "prior learning assessment." If we want
5 to reduce the time to graduation we want to be able to
6 give students, especially older adults who are returning
7 to college, credit for work that they've already done,
8 for knowledge they've already gained. So we're looking
9 at not just things like advanced placement test scores or
10 IB scores, but credit for, let's say, education received
11 while in the military, or on the job. How can we make
12 sure that institutions are giving fair and consistent
13 credit so that students don't have to go in and spend
14 money and time learning something they already know?

15 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you.

16 MADAM CHAIR: Val.

17 DR. FLORES: What's (indiscernible).

18 MADAM CHAIR: What?

19 DR. FLORES: You know, you and I have talked
20 about a carrot to get kids interested and looking forward
21 to college, like you and I did. I mean, we looked
22 forward to college, but we had carrots that helped us,
23 you know, attain that. And I just don't see enough
24 carrots for kids to look -- incentives, yes.

25 MADAM CHAIR: Excuse me just a minute. I



1 should have said this before. In order to get home to
2 Grand Junction I have to leave, so I'm turning it over to
3 the Vice Chair and you can finish your conversation.
4 Lieutenant Governor, thank you for coming. We always
5 enjoy having you here.

6 MR. GARCIA: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's
7 nice to see you again.

8 MADAM CHAIR: And we'll see you again.

9 MR. GARCIA: Yes, Dr. Flores, those
10 incentives are important. So one of the things, for
11 example, that we are doing this year, and did last year
12 for the first time, is Department of Higher Education,
13 working together with the Colorado Department of Labor
14 and Employment, produces a report that says here is the
15 difference in earnings for people who attend college --
16 to get a certificate, to get an associate degree, or a
17 bachelor's degree.

18 We are releasing a report in just a couple
19 of weeks called EdPays, Education Pays. It's not just
20 saying that college education pays more than not having a
21 college education. It's actually breaking it down, by
22 school and by program area. So you can see that a
23 business degree, for example, might pay more than a
24 psychology degree or an engineering degree more still,
25 or, frankly, a certificate. A trade certificate in



1 welding or machining may pay more than a bachelor's
2 degree in a liberal arts field. What we want to do is
3 make sure that families and students are more aware of
4 the way in which education will change their lives, not
5 just their incomes. And so we think that's one of the
6 carrots.

7 The other thing is we've invested
8 significant more. Last year, we increased the amount of
9 need-based financial aid in the state by 40 percent --
10 that's essentially \$40 million -- to make it more
11 affordable for students to go on to higher education,
12 because we know that cost is one of the things that
13 scares people away. We want them to know that they can
14 afford to go and that there is assistance available for
15 them.

16 DR. FLORES: Thank you.

17 MR. GARCIA: Thank you.

18 MS. SCHROEDER: (Presiding) Any other
19 questions?

20 Thank you so much for coming.

21 MR. GARCIA: Thank you, Madam Vice Chair.
22 It's nice to see you.

23 MS. SCHROEDER: Carry on.

24 MR. GARCIA: And welcome to the new Board
25 members. I know we'll be getting to know each other



1 well, and I just want to reiterate that I'm always happy
2 to come and meet with the Board, with senior staff, or
3 individual Board members, if they have questions about
4 higher ed policy or the administration's policy or
5 approach with respect to education issues. Thank you
6 very much.

7 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you, sir.

8 I believe Jennifer is next.

9 (Overlapping)

10 MS. SCHROEDER: Mr. Commissioner.

11 MR. HAMMOND: Oh, thank you.

12 (Indiscernible) for Jennifer's report, then any public
13 opportunity to comment.

14 MS. MELLO: Madam Vice Chair, good
15 afternoon. It's so nice to see you all again.

16 I fear that I'm beginning to sound a bit
17 like a broken record with you all because I think my
18 report will be a bit similar to what it was last time,
19 which is that, in essence, in terms of the really big,
20 substantive core issues that the General Assembly and you
21 all continue to consider, we really have not seen much
22 action at the Capitol since your last meeting in
23 February. It's March, right?

24 So as you know, there were a variety of
25 bills introduced relatively early on in session, both



1 Democrats and Republicans, that would make very
2 significant changes to our testing system, to standards,
3 to the accountability system. None of those bills has
4 yet to be considered by a committee. They are all still
5 waiting for their first hearing.

6 Part of, I believe, why they're waiting is
7 because there has been a great deal of effort at the
8 Capitol, for the last couple of months, and it has
9 certainly intensified in the last week, around coming up
10 with some sort of piece of legislation on that. I think
11 they've tried to find bipartisan way to create a bill to
12 implement the 1202 recommendations. Again, that has been
13 a very kind of active, behind-the-scenes process at the
14 Capitol for the last several weeks. I think that you
15 will see legislation introduced on that topic shortly,
16 today, perhaps, tomorrow, early next week. So there has
17 been progress made on that.

18 And again, it's my understanding -- and I
19 don't mean to suggest in any way, shape, or form that
20 every member of the legislature has signed off on the
21 bill or that everybody's down with it, but there has been
22 a great deal of work to try to ensure that, as
23 introduced, it has bipartisan support. So we will await
24 that eagerly and we will send it to you the minute it
25 happens.



1 Just quick updates on the bills that you all
2 have taken a position on. So Senate Bill 173 is the data
3 privacy bill. As introduced, the bill applied primarily
4 to vendors, to third-party vendors and talking about how
5 they needed to protect student data and what they could
6 and couldn't do. The bill was in committee a couple of -
7 - well, it may have just been a week ago; it feels like
8 longer at this point in the session -- it was in
9 committee a week ago and underwent a lot of amending, in
10 fact, so much amending that they just basically crossed
11 out what they started with and created a new bill. They
12 call it a strike below.

13 It now also puts some requirements on school
14 districts that didn't exist previously. A lot of why
15 they just decided to start fresh is they were making so
16 many kinds of technical changes to the bill that got
17 introduced, but it got really confusing to read. So much
18 of what changed in committee was not substantive. It was
19 really just kind of clean-up or technical or trying to
20 fix a little something that didn't get drafted quite
21 right. The exception to that being the inclusion of some
22 specific things that school districts need to do.

23 Additionally, there was an amendment added
24 that -- and I'm just going to pull it up here because I
25 don't want to speak wrongly to it -- that essentially



1 requires kind of a public and conspicuous -- it uses the
2 word "conspicuous" -- posting of a whole bunch of
3 different information, such as the name, contact
4 information, and location of any data repository where
5 data is kept; the principal purpose or purposes for which
6 covered information is going to be used; a data
7 dictionary; the process by which covered information is
8 collected; the operators' policies and practices
9 regarding storage, retrievability, access controls,
10 retention, and disposal. I'm not going to keep reading
11 to you because I don't think that's helpful.

12 DR. FLORES: Are you talking about third
13 parties?

14 MS. MELLO: Yes. It does specifically apply
15 to third parties. I will tell you that I think there are
16 negotiations happening now, because there are people who
17 don't like this language and would like to soften it.
18 They feel like it goes too far in terms of the
19 restrictions and requirements it puts on third-party
20 vendors.

21 I mean, I don't, obviously -- my personal
22 opinion doesn't matter. I don't have a particular
23 position on that. This is something we're going to talk
24 about at the Leg. contact meeting next week, now that we
25 have a version of the bill that we can kind of go through



1 with all of the changes. So we'll discuss that with the
2 Leg. contacts and then if they want to make any
3 recommendation to you all about position or changing
4 position then we'll go through that process.

