



Colorado State Board of Education

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
BEFORE THE
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION COMMISSION
DENVER, COLORADO
April 9, 2015, Part 3

BE IT REMEMBERED THAT on April 9, 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
Valentina (Val) Flores (D)
Jane Goff (D)
Pam Mazanec (R)
Steve Durham (R)
Debora Scheffel (R)



1 MADAM CHAIR: Welcome to the Pueblo School
2 District who all came up here. (Inaudible) as I reminded
3 them, is my home district. And welcome, Robert --
4 Commissioner Hammond, would you introduce the group and
5 move it off?

6 MR. HAMMOND: Again, Dr. Jones, thank you
7 and all your staff for coming. We really appreciate that.
8 As you know, this is a pretty informal discussion. Just
9 time for you to present what you want for us to know, as
10 well as the Board to ask questions. So you can go ahead
11 and introduce those who are present, and go ahead and
12 start.

13 MS. JONES: Thank you, Commissioner Hammond.
14 Actually, I'm going to turn it over to Dr. DeNiro, the
15 president of our Board, who'd like to begin the
16 presentation this afternoon. Thank you.

17 MS. DENIRO: Good afternoon, and thank you
18 for providing Pueblo City Schools an opportunity to share
19 our progress since we last met last spring. Before we
20 begin, I'm going to introduce our Board, and yes, we have
21 noticed the meeting because I believe we have more than two
22 individuals. And those board members, if you'd please
23 raise your hand. Dr. Milner is here, Mrs. Phyllis Sanchez.

24 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: She's raising her hand.

25 MS. DENIRO: Okay. Mr. Mike Colucci, our



1 Vice Chair, and myself, Dr. Kathy DeNiro. Mrs. Holloway is
2 another member; we thought she was going to be able to
3 come, but because of a work commitment, she was not able to
4 attend.

5 Prior to giving the floor to Dr. Jones, I'd
6 just like to take a few minutes to review some points of
7 time, especially for your newly elected members. In 2011,
8 we did enter turnaround status. In the following year of
9 2012, we moved to priority improvement. As a district, we
10 have followed the direction provided by CDE, and early on
11 with a former commissioner, we were directed to enter a
12 contract with Global Partnership, an outside management
13 firm, that worked with five of our schools while a three
14 year contract was originally sought by Global Partnership,
15 a year to year contract was agreed upon, and they requested
16 to depart after year two.

17 During the last four years, our district has
18 initiated restarts at three schools, developed three
19 Schools of Innovation, changed leadership at 12 schools.
20 Of course, we have a new superintendent, a new assistant
21 superintendent. In my tenure as a board member, Dr. Jones
22 will be my fourth superintendent that we've had. We have
23 enrolled three schools and a central office administrator
24 in the CDE's Turnaround Network. We've enrolled a school
25 and central office administrator in CDE's Relay National



1 Principal's Academy.

2 We enrolled two schools and a central office
3 administrator in CDE's University of Virginia School of
4 Business turnaround programs. We took action to move
5 forward with an IB Corridor School to enhance our current
6 Magnet IB high school. In addition, the district has
7 obtained a \$9.7 million Magnet School Assistance Program
8 grant targeting (inaudible) renewable energy at a corridor
9 of two elementary, one middle, and one high school. And
10 because of budget constraints, we have closed three
11 schools.

12 At last year's meeting with you, you asked
13 how we intended to keep the work moving forward, pending
14 the retirement of our superintendent. At this time, I'd
15 like to introduce Dr. Constance Jones, who will review the
16 district's progress this year. Dr. Jones took the
17 superintendent position last July 1st. She is from Fort
18 Meyers, Florida; from Lee County School District, which had
19 a student population of 83,000. And previously, she held
20 executive and chief academic office positions in Lee
21 County. Dr. Jones?

22 MS. JONES: Thank you, Dr. DeNiro, and good
23 afternoon Chairwoman Neal, members of the Board, and
24 Commissioner Hammond. It's an honor to come before you to
25 share the vision and plans for the Pueblo City Schools, as



1 we work to achieve accreditation with distinction from the
2 State of Colorado.

3 As Dr. DeNiro mentioned, I had the honor of
4 joining the Pueblo City schools this past July 1 as their
5 superintendent. My husband and I relocated to Pueblo from
6 Fort Myers, Florida, where I served as a chief academic
7 officer for the Lee County Public Schools. The district
8 grew from about 60,000 to 83,000 students during my tenure
9 as I served as the Chief Academic Officer, and our
10 demographics were very similar to Pueblo's with 72 percent
11 free and reduced lunch, and 55 percent minority population.
12 During my tenure in Florida, we moved our D and F schools
13 to A through C's, and we improved our district rating to an
14 A, which is equivalent to accreditation with distinction.

15 I knew when I accepted the position as
16 Superintendent in Pueblo City Schools, that they were in
17 the fourth year priority improvement, but I sincerely
18 believe we can put together a high-performing team, and
19 structures and supports to achieve accreditation with
20 distinction through the state's accountability system.
21 It's not going to happen overnight, but we all believe we
22 are on the right track to accomplish great things in
23 Pueblo.

24 Before I get started, I'd like to take a
25 couple of minutes to introduce members of our team who have



1 joined us today. Dr. Sheryl Clark has joined the Pueblo
2 City Schools, new this year, as the Assistant
3 Superintendent for Learning Services. Dr. Clark moved to
4 Pueblo from Fort Meyers also. She has an extensive
5 background in working with turnaround schools, Title 1, and
6 English language learners.

