



COLORADO
Department of Education

Colorado State Board of Education

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
BEFORE THE
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION COMMISSION
DENVER, COLORADO
May 14, 2015, Part 1

BE IT REMEMBERED THAT on May 14, 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)
Marcia Neal (R)
Debora Scheffel (R)
Steve Durham (R)



1 MADAM CHAIR: All right. Staff, please call
2 the roll.

3 MS. MARKEL: Steve Durham? Dr. Flores?

4 MS. FLORES: Here.

5 MS. MARKEL: Jane Goff?

6 MS. GOFF: Here.

7 MS. MARKEL: Pam Mazanec?

8 MS. MAZANEC: Here.

9 MS. MARKEL: Marcia Neal?

10 MADAM CHAIR: Here.

11 MS. MARKEL: Dr. Scheffel?

12 MS. SCHEDFFEL: Here.

13 MS. MARKEL: Dr. Schroeder.

14 MS. SCHROEDER: Here.

15 MS. MARKEL: Oh, and Steve is here.

16 MR. DURHAM: Here, sort of.

17 MADAM CHAIR: Good morning, all. The first
18 item on the agenda is a presentation by Bruce Hankins,
19 superintendent of Dolores County Schools, and Brian
20 Hanson, superintendent of Mancos School District Re-6.
21 Commissioner, would you introduce the program, please?

22 MR. HANKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair, and
23 thank you for all those who have come before us today.
24 We really appreciate wanting to hear from you. I'm going
25 to have Elliot Asp start it off, because this is really



1 dovetails it to his presentation. He probably will cover
2 everything that he's going to talk about, but anyway, we
3 want to get it kind of started, and then turn it over to
4 all of you. Elliot?

5 MR. ASP: Slip in here (indiscernible).

6 Thank you. Well, it's our pleasure to have these
7 representatives here with us today from the Rural
8 Innovative Innovation Council -- excuse me, Innovation
9 Alliance. These folks have been working on an
10 alternative accountability pilot for some time, and we're
11 excited to have you hear about their work today.

12 Let me just run down the table here. We
13 have Paula Stephenson from the Rural Alliance and Douglas
14 Bissonette, superintendent of Elizabeth School District,
15 Brian Hanson from superintendent at Mancos, Bruce
16 Hankins, superintendent in Dolores. That's Dove Creek,
17 Dolores, not to be confused with the other district
18 there. Next to him is Sue Holmes, superintendent at
19 Buena Vista, and then Lisa Yates, who's the director of
20 curriculum and instruction in Buena Vista, and Kathy
21 Gebhart I think is down on the end (indiscernible).
22 Michelle Murphy from CASB is also in the audience with us
23 today.

24 Just a brief introduction. We first met
25 with this group a few months ago as they were formulating



1 their ideas. A number of us from the department, Rebecca
2 Holmes, Keith Hill, and myself, and Lori Shepherd (ph)
3 joined us for that meeting. It was a very interesting
4 day. And these folks have continued to finalize the
5 details of their process, and as they've gone along,
6 we've been able to have a direct communication line and
7 collaborate with these folks as they've moved ahead and
8 further developed their ideas.

9 As this process has gone along, they've done
10 an incredible job of reaching out to a number of
11 different stakeholders. I attended a meeting in CASB a
12 week or two ago, which there were superintendents,
13 teachers, board members, and others working on this
14 design, and a lot of investment by a variety of different
15 stakeholders, and they've also brought in research from
16 different authors, as well as from different states. In
17 fact, they were using some information from Vermont at
18 the same time, so thus we're visiting Vermont and looking
19 at the work that they were doing. So we're duck tailing
20 there, and we look forward to continuing to work
21 collaboratively with the Rural Innovation Alliance as
22 this process proceeds. And let me turn it over to Brian
23 Hanson to start the presentation.

24 MR. HANSON: Hey Elliott, thank you. Madam
25 Chair and members of the State Board and Commissioner



1 Hammonds, thank you for -- not welcome. I saw Robert,
2 and I just had to -- I apologize again yesterday for
3 giving you a heart attack when we walked in early. We
4 didn't mean to do that. We were --

5 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I thought they didn't
6 get the notice that they were (indiscernible).

7 MR. HANSON: No, we just wanted to see what
8 was going on. So again, thank you for allowing us to be
9 here this morning. I know you folks are busy and have
10 heavy agendas, and again, we appreciate the opportunity
11 to come here and talk to you this morning.