5 MR. DURHAM: Thank you. Would you mind
6 providing a list of the vendors that have been involved
7 in trying to oppose or modify this bill, particularly
8 whether or not Pearson is one of them?

9 MS. MELLO: Madam Vice Chair, Board Member
10 Durham, I would be happy to look that up.

11 MR. DURHAM: Thank you.

12 DR. FLORES: May I ask something? May I,
13 Madam Chair?

14 MS. SCHROEDER: Yes.

15 DR. FLORES: It's not only vendors but what
16 about nonprofits and such that are, you know, that have
17 been pushing this as well?

18 MS. MELLO: Madam Vice Chair, Doctor Flores,
19 so anybody who is working on a bill has to tell the
20 Secretary of State that, so we're happy to pull the
21 information for this bill and let you know who has
22 indicated that they're lobbying the bill, one way or
23 another, with the Secretary of State.

24 DR. FLORES: All right. But sometimes they
25 don't, and we know they are. So you probably know.



1 MS. MELLO: Madam Vice Chair, Dr. Flores, I
2 mean, I'm happy -- if I see an -- if there's an obvious
3 exclusion from the Secretary of State I'm happy to, of
4 course, provide you any additional information that I
5 have. I may not know every single person but I will
6 certainly look at the list, and if I say, oh, wow, I know
7 so-and-so has been involved it and they're not listed
8 here, I'm happy to add that information.

9 DR. FLORES: Because that was a very large -
10 - very large group of people that failed the seek (ph)
11 when that report was made public, as the capsule (ph).

12 MS. MELLO: Okay.

13 MS. SCHROEDER: Jane.

14 MS. GOFF: Can you refresh my memory? The
15 amendment that was added -- and it was called
16 complications --

17 MS. MELLO: Conspicuously?

18 MS. GOFF: Yeah. I just blanked out. What
19 was that amendment over?

20 MS. MELLO: Madam Vice Chair, Board Member
21 Goff, I believe the intention of that amendment by the
22 folks who offered it and were successful at adding it to
23 the bill thought that the original bill did not go far
24 enough, in terms of protecting student data, and so they
25 wanted to impose some additional requirements on both



1 vendors and school districts about, you know, telling
2 everybody what's being collected and why it's being
3 collected and where it's being posted and where it's
4 being held, and all of that.

5 Now, you know, it's always dangerous to
6 speak to intention, right? So that is based on my
7 observation of the hearing. That's what they said.

8 MS. GOFF: I'm not sure exactly what it was.
9 It didn't seem like that. It seemed like there was more
10 of a specific direction. It really didn't feel like it
11 would impact our discussion too much. Maybe I'll Jeanine
12 (ph). We might rev it up together. Steve might help me
13 remember. It just seemed like it was more concrete with
14 that, but it would have involved some different kind of
15 approach, on the part of the legislature, not so much us.

16 MS. MELLO: Madam Vice Chair, Board Member
17 Goff, I mean, I think probably the easiest way for me to
18 make sure I'm answering your question and getting you the
19 information you need, they just released what they call a
20 pre-amended version of the bill. It's a quite helpful
21 document because it shows all of the changes in one
22 place. And that was what I intended to use as part of
23 our discussion at the legislative contact meeting next
24 week, so that we could go through it in more detail.

25 MS. GOFF: Could I ask you something? I'm



1 just curious why all these proceedings occur around a
2 bill. Is testimony recorded? How do we ultimately get
3 to the place where we can say this was the legislative
4 intent? Is there testimony that's recorded so you can go
5 back and read and sort of tease out what was the intent
6 of the various members?

7 MS. MELLO: I think (indiscernible).

8 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: (Indiscernible)

9 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: You have to recognize
10 her so she can answer it.

11 MS. SCHROEDER: Excuse me.

12 MS. MELLO: They do record the hearings, and
13 we -- I mean, it's not uncommon to go back and say, "Oh,
14 I want to see exactly what that person said."

15 MS. GOFF: Okay.

16 MS. MELLO: So I think there's a variety of
17 ways that legislative intent can be expressed. Certainly
18 listening to what people say at hearings is one of them.

19 MS. GOFF: Okay. Thanks. I just wasn't
20 sure. I knew the federal part.

21 Why are you laughing?

22 MR. DURHAM: Madam Chair.

23 MS. SCHROEDER: Sure.

24 MR. DURHAM: The courts generally try and
25 look at the written word as opposed to trying to call out



1 what might have been in the mind of a particular
2 legislator, because it is a collective act to pass a
3 bill, and so you essentially 100 intents, so it's
4 difficult to pull that out. As one who has been deposed
5 several times on my intent, I can tell you if it goes
6 back more than a week I have no vague idea of what I was
7 doing.

8 MS. GOFF: Or what you said.

9 MR. DURHAM: Yeah. So it really is just --
10 the printed word on the page is really the most reliable.

11 MS. GOFF: Okay. Thank you.

12 MS. SCHROEDER: Any more, Jennifer?

13 MS. MELLO: I am happy, if you all are tired
14 and would like to be done, and this is enough information
15 for you, that will not hurt my feelings. I can tell you
16 about a few more bills that you've taken positions on if
17 you'd like to hear that as well.

18 DR. FLORES: Please.

19 MS. MELLO: I will continue.

20 So you all have also taken a support
21 position on the bill that would provide grants to BOCES
22 and rural school districts to work together to think
23 about how they can find some efficiencies in their kind
24 of back-office functions, right? I think, again, the
25 concept here is that we are in a climate, and we will



1 likely continue to be in a climate of limited resources.
2 Rural school districts, in particular, have struggled to
3 implement some of the changes in education policy adopted
4 by the legislature and the Board. And so this is a way
5 of saying, all right, we're going to incentivize you guys
6 to work together to see if you can find some economies of
7 scale on the things that don't really kind of touch
8 students, so to speak, so the actual in-the-classroom
9 work. But, you know, your payroll and your accounting
10 and that kind of thing.

11 That bill, you all support it. It came out
12 of the House Education Committee on Monday, on a 10-1
13 vote. Elliott Asp from the Department spoke to the bill.
14 Almost always at the Department, we very rarely, as you
15 know -- we don't take a lot of positions, so not only did
16 he speak to the bill and help explain how it would work,
17 he was able express you all's support for the
18 legislation.

19 MS. SCHROEDER: And that has a \$10 million
20 fiscal note. Is that correct?

21 MS. MELLO: Madam Vice Chair, at this point,
22 yes, that is correct. And the next stop for that bill is
23 in House Appropriations, and that hearing has not been
24 scheduled yet.

25 The final bill that you all have taken a



1 position on is House Bill 1125, by Representatives
2 Lundeen and Senator Holbert. This is one of those big
3 bills that talks about academic standards and assessments
4 and all of that. Per my comments at the very beginning
5 that there were all those bills introduced early on, none
6 of them have been heard in committee, this falls into
7 that category.

8 The only final thing I would say is that the
9 budget process is well underway. We had our figure-
10 setting for the Department of Education earlier this
11 week. The March revenue forecast will be presented next
12 Wednesday. That's kind of the final decisive piece of
13 information that the Budget Committee needs to finalize
14 all their budget decisions. And at this point the Senate
15 is scheduled to take up consideration of the long bill
16 the following week, so not next week but the week after.
17 So that process is moving apace.

18 MS. SCHROEDER: Who is going to carry that?

19 MS. MELLO: Madam Vice Chair, the long bill?

20 MS. SCHROEDER: Mm-hmm.

21 MS. MELLO: It's always carried by the
22 members of the JVC (ph). All six of them have their
23 names listed on it.

24 DR. FLORES: And so Wednesday -- do you know
25 the time?



1 MS. MELLO: You know -- Madam Vice Chair,
2 Dr. Flores -- I do have a time in my calendar but let me
3 check, because it often changes. So I'd rather just
4 check and I'll send out an email with better information.