7 Ms. Junig (ph) Gallegos, one of our
8 Elementary School Supervisors, has been a high-performing
9 principal in Pueblo, and she serves as one of our liaisons
10 for both the CDE Network, and relay training for
11 principals.

12 Ms. Rowen Caleti (ph), our Specialist for
13 Accountability and Assessment, she too has been a high-
14 performing teacher, and school-based administrator in
15 Pueblo.

16 Anthony Sanchez, student extraordinaire at
17 Roncalli STEM Academy. We are very proud of Anthony, and
18 you'll be hearing more from him later.

19 Marci Imes. This is her first year as a
20 principal of Roncalli STEM Academy, and she had done
21 amazing things to transform the culture and academic
22 performance at her school this year.

23 In the audience, I'd also like to recognize
24 more of our team, Alan Berry, Elementary and Middle School
25 Supervisor. Alan also serves as our liaison with CDE for



1 both the network training, and the training conducted this
2 past summer at the University of Virginia. Ms. Cheryl
3 Madril-Stringham supervises our high schools, our Counselor
4 Corps grant, and our new alternative program called
5 Paragon. We have Suzanne Ethridge with us, our President
6 of our Pueblo City Schools Education Association; Tom
7 Weston, who serves as our liaison with our charter schools;
8 Mike Schreiner, our attorney with Caplan and Earnest. And
9 I would just like to say a special thank you for them to
10 come and join us today. It's a great working team.

11 MADAM CHAIR: We appreciate that, and
12 welcome all.

13 MS. JONES: Thank you. I would like to
14 first set the stage by sharing about our district
15 demographics. We currently serve approximately 18,000
16 students in 31 schools. We have 17 elementary's, three K-
17 8's, five middle schools, four high schools, and two
18 charter schools. We also have an alternative program, and
19 an online program for grades six through 12. The ethnic
20 breakdown of our student population is 70 percent
21 Hispanic/Latino, two percent black, and 26 percent white.
22 Seventy-two percent of our students qualify for free and
23 reduced meals. We provide free breakfast for all students
24 in our district, and we are currently evaluating the
25 community eligibility program that would allow us to



1 provide free lunch for all of our students. We also have
2 meal programs that we provide during evenings and summer
3 months. Seven point six percent of our students are
4 homeless, which equates to about 1,365 at the last check.
5 Seven point nine percent of our students are identified as
6 English language learners, and 12.5 percent of our students
7 qualify for at least one category of exceptional student
8 services.

9 We are finding that the highest numbers of
10 students identified are with either intellectual
11 disabilities, specific learning disabilities, speech and
12 language needs, and/or autism spectrum disorder. Our
13 graduation rate is currently at 71.9, which is up almost
14 two percent from last year, and our dropout rate is two
15 point nine percent, which is down almost one percent from
16 last year.

17 Our district is organized through boundaries
18 to create neighborhood schools, but we also offer choice
19 with transportation to our magnet schools, and to our
20 Schools of Innovation. We offer choice without
21 transportation to any of our other schools throughout the
22 district on a seat available basis.

23 Our vision is -- our goal is for 100 percent
24 of our students to graduate from high school, with the set
25 of schools and credentials to go to a two or four-year



1 college, technical school, or directly into the workforce.
2 What we want to share today are the major improvement
3 strategies to achieve our vision and goals for students,
4 and to move forward as a district into accreditation with
5 distinction. We've organized our strategies into the five
6 categories that were outlined in the commissioner's letter
7 of invitation to present to you today.

8 The first is a culture of performance. We
9 have chosen to partner with Advance Ed to create a culture
10 of continuous and systemic improvement. You may better
11 recognize the organization as a North Central Accrediting
12 Commission. Advance Ed is a parent organization for the
13 North Central Accrediting Commission, the Northwest
14 Commission, and the Southern Association of Colleges and
15 Schools.

16 They're internationally recognized for their
17 work in accreditation and continuous improvement, serving
18 over 32,000 charter, public, private and parochial
19 institutions in more than 70 countries. Over 140 schools
20 in the state of Colorado are accredited, including five
21 high schools in Cherry Creek School District. They are
22 also -- Advance Ed is on the list of approved diagnostic
23 review providers for the State of Colorado. Their work is
24 based on Edward Deming, Ron Edmonds, and Malcolm Baldrich's
25 (ph) quality tools and processes. I have gone through



1 their entire accreditation process in Florida with 119
2 schools in Lake County, and I'm confident that it's a very
3 powerful process to help local school districts self-assess
4 their strengths and weaknesses, and to make improvements
5 that have a direct impact on teaching and learning, and
6 ultimately student achievement. It's important to point
7 out that we do not view this accreditation process as an
8 alternate means of achieving accreditation, but rather
9 through their use of their tools and supports, it will help
10 us achieve accreditation through the State of Colorado.

11 The next category pertains to data driven
12 systems of assessment, instruction and planning, and we're
13 taking very aggressive approach to realign our curriculum,
14 and assessment plan. Last year, new math materials were
15 adopted for K-8, Algebra 1 and 2, and Geometry. This year,
16 shortly after I arrived, I learned that our reading program
17 had been in place since the mid-1990s. Our board was
18 extremely supportive in conducting an accelerated process
19 to purchase a new literacy program for kindergarten to
20 grade eight that is much more aligned with the current
21 Colorado State standards, and it contains significantly
22 more informational text, it provides tiered and
23 differentiated instructional strategies, and provides
24 opportunities for students to access online instruction and
25 assessments.