12 As you can tell from the slide behind me,
13 we're here to share with you our student-centered
14 accountability project, answer any questions that you may
15 have, and hopefully get some direction from you as we
16 continue to move forward with this project. You will
17 soon see that there are 14 districts located
18 geographically all over the state of Colorado represented
19 here today. We also represent approximately 1.5 percent
20 of the student population in the state.

21 What you're not going to see -- and I need
22 to take a moment here and say this. What you're not
23 going to see in the presentation and the slide today is a
24 tremendous amount of effort and support that we've
25 received from three key individuals that I want to point



1 out today. One being Kathy Gebhart from Children's
2 Voices, the other being Michelle Murphy from CASB, and
3 finally, Paula Stephenson from Colorado Rural Schools
4 Alliance, and we couldn't be at the point that we're at
5 today in front of you without their support, and we
6 really appreciate that.

7 So just a little history, I guess, in how we
8 got here and why we got here. For me personally, this is
9 my 29th year in education. This is my -- 12 of those
10 years as a high school teacher, ten of those years a
11 building-level administrator, and the last seven years as
12 superintendent of the Mancos School District. Now with
13 29 years of experience, I think I have -- with 29 years
14 in the business, I think I have some experience that I
15 can draw on, and I can make two statements to you that
16 are absolutely truthful. Statement number one is
17 education has never been in a worse place than it is
18 today. Statement number two, education has never been in
19 a better place than it is today. Now you -- you're kind
20 of looking at me going, "What did he just say? He
21 contradicted himself." Let me explain.

22 When I say that education has never been in
23 a worse place, what I'm saying is that over the last 17
24 years, we have been operating a system that the only
25 thing that matters is a test score, but this test, which



1 our kids have openly said over and over again has no
2 value to them, is then used to determine how my school,
3 how my district, how our schools and our districts are
4 rated, and when you factor in the concept that we are
5 small rural districts, and we have a small end size,
6 taking the test that kids really don't value and then
7 throwing it into a system that doesn't account for our
8 small end size, the information becomes statistically
9 invalid.

10 So any trend analysis that we may do is
11 invalid. We collectively would have to test between 100
12 and 300 years before we would have enough data points to
13 have any trend analysis that we develop be accurate. I
14 think the only thing that we've done -- and this is my
15 personal opinion -- is we've drained the life out of our
16 profession, and we're hearing that over and over again
17 from our teachers. I also know that education today is
18 the best it's ever been, and that is due solely to the
19 undying dedication and commitment that we have from our
20 teachers each and every day in the classroom. Today's
21 students are producing more today than ever, and I
22 personally cannot be more proud of the work our rural
23 schools and our rural students are doing, but under our
24 current system our students are continuously labeled as
25 failing, our teachers are continuously labeled as



1 failing, and that is simply not true. It's not true in
2 my district, and it's not true in any of the districts
3 that are represented here today.

4 We are here today to provide you with an
5 opportunity to allow us to move forward with what we
6 think is an amazing project. So with that, I would like
7 to turn it over to my (indiscernible) colleagues, Lisa
8 Yates and Sue Holmes, to lead you through our student-
9 centered accountability project. Sue, Lisa?

10 MS. HOLMES: Thank you. Brian had mentioned
11 there are 14 partnering districts, and I'd like to
12 acknowledge that. We have quite a few here present
13 today, even during this really extremely busy end-of-the-
14 year time, and Elliott introduced a few of us I'd like to
15 acknowledge again. We have Elizabeth School District
16 represented with Douglas toward the end of the table,
17 Dolores County. We're from Buena Vista. Mancos, next to
18 me, as well as Monte Vista and Bayfield are in the
19 audience. And so they're strengthened --
20 (indiscernible).

21 So seven. So half of the partnering
22 districts are here, and it's incredible feat just to be
23 here during this time. You know, we have identified
24 ourselves as having unified diversity, and we are all
25 unified because we're all rural, but also because we have



1 this intense desire to strengthen our accountability by
2 involving our local stakeholders and adding measures
3 above and beyond our state assessment, because we think
4 that that gives us what our local stakeholders are
5 looking for and the strength that we need for
6 accountability.

7 But we're also diverse. We're from all
8 different regions from our state. We're different sizes
9 of rural. Brian talked about some of us being small and
10 having such a small end size that the current
11 accountability system can't even -- we can't even measure
12 to larger rurals and from the state. We represent
13 different student demographics, and then all 14 of us
14 perform differently on the state assessment, and I think
15 that our diversity brings us strength as well.