5 That is also something that you can listen
6 to online. So would it be helpful if we provided the
7 kind of instructions for how you do that? Is that of
8 interest?

9 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: (Indiscernible) at
10 night.

11 MS. MELLO: Okay.

12 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: You what?

13 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Read it later that
14 night, all synthesized. Are there any of you that want
15 it?

16 DR. FLORES: Well, I'd like to
17 (indiscernible).

18 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Sure.

19 MS. MELLO: I will send out the information.

20 MS. SCHROEDER: Anything else? Any other
21 questions? Jane.

22 MS. GOFF: Probably not. I think you
23 answered it by stating none of those bills we saw have
24 been officially done. However, I did have a snippet of a
25 hint -- I don't know where I had it -- that 1123, which



1 was Senate -- or Representative Tate, Senator Tate? --

2 MS. MELLO: Representative.

3 MS. GOFF: -- sorry -- was pulled with no
4 clear answer where it went. Is that true? I -- when I --
5 - I just heard it briefly and I thought, well, maybe they
6 have it confused with another number, such as 1125. But
7 then I went and checked on 1125 and that was still good,
8 in place, going no new status. But the other one, do you
9 know, Jennifer? Do you know anything about 1123 being --

10 MS. MELLO: Madam Vice Chair, Board Member
11 Goff, it was scheduled for a hearing and then they
12 decided not to hear the bill that day. My guess is
13 that's what you're referring to.

14 MS. GOFF: They just changed the date.

15 MS. MELLO: That's correct, and at the
16 moment it is not scheduled for a hearing date. So that's
17 -- but I can understand why someone would ask that
18 question, right, because it was on the calendar and then
19 suddenly it wasn't. And it's just that they changed the
20 date. That's all.

21 MS. GOFF: Thank you.

22 MS. MELLO: Thank you.

23 MS. SCHROEDER: Thanks.

24 So the next item on the agenda is public
25 comment. If you have signed up for public comment I'll



1 call your name, ask you to come to the podium to address
2 the Board. Each person will have three minutes to
3 address the board. Mrs. Markel will be timing your
4 comments, and we ask that you stay within that
5 limitation.

6 DR. FLORES: Madam Chair.

7 MS. SCHROEDER: I'll do my best to watch,
8 but please help me because I'm paying attention to that
9 individual and then it doesn't --

10 DR. FLORES: Madam Chair, we stated that
11 public comment was going to be at 4:00. It's 20 'til.
12 If we could maybe have a few minutes to go to the
13 bathroom or get some water?

14 MS. SCHROEDER: Or how about before that, do
15 that and then come back and let's do the -- do we not
16 have -- did we have Board members?

17 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: No, we haven't done
18 Board reports.

19 MS. SCHROEDER: We haven't done Board
20 reports and I don't know where it is in here. I think
21 it's kind of missing. Why don't we do Board reports.

22 DR. FLORES: Okay. Did we do them
23 yesterday?

24 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: We didn't. We didn't
25 do it.



1 DR. FLORES: We didn't do them.

2 MS. SCHROEDER: Does anyone have anything to
3 report?

4 MS. MAZANEC: I do.

5 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you. Pam.

6 MS. MAZANEC: Like most of my reports is
7 that I just go see a HOPE Online learning center and I
8 was quite impressed with it.

9 The other thing I wanted to add is I said
10 this last month, I think, and I'd like to try again. I
11 want to get on the agenda to discuss whatever changes, if
12 any, we need to make to Board policy about election of a
13 Vice Chair in the event the Chair has to step down. So
14 can we get that on the agenda for next month? Do we have
15 time for that?

16 MS. SCHROEDER: This I don't know as yet. I
17 don't know. The reason it wasn't on the agenda, I think
18 you saw the agenda, and if I heard correctly --

19 MS. MAZANEC: Right. I'm just poking you.

20 MS. SCHROEDER: -- you didn't -- we've not
21 forgotten at all.

22 MS. MAZANEC: Okay.

23 MS. SCHROEDER: But you did not respond
24 favorably when I suggested we were going to have to go
25 into three days.



1 MS. MAZANEC: No, I did not.

2 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: So, I mean, I ask your
3 patience on that. We know that that's what you'd like on
4 the agenda. This one -- this agenda had five-minute
5 items on it. Lucky, two items were removed right before
6 the Board meeting. Otherwise, we would be still way
7 behind at this point. So we've just had an awful lot. I
8 think the fact that we've been having charter appeals and
9 presentations by the school districts and a couple of
10 hearings with testimony -- I mean, maybe the agenda was
11 short for you but the agenda was kind of tight.

12 MS. MAZANEC: I do think it's an important
13 issue to visit, though.

14 MS. SCHROEDER: I agree. I agree. It is
15 not off of our radar. It's definitely on the list.

16 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Is that okay, Pam? Do
17 we have other things to say?

18 MS. MAZANEC: You know, in the next two
19 weeks I'd like to see where we are on getting it on the
20 agenda.

21 MS. SCHROEDER: As soon as the agenda comes
22 out, you'll see.

23 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: And I was thinking it's
24 the sense that maybe it's a legal issue too. I mean, you
25 have to look at the motion, what's in our rules, what's



1 in our policies and procedures. So maybe, you know, we
2 can get some research on it because it's a very quick
3 item.

4 MS. MAZANEC: Yeah. Maybe that would help.

5 MS. SCHROEDER: That's why I was looking at
6 you, Tony.

7 MS. MAZANEC: So I had another comment and
8 it was about the READ Act. I'm concerned that when is it
9 -- we opened rulemaking last time. We didn't address it
10 this time. We had a very full agenda. I just wanted to
11 make sure when it gets on the agenda again we have enough
12 time to think about the issues and we're not rushing to
13 quickly pass it.

14 MS. SCHROEDER: If I'm not mistaken, that's
15 on our agenda next time.

16 MS. MAZANEC: (Indiscernible) to look at it
17 again and to really go through (indiscernible).

18 MR. DURHAM: We noticed, or did we?

19 MS. MAZANEC: We noticed it last month.

20 MS. SCHROEDER: And we have the hearing now,
21 that's coming up?

22 MR. DURHAM: It would be May.

23 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: When do we have to vote
24 on it -- May?

25 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I thought it was April.



1 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I thought it was April.

2 MS. MARKEL: 2:00, April 8th.

3 MR. DURHAM: Okay. It's April.

4 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Is that when we have to
5 vote on it or talk about it again?

6 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Well, if it's unanimous
7 we can vote on it. Oh, sorry. Ms. Markel.

8 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Are we going to be
9 pressured to vote on this in April?

10 MR. DURHAM: No.

11 MS. MARKEL: (Indiscernible)

12 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Good.

13 MS. MARKEL: (Indiscernible)

14 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Yes. And then we still
15 have another month.

16 MS. MARKEL: Yes.

17 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Thank you. That's what
18 I wanted to know.

19 MR. DURHAM: Or you can pass it into
20 December.

21 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Thank you. I just
22 wanted to make sure we wouldn't be rushed, because a lot
23 of issues are. Thank you. That's all.