1 We are now working on updating our pacing
2 guides to better align with our resources, and the embedded
3 assessments that are included in the new literacy program.
4 We conducted an assessment audit during the fall of this
5 year to identify all of the assessments currently being
6 used in our schools. The purpose was to see what is
7 serving us well, and having a positive impact on teaching
8 and learning, and which assessments could be eliminated to
9 provide more time for instruction in the classroom.

10 Our plan is to move forward this upcoming
11 year with a clearly defined progress monitoring system that
12 will give us more frequent feedback, and that will better
13 align with Colorado Assessment System. The data that we
14 provided in our background information is based on Galileo
15 Benchmark data from the beginning of the year, and middle
16 of the year, for reading, math, and science. Knowing that
17 this is a transition year for the park assessments, and our
18 need to provide district produced data, we chose to
19 continue administering the Galileo Benchmark and DIBELS
20 next assessments.

21 In looking at our beginning and middle of
22 the year data, you could see positive trends in the
23 mathematics data, which we can relate back to the updating
24 of our resources this last year, and the targeted
25 professional development that we've provided this year for



1 kindergarten through 8th grade. At the same time, we can
2 understand the variances across the board in our reading
3 beginning in mid-year data, due to the introduction of new
4 materials in late October.

5 This required our teachers to become
6 familiar with new resources and new instructional
7 strategies. We provided professional development training
8 for our teachers every Saturday in January and February, in
9 both the reading and mathematics. We've had a clear sense
10 of urgency to address our Tier 1 instruction in both
11 reading and math, and even though the year had already
12 started, we felt that we couldn't let an entire year go by
13 without adopting new instructional materials for reading.
14 Science is next on the list. Again, looking at our
15 beginning and middle of the year data, it varies across
16 schools.

17 Our resources and professional development
18 need to be updated, which we intend to do for this upcoming
19 year. We've appreciated an excellent partnership with
20 Kathy Martin from CDE, for literacy support. She's
21 provided some excellent professional development for both
22 principals and teachers, and she's also helped us with our
23 new literacy adoption. We've provided schools with the
24 resources and staff necessary for teachers to have either
25 daily or weekly professional learning communities, which is



1 time for them to review their data, and plan together, and
2 we're also providing daily planning time for all teachers
3 during their instructional day.

4 We are working with our elementary staffing
5 guidelines for this next year, to increase their planning
6 time to ensure that they have both PLC, and planning time,
7 each and every day. With differentiated support, we
8 recognize that it is important to provide differentiated
9 supports for our schools that are in turnaround and
10 priority improvement. We also recognize that one size does
11 not fit all. The district has worked hard over the past
12 several years to provide differentiated supports and
13 autonomy for schools to create programs and strategies to
14 serve their unique populations.

15 Three of our turnaround schools have been
16 approved for innovation plans that provide specialized
17 curriculum, an extended school day, and a longer school
18 year. They have waivers from certain board policies, and
19 employee contracts. This is the second year of
20 implementation, and we are seeing very positive changes in
21 the school climate, as well as student performance data.
22 We have taken this year to carefully look at the needs of
23 each of the schools in either turnaround or priority
24 improvement, and we've worked to provide additional
25 resources and supports that we've outlined in our



1 background information.

2 With each school, we are also looking at the
3 changes that need to be made for the upcoming school year,
4 whether it's in leadership, staffing, resources, and our
5 targeted professional development. In talent and
6 leadership development and management, as I've already
7 mentioned, we have the new leadership in both the
8 superintendent and assistant superintendent roles, and we
9 immediately reorganized the roles of our principal
10 supervisors this past fall, to ensure that our principals
11 were being coached by high performing former principals.
12 We are now in the process of developing a new
13 organizational structure at the district level to better
14 serve the schools for this next year.

15 We are also evaluating each school to ensure
16 that we have a highly effective administrator and teachers
17 in all of our schools, particularly those with the greatest
18 need. We've addressed the staffing needs, and identified
19 teachers who will not be returning next year, so that we
20 can now aggressively recruit and hire high quality teachers
21 as early as possible for the upcoming year.

22 Again, we've truly appreciated and
23 benefitted from the partnership that we have had with CDE
24 for our principals to participate in the turnaround network
25 and relay training. We'd like to express a special thank



1 you to Peter Sherman and Dr. Owens. The feedback from our
2 principals has been extremely positive, and we are looking
3 forward to increasing from four to seven principals in the
4 network for the upcoming year.

5 Engagement of our local Board and with the
6 community, our School Board has not only been supportive of
7 the work within the district, but they've been very
8 actively involved in working with outside businesses, and
9 groups, to help find ways to better serve our students. We
10 are currently working for partnership with outside groups
11 to expand our early childhood programs. We have empty
12 buildings that were a result of school closures over the
13 past few years, and we would like to reopen them as early
14 learning centers that could serve children birth to five.

15 We have also formed a career and technical
16 education task force this year with over 30 business
17 leaders, to help reinvest in career technical education
18 training for our students in middle and high school. We
19 believe strongly that this will increase the number of
20 students who are college and career ready. We are planning
21 to create career and technical academies in all of our
22 middle and high schools that can provide career pathways
23 either to a two or four year college or university,
24 technical training school, or directly into the workforce.
25 Our Counselor Corps grant provides additional counselors



1 who play a critical role in helping students develop their
2 individual career and academic plans, better known as the
3 ICAPs, and helping students stay on track with their plans
4 throughout their high school years.