16 When we talk about wanting to strengthen our
17 accountability, I think first we need to look at what our
18 current accountability system is right now. Right now,
19 it's an external measure only. Basically 100 percent
20 minus graduation rate is based on our state assessment,
21 and to strengthen that, we're looking at adding measures.

22 So we would still have the external part of
23 meaningful learning measures, but we would also add
24 resource accountability and professional capacity to be
25 portions of our accountability. We'll go into that in a



1 little bit more detail in just a few moments, but what
2 I'd like to do is really talk about where is this
3 information coming from. We didn't pull these measures
4 out of our hats. We have a great deal of research behind
5 what we're looking at, what we're asking for, and when
6 looking at our main sources, I also look at these as
7 being unified diversity as well.

8 So we've got four main sources listed up on
9 the slide, and they're from a big range. The first one,
10 the Vermont State Board of Education resolution, is a
11 state source. Fullan's article, "Professional Capital As
12 Accountability," is an educational research source.
13 Finished lessons, an international source. And the last
14 one, a national source. National Education Policy Center
15 School of Opportunity Project. So they're very diverse,
16 very different, but they're unified, because they all
17 come to the same conclusion, that we've had an over-
18 reliance on a single measure in our country for
19 accountability, and that includes the state of Colorado.
20 It's just not enough, doesn't provide enough information
21 that we as districts need to bring about positive change
22 and lasting improvement. It doesn't motivate or cause
23 growth, and we've seen that over and over and over again,
24 and Brian alluded to it when he talked about the test
25 means nothing to our kids, and it becomes a very



1 frustrating system to be under.

2 I'm going to pass this off to my colleague,
3 Lisa, as she continues to go into more information in a
4 little bit more detail about the different measures.

5 MS. YATES: So Sue mentioned the pieces of
6 the pie, a visual that we're using to organize both the
7 research, the body of research that we're looking at, to
8 describe what else a strengthened accountability system
9 could be. So the external measures was that first piece
10 of the pie, and we're calling that meaningful learning.
11 That term came primarily from the educational research
12 that we saw in Fullan's article, and that encompasses the
13 transparency that we currently have on that single state
14 measure, but we would also advocate adding additional
15 measures to that meaningful learning category. The body
16 of research shows that, and then our experience being
17 under the current model of accountability has certainly
18 contributed to our advocacy for expanding what is used in
19 accountability

20 So some thoughts that we have at this stage
21 of our project is adding local assessments. In addition
22 to supporting what state assessment results are showing
23 on that, our local assessments also allow us to include
24 our local stakeholders and leverage their involvement in
25 what accountability means. At this point, when



1 accountability comes, we have to spend a lot of time
2 explaining to them what those results even mean, and the
3 complexity of the calculations that are used to determine
4 those accreditations is what we invest our energy in
5 working with our local stakeholders on. If we could
6 shift that and have them much more involved in
7 determining even what those results are, and then looking
8 at the internal, which we'll go to next, the internal
9 factors that can move us to the continuous improvement
10 we're looking for, would change what we use
11 accountability for.

12 So included on the slide are other examples
13 of what we might use in that meaningful learning.
14 Attendance rates, participation rates in extracurricular
15 activities, health and fitness results, emotional and
16 health assessments. The Opportunity School's research
17 also contributed to those other assessment measures that
18 we have up there. So meaningful learning would be a part
19 of the accountability system, but we would strengthen
20 that with the other pieces of the pie. Resource
21 accountability and what we have put in that piece of the
22 pie now are things like our facilities and our finances,
23 our parents in our community that contribute to our
24 system of internal accountability that we would like to
25 add and strengthen our accountability system with.



1 Our last measure on there is mutual
2 accountability and even looking at, what are the
3 resources that a rural district is given, and how are
4 those expenditures used? We feel that's an important
5 part of how our local district should be held
6 accountable. And again, by bringing our local
7 stakeholders into that conversation, we feel like we can
8 leverage then continuous improvement.

9 The other piece of that pie is professional
10 capacity. So things that are happening in our system is
11 we have written curriculum, we have strong instructional
12 practices, professional growth, and then all of those
13 entities that cause continuous improvement, those are the
14 things that we're working on within our system that are
15 overlooked, that don't get factored into, is this system
16 moving students in their achievement and growth? So we
17 would like to add those and strengthen into those
18 measures.

19 In the project, ways that we might measure
20 that, because those internal measures don't necessarily
21 have quantifiable results, so we would look at continuing
22 to use achievement and growth results, but added to that
23 could be perception surveys. Those are quantifiable. We
24 might also look at improvement planning, and could that
25 be quantifiable? What goals have been set? What actions



1 have been put in place, and how has that been monitored?
2 That too could be quantifiable.