24 MS. SCHROEDER: Any other Board reports?

25 DR. FLORES: I'd like to have -- Madam



1 Chair, I would like to bring up the issue concerning our
2 meeting where we can openly discuss the PARCC testing. I
3 had asked for this --

4 MS. SCHROEDER: Right.

5 DR. FLORES: -- and --

6 MS. SCHROEDER: Can you narrow that down?
7 We've been discussing PARCC for about four years, and so
8 it would be helpful to have clarity as to what the topic
9 of the discussion is.

10 DR. FLORES: I think in April we will
11 probably get the results. We, the Board, will get the
12 results of PARCC.

13 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: No, we won't.

14 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: No. They won't even be
15 done.

16 MS. SCHROEDER: They won't even be done
17 testing until May.

18 DR. FLORES: Oh, I thought the teachers were
19 going to have a summary kind of report in May.

20 MS. SCHROEDER: Well, not to my knowledge.

21 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: It's not even over by
22 then.

23 MR. DURHAM: They were going to provide a
24 report once they get some results, some information for
25 you. I know we talked about it in June.



1 DR. FLORES: Well --

2 MR. DURHAM: We'll talk about this in June.

3 DR. FLORES: Okay. In June. Because I
4 thought that we were going to be getting some kind of
5 results in April, and then after that, in May -- I have
6 that written somewhere -- that then the teachers were
7 going to discuss it sometime in May. I think the Board
8 needs to really have a discussion.

9 MS. SCHROEDER: I hear what you say but your
10 information is not correct, and so I need some real
11 clarity about what you want to talk about, what
12 information needs to be available. If you're waiting to
13 get the feedback from the PARCC exam --

14 DR. FLORES: The PARCC people were here
15 today. I couldn't ask many questions, if you recall. I
16 asked questions and I was told that this was not the time
17 to ask questions.

18 MS. SCHROEDER: Okay. So let's work on
19 clarifying what your concerns are, because you've now
20 said several different things. One of them related to
21 the results and then having a conversation --

22 DR. FLORES: Yes, the results.

23 MS. SCHROEDER: Okay. The results will not
24 be back for quite a while. So do you want to wait until
25 then or is there another topic that you would like to



1 discuss before we have any kind of results from PARCC?

2 DR. FLORES: We haven't had really a
3 discussion about PARCC at all. We have not. We have had
4 bits and pieces of PARCC, and we have not joined --

5 MS. SCHROEDER: Let's work on this.

6 DR. FLORES: -- in a discussion.

7 MS. SCHROEDER: There's been no -- I don't
8 understand --

9 DR. FLORES: No, you do understand, because
10 I wrote a lengthy letter to everybody on this Board about
11 that meeting on PARCC. And so I think you know very
12 well. Everybody got it, I know. And so I would like to
13 put it somewhere in April, hopefully, where we have a
14 special session where we discuss PARCC.

15 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you.

16 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Well, we don't normally
17 do agenda setting here at the table. The agenda setting
18 is done through the Chair and the Vice Chair, and then we
19 find out about it.

20 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: This Board report time
21 is really time for us to talk about where we may have
22 been, how we've interacted with our constituents.

23 DR. FLORES: Okay.

24 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Some things that have
25 come up.



1 DR. FLORES: Well, we got on this topic and
2 so I can report on what I've done.

3 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Do you have something
4 to report?

5 DR. FLORES: Yes, I do. Thank you.

6 I did visit a Denver public school. I have
7 been -- in fact, I visited (indiscernible) House district
8 meeting where Common Core was being discussed, and one of
9 the people in the Department, unbeknownst to me, was
10 there and was discussing this. I also went to CAES and
11 CASB and I found those to be very helpful, especially
12 with the report that Elliott Asp gave. I found that very
13 helpful and I found another report at CASB that was
14 presented by a professor at --

15 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Lorri Shepard.

16 DR. FLORES: -- Lorrie Shepard, at the
17 University of Colorado-Boulder, and I found that very
18 helpful as well.

19 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you.

20 DR. FLORES: Thank you. And that's what
21 gave me -- led me to believe, I think, that there's a lot
22 of issues concerning PARCC that we need to decide.

23 MS. SCHROEDER: Steve.

24 MR. DURHAM: Thank you. I just would
25 observe that the rules of the Board allow three members



1 to call a special meeting any time they want to. So if
2 we think that it's a time to discuss something, I think
3 we can probably work together on that to get that done.
4 I think we're overdue for sort of an in-depth education
5 discussion. We've been killing a lot of flies and
6 putting out a lot of fires --

7 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: And starting some.

8 MR. DURHAM: -- and I don't think it lends
9 itself particularly to good policy, but it would be nice
10 if we had some of those other opportunities.

11 So I think in terms of a report, the only
12 thing I have to report is what I read in the paper this
13 morning. I always -- in the local paper they have some
14 article from 50 years ago today. And so 50 years ago
15 today, which would have been March of 1965, it says,
16 "Fourteen juniors at Bennett Hill Academy will take the
17 1965 National Merit Scholar qualifying test Saturday.
18 The test is a three-hour examination of educational
19 development and it is the first step in the 11th annual
20 competition for the four-year merit scholarship." I'm
21 finding it hard to believe things have improved since
22 1965.

23 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Except we've graduated
24 from high school.

25 MR. DURHAM: That was a good year.



1 MS. SCHROEDER: Jane.

2 MS. GOFF: Speaking of high school, I spent
3 a great afternoon with probably 10 or 12 high school
4 students from throughout CD-7. So these were kids who
5 are either in their junior or senior year in Adams County
6 district or in Jefferson County. It's the first time
7 that I've had lately to have just purely the student
8 interaction, and, you know, a little bit different than
9 what we have seen our high school students doing publicly
10 and newsworthy-making events.

11 But they were talking a lot about school and
12 about future in the sense of -- I will tell you, the A
13 word, "assessment" or the T word, "test" did not come up
14 at all in the conversation. And it was all about just
15 thinking ahead. And they really were interested in
16 professional things, in the sense of what is, you know,
17 the profession of an educator, in general. There wasn't
18 anything in particular. It was very interesting.

19 And they were concerned about school
20 finance. So we have, whether you call it or not, I guess
21 we've done a good job of raising the awareness and having
22 young people's ears perking up about how this work, what
23 it takes to run schools, fund them. But they were --
24 they've been paying attention to school finance
25 conversations, so we can look forward to that. That was



1 great.

2 Other than that, nothing of really great
3 note, out of the ordinary, but I do have the intention
4 and, gratefully, some opportunities to meet with high
5 school students, and in some regards, the middle school
6 age. But right now my focus, as far as student talking,
7 is early postsecondary or the last couple years of high
8 school. So it's been really fulfilling and rewarding and
9 pretty darn educational on my part, to hear some things.

10 So that's what I've been doing, other than
11 this agenda that we've all been working for the past
12 couple of months.

13 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you. All right, are
14 we ready to have members of the public please come speak
15 for a few minutes? I'd like to call Oscar Zavala,
16 please.

17 MR. ZAVALA: (Speaks Spanish)

18 MS. SCHROEDER: Gracias, Senor Zavala. It's
19 wonderful support for your son. Thank you.

20 Princess Mack.

21 MS. MACK: Good afternoon, Madam Vice Chair
22 and members of the Board. My name is Princess Mack and I
23 am here as a parent of two generations of children that
24 are 26 and 27 and 7 and 6. I also am a representative of
25 Together Colorado and Climb Higher.



1 The reason I am before you today is that I
2 would encourage that you embrace the Colorado Academic
3 Standards and flexible assessments. The reason for that
4 is because having raised two academically successful
5 adults and now having two little kiddos in the system, it
6 is imperative to me, especially by them being Heidi (ph)
7 scholars, that the assessments are not only tailored to
8 the success of our students, but that we, as parents and
9 staff members, know the growth of our students.