5 We have also formed several partnerships,
6 and we're working to grow those, because we believe very
7 strongly that having positive mentors and role models for
8 our students is a very critical ingredient for success. We
9 believe strongly that the only way we will truly improve is
10 for our community to unite and join us in providing the
11 supports and encouragement our students need in order to be
12 successful.

13 And now I'd like to present to you one of
14 Pueblo City School's shining stars, Anthony Sanchez.
15 Anthony has attended Roncalli STEM Academy for the past
16 three years, and is this year's school Spelling Bee champ,
17 as well as the student leader for his school. So at this
18 time, I would like to turn it over to Anthony, we would
19 like to share with you about Roncalli STEM Academy.

20 MR. SANCHEZ: Good afternoon. My name is
21 Anthony Sanchez, and I've been attending Roncalli for about
22 three years now. It is an honor to speak to you and tell
23 you about the positive changes that have happened at
24 Roncalli STEM Academy, including our new mascot and colors.
25 Today I will start with how the new mascot ties in around



1 Roncalli's new culture and changes we have made.

2 Roncalli used to not perform so well. It
3 used to be one of the lowest performing schools in the
4 whole state. But similar to our new mascot, we are now
5 striving on working our way to the very top. Roncalli is a
6 whole new school this year. We haven't done this well in a
7 long time. We really have turned around. Just like our
8 new colors, black and silver, Roncalli has really been
9 shining this year. We students have had our chances, but
10 we also kept passing them up. In the past, we Roncalli
11 students didn't feel connected to the school, and didn't
12 see any value what they were learning, or were being
13 taught.

14 This year, however, the students finally
15 feel connected and are engaging in their learning. When
16 the students hurry to classes and work hard to complete
17 their work, and (inaudible). We are finally taking
18 advantage of the chances that we've been given. The new
19 mascot also ties in with a lot of other chances for
20 Roncalli and its students. Creative thinking. There are
21 also a lot of bright student problem solvers. Everyone
22 finally realized that we had to get our act together and
23 get rid of all of the problems that we had. We all had to
24 come together as a family to build Roncalli to where we are
25 now. All of these traits that everyone will display this



1 year, helped to create our new mascot, and we are proud to
2 be the Roncalli STEM Academy Wolves.

3 MS. JONES: Thank you, Anthony.

4 MADAM CHAIR: Can I ask you how to spell
5 something? I'm just kidding.

6 MS. JONES: Anthony presented -- I couldn't
7 have been more proud of Roncalli STEM Academy. They did an
8 unveiling, they involved their whole community, and coming
9 up with their new colors, and their new mascot, and Dr.
10 DeNiro and I were able to attend their ceremony, and the
11 student body all dressed in khaki and black polo shirts,
12 and they were just so beautifully behaved. They were so
13 excited. And Anthony did the unveiling of their mascot,
14 and it was just a wonderful day for everyone. So I had to
15 bring him along to share -- he's a terrific student, and we
16 couldn't be more proud.

17 So moving forward, the Pueblo City Schools
18 has experienced many different strategies and reform
19 efforts over the past several years. As a new
20 superintendent, I have been able to come in with a fresh
21 set of eyes to review the various programs that they have
22 tried. And of the various options that have been provided
23 by the state, the Innovation School concept has presented
24 the most promise to create sustained improvement over time.
25 This is why we're coming before you today to express our



1 interest, to take our own early action to create an
2 innovation zone of schools for the upcoming school year.

3 We have begun discussions with the Denver-
4 based Gates Family Foundation to look at national high-
5 performing models of reform. We are reviewing research-
6 based progress monitoring systems that would align well
7 with the park, and would provide frequent data to make
8 adjustments and instruction in a more timely manner. We
9 want to also put together a strategic plan for professional
10 development that would provide ongoing supports throughout
11 the year, to help principals grow as instructional leaders,
12 and to also help teacher leaders grow in making decision --
13 data-driven decisions.

14 As I mentioned before, we are looking to
15 expand our participation in the CDE Turnaround Network,
16 which we see as an integral part of the Innovation
17 Initiative in providing our principals with high quality
18 professional development. In the first year, we would
19 target six to ten of our schools to participate in the
20 Innovation Zone. Our quality control would be for our
21 consistent progress monitoring system, to ensure their
22 strategies of producing positive student achieve results,
23 but each school in the Innovation Zone would have the
24 autonomy to create a unique program to engage students and
25 their parents to provide high-quality instruction. What



1 we'd like to do is to submit a more concrete plan to you in
2 August for your consideration. This would give us the next
3 four months to solidify our external partnerships, identify
4 the schools that would be included in the Innovation Zone,
5 and provide more detail on the work that would be
6 accomplished in year one and beyond.

7 We believe in our Pueblo City School
8 students. Many of them come to us with less background
9 knowledge, vocabulary and skills, due to their family
10 circumstances. But we strongly believe that this is not a
11 matter of their lack of ability, but rather it's a lack of
12 opportunities. We plan to create strong programs that will
13 provide them with a rich array of opportunities that will
14 ensure their academic success. Our goal is 100 percent
15 graduation rate, and we look forward to joining you in
16 upcoming years to celebrate our accreditation with
17 distinction.