3 And then audits, you'll hear later more
4 about what we'd like to include in the project is peer
5 reviews, so these partnering districts going in and
6 giving one another feedback on those internal measures,
7 and so that too could be quantifiable. So adding some
8 quantity to the internal measures is what we're proposing
9 in the project.

10 So I think Bruce is going to take a more
11 detailed look at the timeline.

12 MR. HANKINS: Madam Chair, members of the
13 State Board, I'd like to thank you again for this
14 opportunity to present our project. I'd also like to
15 thank CDE and Elliott specifically for taking the time to
16 give us feedback and support (indiscernible). And I'd
17 like to thank all of the team members. We put a
18 tremendous amount of work into this project already. So
19 you might be sitting there wondering what it is that
20 we're asking for. Really, we have two asks this morning.
21 The first, we're asking that you endorse our timeline
22 that I'm getting ready to present for our project, and
23 secondly, we're looking for some assurances that we would
24 not be required to concurrently run two accountability
25 systems.



1 I'd like to go to the highlights of our
2 timeline, which starts today, and obviously we spent a
3 lot of time, several months, working on this. I've
4 logged about 7400 miles back and forth from Denver since
5 January. Brian did about 7,000, and Paula's about 4,000.
6 So that goes to show our dedication to this project. We
7 really have worked a lot of long hours getting to this
8 point. (Indiscernible) Yeah, and it shows how his hair
9 is gray.

10 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: That's not what I said.

11 MR. HANKINS: Actually, it's the hours in
12 the car together that caused that. So our phase one
13 goals are to simply, year one, secure your endorsement
14 assurances, as I just stated, to utilize the state's
15 transitional hold on accreditation, to give a sufficient
16 time to focus on our student-centered accountability
17 system that will meet state legislative intent and state
18 statute. Participating districts will work with local
19 stakeholders to identify and adopt specific internal and
20 external accountability indicators, and some districts
21 have already begun this work. And then we would fine
22 tune the collaboration among our districts and that
23 collaboration between our districts and CDE. So that
24 would be the first year of the project.

25 Year two, we would implement the project,



1 the student-centered accountability system, which is
2 aligned to Colorado academic standards and the
3 Opportunity Gap Distinguished Criteria. We have also
4 added student growth to the eleventh criteria identified
5 in the Opportunity Gap work. We'd also have multi-
6 district teams complete site visits. These would be the
7 audits that Lisa talked about, and provide feedback to
8 the local stakeholders and a project update to CDE and
9 the state board on the progress of our project.

10 Year three, the partner districts would
11 respond to the peer review and continue aligning the
12 accountability system to Colorado academic standards and
13 the Opportunity Gap criteria that we identified.
14 District would also develop action plans to address the
15 areas of focus identified by the peer review teams.
16 Phase one would end with an external review by an
17 eclectic team of educational experts that will be
18 determined through collaborative process with the state
19 board and CDE. So we want people from the outside that
20 have expertise then coming in to our districts and giving
21 us feedback on what we're doing well and what we might
22 need to improve on.

23 Phase two, and this is really kind of an
24 undetermined amount of time at this point, but by the end
25 of phase two, we would like to produce a replicable



1 student-centered accountability system that focus the
2 attention of educators, parents, students, and other
3 members of the community on maximizing every student's
4 progress towards post-secondary, and workforce readiness,
5 and post-graduation success, and that is right out of
6 statute.

7 Again, I'd like to thank you for allowing us
8 to (indiscernible) a project, and we do hope we have your
9 support. We tried to specifically arrange this so we had
10 quite a bit of time for questions and answers, so we
11 would like to open it up for any questions that you have,
12 and we'll move forward from there. Thank you.

13 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Board, questions?
14 Angelika.

15 MS. SCHROEDER: Well, I didn't want to go
16 first asking questions, having you think that I'm not
17 very impressed with your report. I thank you for coming,
18 and I think it's terrific, so my questions are not about
19 being critical, but just understanding a little bit
20 better.

21 When I see the various factors that you're
22 looking at, are you thinking that there's going to be a
23 menu for these items? For example, participation in
24 extracurricular activities. There might be a district
25 that has ten kids in it, and so in other words, is it a



1 menu, or what are the -- what's kind of framework? Are
2 we just adding requirements that you report on, or are we
3 giving some choices in the same way that we're talking
4 now about graduation requirements, giving districts some
5 choices?