10 The reason that this is also important to me
11 is because, as I looked around the room today, what I
12 noticed is that everyone has a decorum or expectation of
13 decorum in this room. I believe that that comes through
14 many flexible assessments, or testing, so you know what
15 your level of expectation is and where your areas of
16 growth need to be.

17 I don't think that's any different from our
18 scholars. Our scholars and our families need to know
19 where our students are at academically. It ties
20 intricately into the student growth. It is not there for
21 you or for me or for anyone that is intertwined in our
22 children's education to not have an idea of where are
23 students are succeeding.

24 It is not fair for students to graduate and
25 not be able to compete in the market of career. It not



1 fair for them to have to stay in a certain geographical
2 area because if they move out of a geographical area they
3 will not be as successful as their counterparts who have
4 been able to have the testing that reflects what their
5 growth is and where their opportunities of excelling
6 could be, or their opportunities to address the
7 challenges.

8 I came here to read off of a paper but I
9 just want to really say there is an African thing that is
10 Sawubona, which means "I see you." And I am not here to
11 be combative with teachers or with the school board. I
12 want us to work in collaboration. But moreover, I want
13 us to see our children and I want our children to see
14 ourselves and where they achieve and not flounder through
15 our academic system. It is not fair for our children to
16 graduate and read on a third-grade level. If they want
17 to work at Walmart or Subway, that is wonderful, but I
18 want that to be an option, not a necessity.

19 Thank you very much.

20 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you very much.

21 Brent Owen?

22 MR. OWEN: Good afternoon, State Board
23 members, Commissioner Hammond. Thank you for giving me
24 the opportunity to speak today about the use of
25 assessments and standardized test in Colorado.



1 My name is Brent Owen and I am an associate
2 at Lewis Roca Rothgerber. It's a law firm here in town.
3 I'm a member of Colorado Succeeds, but I'm here today as
4 a new parent. I have a son who is a month and a half
5 years old, named Henry, and I'm here to speak to you from
6 my perspective as a new father about why high standards
7 and quality statewide tests are important.

8 The updated Colorado Academic Standards are
9 preparing students with the critical thinking skills and
10 the knowledge they need to succeed in career and life.
11 These are exactly the kinds of standards that I want my
12 son to learn. As a parent, I also want the peace of mind
13 that comes with a statewide assessment. The PARCC test
14 helps schools understand whether students are meeting the
15 benchmarks from one grade so they can move on to the
16 next. This is important information that, as a parent, I
17 can use to find the very best school for my son.
18 Comparing schools and finding the right fit would be
19 impossible without every Colorado school administering
20 the same high-quality test.

21 All that means is that I think the concern
22 about overtesting children is legitimate. As the
23 Standards and Assessment Task Force recently reported, it
24 is true that testing efficiency can be improved.
25 Duplicative testing should be eliminated. If the same



1 skill is being measured by multiple tests, the assessment
2 that most accurately compares to Colorado Academic
3 Standards should be used and the other tests should be
4 eliminated.

5 Another important finding by the task force
6 is that local assessments, not state tests, account for
7 the majority of time spent testing in all grade levels
8 across Colorado. Hearing this as a parent, I personally
9 want to know exactly how much time will be spent locally
10 in my son's classroom on testing. That is a better use
11 of resources than focusing on the less than 2 percent of
12 time he will be spending on the important statewide
13 tests.

14 Like any other change worth making, the
15 implementation for practical use of these new assessments
16 will take time, patience, and flexibility. Concerns such
17 as testing burden and access should not be a hindrance to
18 the great progress we've made in Colorado's education
19 system.

20 To put on my business hat for a moment,
21 companies are relying on our schools to produce students
22 who are ready for college and career, and these tests, as
23 well as the Colorado Academic Standards at their very
24 core, are the key to ensuring that Colorado's kids will
25 be ready for Colorado's jobs.



1 I am eager to see sensible change happen
2 without abandoning our strong standards, developed in
3 Colorado by Coloradans, and those aligned annual
4 statewide tests. Without them, I worry that the school
5 system just won't be a good place for my son.

6 The bottom line is that tests, in various
7 forms, are a reality of life. The Colorado Academic
8 Standards are the best option to test our kids. I worry
9 that a myopic focus on eliminating tests will undermine
10 Colorado education system.

11 Thank you for your time.

12 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you so very much.

13 Duncan Potter, and I'm not sure that I read
14 that properly.

15 Lynn Roberts.

16 MS. ROBERTS: I want to thank you for all
17 the time and work that you share with the children in the
18 state of Colorado, and I thank you for your recent
19 decision to protect the right of test refusal.

20 I am here as a parent of two children who
21 are served by a Montessori school in Denver Public
22 Schools, a Title 1 school. I am indebted to some
23 extraordinary individuals who have taught them things
24 that I couldn't have, and to Maria Montessori for her
25 groundbreaking work in developmental education for



1 children. I am thankful for the opportunity for my
2 children to go there.

3 Parents in Denver Public Schools, like
4 thousands and thousands of others in this state, have
5 critically examined the test and the culture surrounding
6 it. Like them, we have initiated exchanges with our
7 local administration and our board and we have been open
8 about our informed concerns. Like parents in every other
9 district in this state, we want a public education that
10 serves all children, that promotes equity, and that
11 builds our communities.

12 We watch thousands upon thousands of other
13 people's children be excused without consequence from
14 tests that have been proven neither reliable nor valid,
15 that violate our children's right to data privacy and
16 that occupy untold hours, more than 2 percent, of
17 instructional time with testing, test prep, and
18 infrastructure drills, which you have read about in lots
19 of stories. This is a system that serves only to further
20 polarize the diverse children and families who need each
21 other in a testing environment in which results correlate
22 most with ZIP code and family income.

23 We met with our district leaders in January
24 and we were told that despite Senate Bill 163, which
25 directs that test refusals not be counted as zeros, when



1 Denver Public School parents opt their children out,
2 their children's scores are counted as zeros in
3 accountability frameworks. We were clearly told that our
4 teachers' bonuses, \$7,000 of pre-Christmas bonus, would
5 be at risk, that our school may lose funding, that our
6 children won't be able to participate in field trips or
7 continuation ceremonies, and that we may even compromise
8 their college admissions.

9 We are further told that we are doing our
10 children and their peers a disservice - those learning
11 English, those with special needs, those who need more
12 instructional time, and are losing more to this testing
13 culture. The parents whose children's strengths these
14 tests don't capture are told that their professionally
15 prepared teachers might not know what to teach them to
16 help them be ready for postsecondary life, and the
17 families whose children are likely to score proficient
18 get subtle and not-so-subtle messages that this is what
19 they owe their school and their teachers.

20 Since your action last month we have
21 approached our district. We have asked them whether your
22 motions would make a difference for our teachers'
23 livelihood. We have not received an answer to repeated
24 questions about that. One of my friends said it so
25 clearly when we met with our district leaders: "Our



1 teachers are being used as human shields."

2 I care deeply about the freedom that my
3 school and my professional educators have to implement
4 what they know, to serve learners who are diverse in ways
5 that we value but can't quantify, to deliver a
6 developmentally appropriate education."

7 MS. SCHROEDER: Can you sum up your
8 presentation? I'm sorry.

9 MS. ROBERTS: Yes, I can. Let me skip
10 ahead.

11 MS. SCHROEDER: (Indiscernible)

12 MR. ROBERTS: But I'm concerned these tests
13 turn public money into private profit and I think you've
14 read a lot about that too.