18 We thank you for your time and consideration
19 today, and we would welcome your comments and feedback and
20 questions at this time. Thank you.

21 MADAM CHAIR: Thank you very much, Dr.
22 Jones. A couple of quick questions before I let the Board
23 have a chance. First of all, was it a culture shock to
24 move from Fort Meyers to Pueblo?

25 DR. JONES: Well, the weather has changed



1 dramatically. My toughest decision is calling snow days, I
2 can just say that right now.

3 MADAM CHAIR: There's quite a difference.
4 And I may have missed it if you mentioned, have you
5 experienced significant student growth in the last year or
6 so, or in the last few years? Or are you pretty steady?

7 DR. JONES: We're very stable in Pueblo. It
8 looks like we're ranging right around 18,000 a year for the
9 past two or three years.

10 MADAM CHAIR: And you talked about a
11 partnership, and I think (inaudible), are you making an
12 effort to partnership with various community groups and
13 businesses? You mentioned Gates or something?

14 DR. JONES: Exactly. The Gates Family
15 Foundation has reached out to us. We are in discussions
16 about their support with our progress monitoring system,
17 and other supports that they can provide our district.
18 We've already partnered with Advance Ed as resource and
19 support for training and needs assessments, and self-study
20 for our school district. So we are looking for additional
21 external partners, but then also locally we have some
22 wonderful partnerships with the United Way organization,
23 and our local rotaries and CSU Pueblo, providing our
24 students with mentors and supports in the classroom.

25 MADAM CHAIR: And finally, when you



1 mentioned the teachers, do you have any particular goals or
2 plans to work with your teachers to reward them for
3 professional growth or any of that sort of thing?

4 DR. JONES: Well, we are certainly looking
5 into compensation plan, and we believe that's important,
6 and they should be compensated for their additional work.

7 MADAM CHAIR: Well, I certainly congratulate
8 you, it sounds like you've done a great deal of work.
9 Jane, did you have a question?

10 MS. GOFF: Sure. I'm going to go in the
11 backwards order. United Way partnerships -- in any
12 particular area? This is through their literacy work
13 primarily? Early literacy? Early childhood? I mean, they
14 do a lot of things.

15 DR. JONES: They do, and they are working
16 primarily with our middle school students, and they provide
17 academic support, but primarily social and emotional
18 support, and mentoring -- talking with the children every
19 week, providing that stability in a child's life; that
20 positive adult model. So it's -- many aspects are covered
21 through this mentoring program, but just having one
22 positive adult for some of our most struggling students,
23 really is benefitting them.

24 MS. GOFF: Is there a steady cadre of
25 mentors through their tutoring program? It looks a little



1 different in all parts of the state that they work, but --

2 DR. JONES: Yeah, our United Way really has
3 done a nice job. They get volunteers committed to three
4 years, staying with these students, and even above and
5 beyond, we have some that have actually moved with the
6 students into their high school years.

7 MS. GOFF: One more -- Pathways, which ones?
8 Are there more than one? We know about STEM and all of the
9 creative thinking we can do around that. Just curious if
10 there are other pathways that are not necessarily related
11 to STEM as we know it?

12 MS. JONES: Right, with our career and
13 technical academies, actually with our business partners,
14 what we're doing is we're going -- we're planning a large
15 summit in May, where we're hoping to have close to 300 of
16 our business leaders come together to help us shape what
17 our career and technical academies are going to look like,
18 and what kinds of technical skills, what kinds of training
19 should we be providing? I mean, we have our steel
20 industry, we have a huge need in the health fields;
21 construction, welders. There are many different pathways,
22 but we're going to be working with our business partners to
23 ensure that we're producing a workforce and partnering with
24 our community college -- Pueblo Community College -- as
25 well as CSU Pueblo, in creating pathways that Dr. Milner,



1 one of our Board members has finally labeled as “stackable”
2 credentials, so that we can provide industry certifications
3 at the high school level, then two-year degrees, and four-
4 year degrees in a particular career area. So partnering
5 with our higher institutions as well.

6 MS. GOFF: You’ve been the beneficiary of
7 the Counselor Corps help for, as far as I can remember,
8 most of the courts have been available to you. Have you
9 noticed an increase in ICAP participation and competition
10 and other things that is aligned with course planning,
11 obviously, but I just always like to hear from districts
12 that have had the Counselor Corps presence and what we know
13 now that enough time has gone by to be able to really tell
14 whether or not that’s helping, and contributing to some
15 community involvement, especially parents and families and
16 cultural competency contributions and such as that. ICAP?

17 MS. JONES: I would be happy to respond to
18 that one too. It’s a fabulous thing. We hope we can
19 continue to be recipients of those funds, and that support,
20 because basically it’s adding additional counselors, so
21 it’s reducing the ratio, which is so critically important
22 to offer that one-on-one assistance to even begin with ICAP
23 and then monitor it through the high school years. So I
24 mean it’s an absolutely -- I applaud the state for
25 providing those opportunities for the school districts,



1 because that's a critically important area of counseling.

2 MS. GOFF: Is there any presence yet of
3 Counselor Core personnel in middle schools? Have you
4 started -- or always have been coordinating those efforts?

5 MS. JONES: So we were a school that was
6 lucky enough to receive a Corps counselor, and she has been
7 amazing. She actually has been really working with our
8 current counselor, and they partner together to make sure
9 that everyone one of our students not only completes an
10 ICAP, but actually really takes it seriously, and really
11 looks at how that ICAP supports what they are doing in the
12 regular classroom every single day. How, whatever the
13 career path they chose, they are currently (inaudible) in
14 arts, and math and social studies class ties in to what
15 they're doing, but not only that, what career path -- or
16 what courses they need to enroll in, in high school, to
17 achieve whatever their goals are? And what colleges are
18 available for them? And what scholarships are available
19 for them? Even at the sixth grade level?

20 MS. GOFF: Anthony, were you just primed for
21 an opportunity with STEM? Or was there some tool of
22 attraction that solidified your decision to take this
23 route?

24 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: In the STEM school?
25 What led you to the STEM school?



1 MS. GOFF: I encourage Anthony to talk about
2 -- when we talk about ICAP, perhaps you want to talk about
3 your goals for continuing in high school and on, and how
4 STEM has helped to think about that.

5 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: He's very nervous.

6 MS. GOFF: That's okay, he had talked about
7 with us, when we were at the unveiling, Anthony shared with
8 us. We asked many of those same questions, and he was able
9 to share with us how he is looking forward to continuing at
10 the local high school, and then moving on into the
11 military, actually, and so as you mentioned earlier, the
12 turning around of the school has meant a lot to him, making
13 decisions to continue on to secondary education. So that's
14 what I remembered you were talking about. You can add to
15 that though, I didn't mean to put words in your mouth.

16 MR. SANCHEZ: Actually, yeah, I plan on
17 going, after I graduate high school, I plan on going into
18 the Marines. And I feel like while I'm out there, on the
19 frontline, the STEM -- the STEM support would like -- it
20 would -- it's been helping me with my problem solving and
21 my creative thinking and stuff, and I feel like the
22 creative thinking and problem solving would really help me
23 out there, with out to like -- how to plan and -- I don't -
24 - I don't know --

25 MS. GOFF: Gives you the background and the



1 roots for carrying on in your life. Congratulations on
2 your spelling championship, that's --

3 MR. SANCHEZ: Thank you.

4 MS. GOFF: That's not easy to do.

5 MADAM CHAIR: Anyone else? Angelika?

6 MS. SCHROEDER: Looking at the data is
7 troubling to me, because I see up and down, and up and down
8 over time. And I see very little continuous change. Are
9 there specific things to look at, or -- assure me -- well,
10 first of all, when you come back in August, will you have
11 some 2014-'15 data? I realize the statewide assessments
12 will not be there, but you have local assessments --

13 MS. JONES: Yes.

14 MS. SCHROEDER: -- that you can report to us
15 and show us some progress. Will you have that available to
16 us?

17 MS. JONES: Yes, we will.

18 MS. SCHROEDER: Okay, because it is a little
19 troubling. I mean, we looked at the six schools. I know
20 you've got schools another two years behind that, and you
21 know, these graphs that go all over the place, I don't know
22 what to make of it. Do you want to tell me what you make
23 of it?

24 MS. JONES: Well, again, my analysis has to
25 do with really focusing on literacy instruction, math



1 instruction, having very targeted professional development.
2 It was so important for us to update the materials, and as
3 you can see with the science, those materials have been in
4 place since the mid-'90s as well, and we need new updated
5 resources and materials, and then we need to --

6 MS. SCHROEDER: Do you have the funding to
7 do that?

8 MS. JONES: We're -- we have set aside
9 funding for the science, yes, for this coming fall, and we
10 were able to piece together the funding this past fall for
11 the reading. And so yes, I feel confident we will be able
12 to put materials in kindergarten through eight grade, basic
13 materials, and then look at our science labs, and our
14 resources for our secondary schools as well.

15 But that's critically to have good, solid,
16 up-to-date resources, but even more important is the
17 professional development training then to put in place, and
18 on-going training, not just an event at the beginning to
19 introduce the materials, but to keep coming back to how the
20 teachers with strategies to utilize the materials
21 effectively. I also don't think the progress monitoring
22 that we're -- or the assessment systems that we have in
23 place locally are as robust as we need, and I think we need
24 something that's going to give us more frequent data, and
25 that's why we're going to be looking very carefully to find



1 something that will align well with (inaudible) or whatever
2 assessments we end up in the future, but to be more current
3 in their strategies for assessing students.

4 MS. SCHROEDER: What worries me is that I
5 could see growth, so then my question is, well what did you
6 do to make these get better, and then all of a sudden it
7 goes like, this way, and this way? So it's haphazard.
8 There isn't anything one --

9 MS. JONES: Right. And like I said, we had
10 an event with the new materials and readings, so I wasn't
11 surprised that there's a dip, or lines going various
12 directions, because of the change right in mid-stream, so
13 to speak. The science is a little more steady with upward
14 trends and so -- or the science -- the math, I mean.

15 MS. SCHROEDER: The math, yeah.

16 MS. JONES: And so I really do attribute --
17 you know, we need to stay the course, we need to update our
18 resources, training, and stay the course to learn the
19 materials well, and to become consistent in our practices.

20 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you.

21 MADAM CHAIR: Yes?

22 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Dr. Jones, so how long
23 have you been in Pueblo?