15 Today I ask you to give the broadest
16 protection possible to parents who make choices about
17 testing and data collection on behalf of their children.

18 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Ms. Roberts.

19 MS. ROBERTS: Certainly a holiday from
20 accountability measures seems like the way to ensure free
21 dialogue. Thank you very much for your time.

22 MS. SCHROEDER: Deborah Cole.

23 MS. COLE: Madam Vice Chair and members of
24 the Board, the following was written by Dr. Joseph Bean,
25 a long-time Glendale, California, school board member,



1 who was describing the new paradigm for public education
2 that had just been instituted in the state of California.
3 The description, written in 1970, is chilling predictive
4 of the regimen that is unfolding here now.

5 "When the teacher has completed an
6 instructional unit and has tested the students, the test
7 results are assigned symbols and computerized. The
8 information flows to a regional data collection and
9 processing center, one of several in each state. There,
10 a student profile is built for each student in the
11 region. In this master bank, an enormous amount of
12 information is permanently stored on each student.

13 "After three or four testings or
14 evaluations, the programmer will no doubt have
15 standardized the objectives for every classroom, and the
16 usual decision-makers will be locked out of the process.
17 The power of the programmer bypasses the Board of
18 Education, the superintendent, and the parents. Even the
19 teacher loses out. The teacher will be truly a
20 facilitator and a manager of the classroom, but not a
21 teacher at all.

22 "After each child is programmed with the
23 predetermined knowledge, values, and potential skills, he
24 will be standardized and average out, leveled off at a
25 baseline of mediocrity. Subject matter, as we know it,



1 will no longer exist, and very few other aspects of
2 education will remain.

3 "The more than 40 million children in
4 nation's schools will be insensitive and unnatural, and
5 will be capable of only highly directed behavior, and
6 each holding identical points of view. Under the new
7 management, the information input to the student will be
8 limited, random encounter in the learning process will be
9 eliminated, instruction will be highly prescribed and
10 programming toward a particular ideological,
11 philosophical, political, and social point of view will
12 be the chief characteristic of the system."

13 Dr. Bean resigned from the board when it
14 became clear he could do nothing to stop the process just
15 described. His resignation statement included this
16 sobering comment on the disconnect between student
17 families and every level of school administration. He
18 said, "With their districts 90 percent controlled by the
19 federal and state governments, parents live under
20 complete tyranny when their own local boards identify
21 with the administrative staff instead of the people whom
22 they were elected to represent."

23 Dr. Bean could have been describing the
24 feelings of Colorado parents, and yes, teachers and
25 school leaders, in their encounters with the education



1 bureaucracy regarding their concerns over data
2 collection, Common Core, and the aligned testing regimen.

3 Thank you.

4 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you.

5 Carol Baum?

6 Anita Stapleton? Oh, I'm sorry.

7 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Good afternoon, Madam
8 Vice Chair and members of the Board. I am concerned, as
9 a grandparent, on all the testing on Common Core in our
10 schools today. The tests are linked with controversy as
11 students give accounts of what they experience as they
12 take these tests, such things as anxiety, fear,
13 dizziness, headaches, stomach aches, crying, couldn't
14 concentrate because of noise in the background on the
15 test that were taken. Some felt like they were being
16 brainwashed and feeling weird after taking these tests.

17 Teachers are frustrated because the time in
18 the classroom is shorted because of the amount of time to
19 prepare for these tests. Their hands are tied, in many
20 cases, so that they can't teach the way that is best for
21 our children.

22 Common Core is a one-size-fits-all approach
23 to education. The cost of all this is tremendous and
24 more money spent does not mean better outcomes. Bill
25 Gates, who is one of those that is funding the Common



1 Core, said, in an interview in September of 2013, "It
2 would be great if education stuff worked, but we won't
3 know for probably ten years on the outcomes."

4 This is an experiment on our children and I
5 feel that we need to get out of PARCC and Common Core for
6 these reasons. It is invasive. It indoctrinates our
7 children. It is expensive and is taking control away
8 from parents, schools, our state, because of individuals
9 who are unelected, and also the Federal Government has
10 become involved in this process. It also is taking away
11 transparency when the tests are so secretive that parents
12 and teachers aren't allowed to see what is on them.

13 To help educate you on this important issue,
14 I would invite you to watch Anita Hoge, H-o-g-e. She
15 gives a great presentation that's called "The End Game of
16 Assessments" She is a parent of a child in Pennsylvania
17 and she did a lot of research on this, because she was
18 concerned. Her child came home and told her some things
19 that were on the test, so she wanted to delve into it
20 more. And she tells why all the data is being collected
21 on our children today, and I want to thank you for your
22 time.

23 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you. Thanks very
24 much.

25 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Good afternoon. Thank



1 you. I'm Carol Morentz (ph).

2 I have been here different times this year
3 and I am an educator at heart. I'm an educator by trade.
4 I'm a mom. I'm not a grandmother. But I have a heart
5 for the students in this state, and that's why I'm here.
6 I have no dog in the fight.

7 But since I've been here I am very alarmed,
8 mystified, shocked, maybe naïve to see the number of
9 people that sit at this table, and that are in this room,
10 whose livelihood depends on the children in our schools.
11 And I don't like it. I think it needs to be addressed,
12 and you are the people here who can do it.

13 I appreciate every one of you up here,
14 because you are giving us your time. Believe me, I did
15 not know how much time it took. You are giving us your
16 energy, and I didn't know how much time that took, and
17 your intellect. And I rest assured that you are going to
18 make the right decisions for the children, and not for
19 the people whose lives have been invested into our
20 children for their own livelihood.

21 On another issue, I want to speak about the
22 assessments. When I was in education, which I still am,
23 but when I was paid for it, in the spring of the year we
24 would give the students a test. The test was two, maybe
25 three hours in the morning. By the end of the year, the



1 students had their test results. Not only did they have
2 the results, the parents had the results, and we knew,
3 from looking at that test, where that child stood on a
4 percentile, for Colorado and for our country. I could
5 look at that test and know if that child knew his nouns,
6 pronouns, a complete sentence, a topic sentence, an
7 adjective, an adverb, could write a paragraph. I could
8 see what they knew in math.

9 This test is still around. At that time it
10 was called the Iowa Basic Skills and it cost 75 cents.
11 It's still here, it's a little more expensive, but it's
12 not as expensive as what we are putting our taxpayers
13 through and our children.

14 I have something that was given to me to
15 read by a teacher who wishes to remain anonymous.

16 MS. SCHROEDER: I'm terribly sorry.

17 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Could this be her time
18 now? It will take me probably 30 seconds to read it.

19 MS. SCHROEDER: Please do.

20 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Thank you.

21 The teachers do not want to be known. They
22 don't want anybody to know what they're saying, which is
23 frightening to me. They don't want anyone to know how
24 they feel about what's going on in the schools.

25 "Students are testing for over 20 hours in



1 the spring, which takes a lot of time out of the
2 classroom, working on content that we could go more in
3 depth with. The testing completely closes the lab to
4 other grade levels for the rest of the year so they
5 cannot get typical support with Waterford, that they
6 usually can. The test are written so wordy, with odd
7 formatting and above grade level, that they are truly not
8 assessing the students' knowledge. They are assessing
9 the students' computer skills.

10 "PARCC will be administered on computer
11 rather than paper, which places pressure on our younger
12 students to learn keyboarding. Tight school budgets are
13 spending more on hardware just to accommodate
14 computerized PARCC. It would make much more sense to
15 give one test on paper.