24 MADAM CHAIR: Not quite a year.

25 MS. JONES: Not quite a year, right. Since



1 July 1, so --

2 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: So you are assessing in
3 --

4 MS. JONES: -- about eight, nine months. So
5 I have spent a great deal of the year this year trying to
6 learn Colorado vocabulary and the new accountability
7 system, but also assess what we have in place; what's going
8 well, what's not, so that we can make these changes for
9 next year.

10 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I guess the question
11 is: And you've been working the Department?

12 MS. JONES: Yes. They've been great.
13 They've been great support.

14 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Thank you.

15 MS. MAZANEC: Madam Chair?

16 MADAM CHAIR: Yes, Pam?

17 MS. MAZANEC: Thank you for your
18 presentation. What do you see as the biggest barrier to
19 academic growth for your students?

20 MS. JONES: Time. As far as -- when I made
21 the comment about our children, I've worked with children
22 of poverty all my life, and I will never use that as an
23 excuse, but they need the time to get caught up with their
24 peers, and that's why we're working hard to expand our
25 early childhood programs. I'm a huge advocate of trying to



1 start early to keep the gap as minimal, and as small as
2 possible, with children.

3 But they need the time, and when they're not
4 coming with a strong, rich vocabulary, and the background
5 knowledge that their more fluent peers have, then it takes
6 more of our time and work to provide those opportunities
7 within the school day. So it may take longer than a year
8 to get the gains that someone else who's more accelerated
9 can receive. So it's a challenge. It's -- it doesn't
10 prevent us from being successful, but it just -- it takes
11 more time, extended day, extended year can help. We are
12 looking at our summer school programs to provide ongoing
13 supports and instruction during the summer to help the
14 children as well.

15 MS. MAZANEC: Two of our earlier schools
16 talked about having so many immigrant children who had not
17 been at school at all. I wondered if you run into that in
18 Pueblo, because you have a lot of immigration of that sort,
19 where they have not had schooling at all?

20 MS. DENIRO: We don't have many immigrants
21 or refugees that we heard in the presentations, however, as
22 you can tell, our population, we have Latino and Hispanics
23 and while we don't have a large number of ELLs receiving
24 services, we are devoting a very big idea -- Dr. Jones had
25 given her direction to take a look at reviewing and



1 reorganizing some of our content area specialists, and the
2 ELD was one of them.

3 And in my past experiences, with ELL
4 students, we have decided that we're going to look very
5 closely at the Meta Consent Decree, that you may be
6 familiar with. I don't think the State of Colorado is a
7 required state to follow the compliance, but Florida was --
8 is, and so out of that comes some opportunities that I
9 believe will serve us well in Pueblo.

10 And you mentioned about incentives for
11 teachers, we would like to look carefully at an opportunity
12 for encouraging our teachers to become endorsed so that
13 students, wherever they are, in more of an inclusion-type
14 of providing services and co-teaching. And while this is a
15 big idea, we are beginning on it as a part of what we --
16 how we want to serve those students who are coming new.
17 And we have a newcomer program as well on the horizon. So
18 we are excited about that.

19 MADAM CHAIR: Deb?

20 MS. SCHEFFEL: Thank you for your
21 presentation. Can you say -- the big picture here is it's
22 truth in advertising; let's label the problem, let's figure
23 out how to assign a label to it, let's put faces of kids
24 behind it. Let's put a great plan in place, allow time,
25 and address the problem. When you look at it that way, do



1 you -- have you looked very specifically at how much -- how
2 many months growth do you need to make sure it happens in
3 order to get out of these categories which aren't
4 meaningful as categories per se, except that they represent
5 the faces of children?

6 Are you being that detailed and deliberate?
7 Because all of the things that you've mentioned are
8 excellent; that's all the things pretty much anyone would
9 mention, you know? The various areas of leadership and
10 data, and curriculum, and instruction and professional
11 development. Those are all the leverage points. But have
12 you looked really detailed at the data, so that you don't
13 put all of those things in place, and then find still, oh,
14 we're short X number of months growth in various sub-
15 sectors of our population? Because I think that can be
16 very helpful, because it's very almost surgical in your
17 approach. Right?

18 MS. JONES: And to be perfectly honest,
19 that's why we're looking for a new progress monitoring
20 system that will give us more detail, more information,
21 more frequently. So that we can drill down to the student
22 and our professional development will be targeting exactly
23 that. Really getting down to each and every individual
24 child and their performance needs, their strengths or
25 weaknesses. The types of data we have now are too



1 infrequent, and aren't prescriptive enough to help us drive
2 instruction. And we need to find a better tool to serve us
3 well.

4 MS. SCHEFFEL: Okay, great, thank you.

5 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Madam Chair?

6 MADAM CHAIR: Yes?

7 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Do you have trained ESL
8 teachers?

9 MS. JONES: Could you repeat that?

10 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Do you have trained ESL
11 teachers?

12 MS. DENIRO: Yes, we do.

13 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: And a connection with
14 the university? I know I seem to be repeating myself.

15 MS. DENIRO: No, I listened very carefully
16 to what you said earlier, and yes, we have a great
17 relationship and we're working on that. We are not where we
18 need to be to ensure that we have enough teachers. We are
19 actually looking in our budget process to get a better
20 ratio of teacher to student for ELLs and we're not finished
21 with that process yet, but I am familiar enough with it to
22 work closely with our Budget Department to make sure that
23 we can increase that somewhat. But they are qualified
24 teachers, they are a wonderful group, and I just believe
25 that we can extend that out beyond those specific groups of



1 teachers.

2 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: You talked about
3 teacher training, and I think quality teacher training that
4 is not a one-shot deal, that extends, I think would be
5 another idea. I was also thinking that we have such a need
6 in Colorado for teachers, that possibly the Department
7 might be helpful. I'm sure that there are lots of people,
8 lots of teachers around the country, who might want to come
9 to Colorado and teach. And if we had somewhat of a network
10 where we're looking for teachers, we are looking for
11 qualified teachers, and the Department could have a -- I
12 don't know, a lifeline for teachers to come here in the
13 ESL. I mean, I think Colorado is so desirable a place to
14 live, that I can't imagine people wouldn't want to come
15 here and teach. Thank you.

16 MADAM CHAIR: Thank you. Anyone else?
17 Jane, go ahead.

18 MS. GOFF: Thanks. The Innovation Schools -
19 - that was a fun afternoon we spent together on that, about
20 a year ago or so. What would you say, drilling down into
21 the -- what are one or two of the major big bonus points
22 that have come from that, and how is the teacher voice --
23 the staff, all staff in the building, how are they doing
24 with it? How are they contributing? Do you get feedback
25 from their fulfillment level, and their satisfaction level



1 with it? And if you're thinking of going from 15 -- or to
2 15 -- I think I heard correctly -- no, ten out of 32
3 schools in the district -- that's a sizable portion to have
4 under -- I think it's workable, but that's up to you to
5 decide. But I'm just thinking, what are the benefits
6 you've heard back? Particularly from, at this point, the
7 professionals in the building?

8 MS. JONES: So there are two -- if you're
9 going to ask for two, there is many, but there is a couple
10 that stand out to me mostly, and that is the support that
11 we're getting in terms of the waivers that we asked for,
12 and how we're utilizing those waivers to implement changes
13 within the building without having road blocks -- that sort
14 of thing. In terms of longer hours, longer days, and then
15 compensating our teachers for those longer hours, longer
16 days. Being able to provide professional development to
17 our teachers that are specific to the school, that really
18 address the needs of the teachers and the students of the
19 school, rather than a comprehensive, you know, sitting in a
20 professional development that may be not -- is not
21 applicable at that point, or there is another professional
22 development opportunity that is more applicable to our
23 teachers at that point.

24 Being able to really focus and really get
25 the support of focusing on what is truly needed at the



1 building, and then getting the support, such as -- I will
2 give you an example -- one of the things that we really
3 needed to focus on this year, was student culture and
4 climate. Changing a positive school -- student culture and
5 climate. And we have received lots of support from the
6 district, and lots of support from the state as well,
7 through the network, to be able to really hone down on what
8 that looks like. To really -- even identifying what that
9 positive school culture, climate looks like, and creating
10 our picture postcard. And then developing a systems -- or
11 the systems in place needed to make those changes. So
12 that's been really helpful.

13 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Madam Chair, may I?

14 MADAM CHAIR: Yes.

15 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I know that in a school
16 district that I work with, what they did was they --
17 sometimes extended time is extended time. I mean, like at
18 Germany. Germany -- children in Germany go to school for
19 half a day. I'm not saying you do the same, but at this
20 school that I work with, the teachers, the parents, asked
21 for teachers to have time to plan together. And they also
22 asked -- of course everyone wants this -- the best teachers
23 to go where there is the greatest need. The need is the
24 greatest.

25 And planning -- for teachers, you know, to



1 plan together. I think -- and giving -- given that time to
2 do so. Just in the research also comes up over and over
3 and over again, that teachers have time to plan together.
4 In this particular school district, they were paid more for
5 that extra time to work together. And it might help in
6 climate, you know, getting better school climate, when
7 teachers are working together. When there's more
8 engagement. You know, engagement with parents, engagement
9 -- teacher and student. The longer school year I think
10 would be something where kids do not lose, you know, and
11 working, I think that's a good idea that you're thinking
12 about. Especially with children that are economically
13 poor. Thank you.

14 MADAM CHAIR: I want to thank you very much
15 for coming. Fascinating discussion. I particularly -- I
16 don't know (inaudible), but I think that we don't get
17 enough chance to hear about the lower income schools, with
18 the minorities and the difficulties that you face in
19 raising scores and providing education for those kids. You
20 are our third district, and we have been impressed with
21 every one of them, and I'm certainly impressed with you and
22 everything you've had to say. I look forward to great
23 results as you move on. Commissioner, do you have anything
24 to say?

25 MR. HAMMOND: No, I just want to thank you



1 all, and Dr. DeNiro for coming, as well as Dr. Jones, and
2 all of the various people that you brought along. I know
3 that's not easy, and especially the drive and bringing
4 everybody together. We always appreciate a candid
5 conversation, and I thank you very much for taking the
6 time. So --

7 ALL: Thank you.

8 MS. JONES: If I may add though, we'd also
9 like to invite each and every one of you down to Pueblo to
10 visit our school district, our city. It's a lovely place.
11 You can come during the Pueblo Chili Festival, or you can
12 come anytime. It's a state fair, or come and just visit
13 our schools. Be with us for a little bit. Thank you.

14 MADAM CHAIR: Thank you very much.

15 CHAIRMAN DURHAM: Board members, and Chair,
16 we have the Denver Public Schools at 2:00, and if you want
17 to take just a brief break, we have time.

18 (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.

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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 22nd day of January, 2019.

/s/ Kimberly C. McCright
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