16 "Activities in the classroom should not be
17 centered on what is on the PARCC test. This robs the
18 classrooms of teaching moments. Massive amounts of
19 instructional time is lost. The test will be used to
20 evaluate teacher performance. This is flawed logic.

21 "There are way too many variables in the
22 lives of students that can have negative effects on how
23 they do in school. Over-evaluate a staff and you will
24 have no time to inspire, no energy to motivate."

25 Thank you so much for this time.



1 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Ms. Morentz (ph).
2 Ms. Stapleton.

3 MS. STAPLETON: I'm tearing things up.
4 Sorry. It's been a long two days. I feel your pain.

5 Thank you, State Board of Education, for
6 this time. I'm Anita Stapleton from Pueblo, Colorado. I
7 am here today, turning in 114 letters of opposition to
8 the Common Core and the PARCC testing. This brings our
9 total close to 3,800.

10 Today I've heard a lot of discussion about
11 PARCC and about Common Core, at least trying to. A real
12 conversation must be done. I agree with Dr. Flores.
13 This should have happened prior to us joining the
14 consortium. I'm not going to argue who got us in there.
15 I just know how we can get out.

16 So now that our application has been
17 fulfilled and the State Board has agreed to pull out, as
18 of April of last year, our voices need to be heard. Our
19 voices, your employers, demand that we not be silenced or
20 ignored any longer. Colorado public education will not
21 come out the winner. As long and PARCC and Colorado
22 stays in partnership with one another, we will continue
23 to wage a campaign to refuse to test. As long as our
24 students are being sacrificed, as we toil to make our
25 teachers conform -- not teach, conform -- to mandates to



1 be labeled to losing their effectiveness status, they
2 will become facilitators. They're already being called
3 facilitators. We will refuse to test as long as this
4 continues.

5 Here is what needs to happen. First, you
6 all need to educate yourselves regarding the truth around
7 PARCC and the purpose of the test. It is about big data,
8 to drive the curriculum. Please read the report that I
9 am providing for you. It is by the Department of
10 Education. I have eartagged pages. I have spoken about
11 these reports numerous times, not only to you but, yes,
12 across the street to our legislators. Our
13 (indiscernible) have been put on hold. Why? To silence
14 our voice. I don't make this stuff up. I was accused of
15 that yesterday by some people in the audience that we had
16 a conversation with. I don't bring anything to you that
17 is not fact based.

18 Pearson sat here today, along with the CDE,
19 and claimed that they don't collect psychosocial data --
20 values, attitudes, behavioral responses, et cetera.
21 However, this report clearly states, in black and white,
22 that it does. It talks about the embedded assessments in
23 Newton's Playground. It goes on and on and on, and I
24 heard some of that language today.

25 Furthermore, it's amazing. Denver Public



1 Schools is all over this book. A lot of our Colorado
2 schools are. Why? Because we're heavily embedded with
3 the U.S. Department of Education, Arne Duncan, Bill
4 Gates, and the likes. They have an agenda, and now
5 Colorado has been elevated as the golden child state, and
6 I am not going to stop until it's done. I'm getting
7 tired, I'm getting cranky, but my kids mean more than
8 anything to me, and so do my teachers.

9 Pearson and the CDE also claim that Colorado
10 does not share this data with the Federal Government.
11 You have documents, which I've shared with this Board
12 many times before -- and I'm almost done -- the co-op
13 agreement between the U.S. Department of Education and
14 PARCC. I have one question. I asked this question
15 today and our Chair did not read the card properly.
16 PARCC contracts with Pearson. PARCC contracts with the
17 U.S. Department of Education. I have highlighted this
18 for you. Whose contract trumps whose? It is clearly
19 stated -- your pages are marked so easy reading for you.
20 If PARCC is mandated to share this information --

21 MS. SCHROEDER: Ms. Stapleton, we will make
22 sure that --

23 MS. STAPLETON: -- with the U.S. Department
24 of Education, then how can we sit here and spend hours on
25 hours listening to lies?



1 MS. SCHROEDER: Ms. Stapleton, we'll make
2 sure that the question you just articulated will be part
3 of the FAQs.

4 MS. STAPLETON: Well, I hope so, because it
5 was in clear language and I was mocked, actually for
6 that.

7 You also have -- and I'm done, truly.

8 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you.

9 MS. STAPLETON: But you have a big packet of
10 all the grievances that are happening, all the
11 inconsistencies in districts. I asked las May, in Grand
12 Junction, for this Board to please go to the districts
13 and ask them to make their policies regarding refusal to
14 test, because this was going to be a big campaign. It
15 fell on deaf ears.

16 MS. SCHROEDER: Ms. Stapleton --

17 MS. STAPLETON: And now we have many
18 grievances, and you're opening -- the districts are
19 opening themselves up for lawsuits.

20 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you.

21 So we began public comment before 4, and I'm
22 concerned that there may have been someone who has come
23 who wanted to speak, but the sign-up sheet was with me
24 instead of out in the hall. Please come forward if you
25 would like to speak.



1 Oh, one at a time, however. That's okay.
2 And introduce yourself, please.

3 MS. CHESTER: Good afternoon and thank you
4 for the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is
5 Laura Chester and I am an eighth-grade math teacher here
6 in Colorado. I believe it is critically important for
7 educators to have an opportunity to share their
8 perspective during policy discussions that will impact
9 their classrooms, so I also work to organize other
10 teachers to help elevate their voices in these types of
11 discussions.

12 Today I'm here to offer my perspective about
13 the new Colorado state test that we have been
14 administering over the last few weeks. As a teacher, my
15 goal is to help students think deeply, reason critically,
16 and defend argument. If they remember the math, that's a
17 bonus. As adults, I hope my students will take their
18 current experiences and apply them as good citizens of
19 society who seek knowledge and think before they speak.

20 These are the exact skills that the PARCC
21 exam is targeting with the construction of its questions.
22 These questions require students to compare strategies
23 and explain possible approaches instead of simply
24 choosing A, B, C, or D.

25 When I gave my students a practice problem



1 to the PARCC exam, they struggled, but in such an amazing
2 way. They were challenged to make connections between
3 current and past learning, and to use a variety of tools
4 within a single problem. When they ultimately finished a
5 problem their big grins clearly conveyed their sense of
6 triumph.

7 I admit that there are things about PARCC
8 that could be improved, but it is also critical that we
9 recognize the structures of the assessment that are good,
10 and should continue to be tweaked and developed over
11 time. There are always ways to improve upon things, but
12 throwing something out every time we think there is a
13 flaw would create a world in which nothing ever gets
14 accomplished.

15 So, in closing, while there are things that
16 we still need to work on to improve our state tests, I
17 believe that these new tests are a vast improvement over
18 what we have been using in the past. They are one piece
19 of a puzzle that, when put together, helps prepare our
20 students for whatever is next for them in life.

21 Thank you very much.

22 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you very much.

23 Could I take Chair's privilege and ask you
24 one question, Ms. Chester, which is, we learned today
25 that there are some questions that will be asked of the



1 students, I think, in the next iteration, in the May
2 iteration, about the test and how it was, how hard it
3 was, et cetera. Are teachers being asked any questions?
4 Are you seeing the assessment?

5 MS. CHESTER: No. I have never heard that,
6 actually.

7 MS. SCHROEDER: So you don't see the
8 assessment in order to provide any kind of feedback.

9 MS. CHESTER: We will get feedback from the
10 results once they're established, which, going forward,
11 is intended to be rather immediate. But in the first
12 couple of years it will take extra time.

13 MS. SCHROEDER: It won't be -- okay. Well,
14 let us know if, at that point, you're not asked for
15 input, because I think that's also an important piece of
16 all of this, and thank you very much for coming and for
17 answering my question.

18 MS. CHESTER: Sure. Thank you so much.

19 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you. Next person.

20 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Good afternoon. My
21 name is Angela Kobian, Angela Kobian. I'm from Denver,
22 Colorado. I'm a former elementary school teacher with
23 Denver Public Schools, turned education organizer at
24 Together Colorado. I come representing a cohort of
25 women, one of who you spoke to early, whose name is



1 Princess. And I come here just to echo her talking
2 points and reaffirm the fact that if we've taken one
3 giant step forward it makes absolutely no sense to take
4 one giant step back.

5 What am I talking about? Well, I'll
6 elaborate. I am not only an elementary school teacher,
7 former, but I was also a first-generation college student
8 and a woman of color. So when I came back to my
9 community here in Denver to see the state of public
10 education, I was so shocked to continue to see that
11 children of color are being left behind and children
12 across the state of Colorado included are being left
13 behind because the standards that were in place in were
14 so low and were not preparing kids to be fully successful
15 in college.

16 I experienced that myself as a freshman at
17 the Colorado College in Colorado Springs when I first got
18 there in 2007. Had to work twice as hard as all of my
19 peers to be able to be a successful college political
20 scientist, and, fortunately, I was able to do that with
21 all of the support that I received at that institution.
22 But a student shouldn't have to work twice as hard,
23 especially when the institution is already set up to
24 disenfranchise them in the first place.

25 So, in closing, the reason why I'm here is



1 to support the high-quality Colorado Academic Standards
2 and the tests that are aligned to put them in place, and
3 to ask you to please think twice before limiting them or
4 taking a step backward, as I mentioned in the beginning.

5 And I yield my time to the floor.

6 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Ms. Kobian.

7 MR. DOTTERER: Good afternoon, Vice Chair
8 Schroeder and members of the State Board. My name is
9 Duncan Dotterer. I'm here representing myself as fourth-
10 grade educator.

11 I'm pleased to be afforded this opportunity
12 to speak before the Board today. I'm a Colorado native
13 and have taught in Denver Public Schools for the past six
14 years. I thought the Board would benefit from hearing
15 someone who teaches the students affected by PARCC and
16 the Common Core State Standards.

17 As you know, students across the district
18 are currently taking the PARCC tests. Yesterday, in my
19 fourth-grade classroom, we finished the literacy portion
20 of the PARCC test, and after the testing session has
21 ended several students expressed interest in reflecting
22 on the testing experience. Many students felt that they
23 had accomplished an important feat. All year we had been
24 preparing for the assessments using the Common Core State
25 Standards as a framework to guide learning. There was an



1 overall sentiment of elation among my students. It felt
2 as if they had been challenged. They enjoyed the
3 challenge, and as a result they were triumphant.

4 Throughout my lessons during the school year
5 I have been discussing the differences between the PARCC
6 test and its predecessors, the TCAP and the CSAP, with my
7 students. I had repeatedly referred to the level of
8 critical thinking and in-depth analysis required to
9 succeed on the PARCC test, and I have argued that such
10 skills are of great benefit to them. For example, rather
11 than writing an essay from their own perspective,
12 students are asked to read a narrative and write from the
13 point of view of one of the characters in the story.

14 Although there has been much opposition
15 among educators, parents, and policy-makers to the Common
16 Core State Standards and PARCC tests, compelling students
17 to step out of their own subjective experiences and think
18 about the world through the lens of a fictional character
19 promotes creativity and builds cognitive flexibility. As
20 a passionate and devoted educator, I hold my students to
21 a high standard of achievement in all content areas. I
22 know that all of my students are capable of greatness in
23 my classroom and in their lives. My greatest concern is
24 that after students leave my classroom, and before they
25 enter my classroom, they may not receive the consistency



1 that is so vital to their educational success.

2 It is my understanding that the Common Core
3 State Standards have been developed using rigorous,
4 internationally comparative measures. This is evidenced
5 in a document prepared by David T. Conley, the Common
6 Core State Standards co-chair and professor of
7 educational policy and leadership, and founder and
8 director of the Center for Educational Policy Research at
9 the University of Oregon.

10 I urge you, the State Board of Education, to
11 embrace rather than reject the Common Core State
12 Standards in order to secure college and career readiness
13 for all of Colorado students.

14 I thank you for your time and consideration.

15 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you very much.

16 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Thank you so much for
17 your time. I've been with you today and it's been a long
18 day, but your efforts are amazing, to hear everybody out.

19 I was not going to speak today. I've been
20 before the Board a few times before and I feel like I've
21 said everything I need to say. But I just couldn't sit
22 any longer without saying some things that are coming to
23 my mind and heart, based on --

24 MS. SCHROEDER: Could you give me your name
25 first, please.



1 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: -- based on the
2 conversation.

3 My name is Cindy Well (ph). I'm a school
4 leader. I'm the principal of a charter school in
5 Colorado Springs.

6 We love accountability, but to be
7 accountability it's got to be the right test.

8 I'm a school leader, in its second year, and
9 I say this with great humility but pride on behalf of our
10 staff and our students. Our first year we were open,
11 last year, we had the highest scores in the region for
12 fourth grade -- 100 percent proficient advance for
13 fourth-grade math, 95 percent proficient advance for
14 reading and for writing. As a brand-new school, kids
15 coming from all over, it was remarkable. Third grade,
16 the same. We had great results. Fifth grade, I can't
17 report out. Our number was too low.

18 We love accountability. It has to be the
19 right kind of accountability.

20 I'd like to just say that a previous speaker
21 said that there's only 2 percent of time consumed by
22 state tests. Not in the world that I'm living in. We
23 are wiping out a quarter of our instructional sequences
24 on content to make room for all the different tests under
25 one roof. One quarter. We used to be a four-quarter



1 instructional model. We now have to be a three-quarter
2 instructional model.

3 I was at a conference last week. PARCC
4 results, I was told, can be expected in February, not
5 April. February. Next February, PARCC results. Hard to
6 make data-driven decisions by that time.

7 One of my chief concerns, and it's now
8 coming out, the CEO of PARCC said, in a recent article,
9 my chief concern about national assessments is not just
10 the federal-state component but these tests are
11 different. They drive curriculum. To do well on these
12 tests you've got to have a curriculum that's aligned with
13 it. So now we've got a national curriculum that's going
14 to have to conform with a national test, that conforms
15 with Common Core. We just wiped out a lot of different
16 school models, including the Montessori that I heard
17 represented here today.

18 Why are the tests created in secrecy? I
19 keep hearing these numbers, as we did today, about how
20 many educators in Colorado were involved, and I've never
21 met one. I've been in education for decades. I've never
22 heard one educator that was involved in these. They are
23 in secrecy.

24 In the years past, our schools have a
25 tradition of 100 percent participation. Last year, with



1 those results that our staff and students did, 100
2 percent participation. This year, we're in our second
3 week of testing. Every day more parents are opting out.
4 Those are going to be zeros. We're down to 45 percent
5 refusal rate, and we've always had 100 percent. There's
6 something very different what's going on.

7 Thank you for listening.

8 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you. Is there anyone
9 else who wanted to speak, please?

10 Thank you very much for coming, ladies and
11 gentlemen, and our Board meeting is recessed until April.
12 Thank you.

13 (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 25th day of January, 2019.

/s/ Kimberly C. McCright

Kimberly C. McCright

Certified Vendor and Notary Public

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