6 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: So I'll take that one.
7 The idea was to have broad enough frameworks that we
8 could measure whatever each of us was doing. What we
9 didn't --

10 MS. SCHROEDER: Okay.

11 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: -- want to do is have
12 this top-down approach, where we said, "You have to do
13 all of these things," because we are very different, and
14 there might be a district that only has ten kids, but if
15 they only have a hundred kids in their whole district,
16 that would be an indicator of student participation,
17 which also rolls into student success.

18 MS. SCHROEDER: Right. So there are some
19 decisions to be made at your board level, which may or
20 may not need approval. I'm trying to figure out a way
21 for this to work without top-down, without a list of
22 requirements. Thinking back on 191, in some ways, I
23 think people -- districts feel like they have choices if
24 they adopt the model, but in some ways, I'm not sure they
25 feel they have choices if they adopt the model, and so



1 I'm trying to get a comfortable level of balance when I
2 ask these questions.

3 So when you -- when a district makes a
4 decision of which items on the menu that you've
5 described, and there may be some more items that other
6 districts want to add in here, does the district set a
7 percentage? I'm looking for the implementation, partly
8 because that's where we often get stuck when we have
9 really great ideas.

10 MR. HANSON: You know, I'll take a stab at
11 that question. So we have focused, as Bruce said, around
12 a framework, and we've focused around the Opportunity Gap
13 framework, and I think we included that information in
14 the information that we sent to you. There are 11 of
15 those. We added a twelfth one, which is student growth.
16 We're envisioning that districts would focus on five of
17 the twelve, with one of them being student growth, each
18 and every year --

19 MS. SCHROEDER: Okay.

20 MR. HANSON: -- so that within the five that
21 a district chooses, it leaves it -- it leaves the
22 opportunity for districts to really focus at the local
23 level of what's important in their specific district.
24 You know, for an example, we -- through this process, we
25 visited some other districts in talking about with their



1 superintendents and their boards, and one of the
2 districts we visited was Merino, who has an incredible --

3 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: What's the other name
4 for Merino?

5 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Where is Merino?

6 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Buffalo.

7 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Because I looked for it
8 on the list of 178 districts, and I couldn't find how
9 it's listed.

10 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Buffalo.

11 MR. ASP: (indiscernible) for you. It's
12 five miles south and east of Willard.

13 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Well, that's the where,
14 but how is it listed on the CDE --

15 MR. ASP: (indiscernible).

16 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Buffalo.

17 MR. HANSON: They have an incredible student
18 --

19 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: So sorry to interrupt
20 you. It was just one of my questions from three days
21 ago.

22 MR. HANSON: They have an incredible student
23 and staff health program going on, and that's important
24 to them, and they could take that and embed that into one
25 of their criteria, where another district might have



1 something else. So it does allow that menu piece for
2 people to focus on what's important at a local level,
3 what people really value at the local level.

4 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: And lets us learn from
5 each other. I mean, when I went to Merino, I was like,
6 "We could do that. That would be powerful for our
7 district."

8 MS. SCHROEDER: Sure.

9 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: And I hadn't even
10 thought about it until I saw it.

11 MS. SCHROEDER: And that audit piece, I
12 think, is really powerful for folks to be able to
13 interact. I am glad that you're putting growth in there,
14 for sure, because I truly believe that is what parents
15 want to see, is their kids learning, growing each year.
16 In some cases, it needs to be faster than one year, but
17 that's a whole other discussion.

18 Are you suggesting that we adopt this
19 statewide, so the biggies? I mean, you're representing
20 the small districts where there are real Opportunity
21 Gaps, but are you suggesting that this would be the
22 statewide system? Should we think about it that way?

23 MR. HANSON: Kathy, take it.

24 MS. GEBHART: Thank you Madam Chair, and
25 Madam Vice Chair, and the rest of the Board. We're not



1 suggesting that other districts -- that we would impose
2 this on other districts. We think it's a very viable
3 model, and if other districts wanted to look at it, they
4 certainly should, but this is -- as you've seen, we want
5 to run this small, and run it for as long as we need to
6 get the appropriate data, and we believe that at the end
7 of it, it will be a model that other districts will want
8 to adopt, but that's certainly not our position or our
9 ability to ask other districts to adopt this.

10 MS. SCHROEDER: Okay. So at the same time,
11 we have another process underway, which I think includes
12 some of the larger districts, because there's -- there's
13 no question, but there's a concern that we've not had
14 enough factors in our accountability system to provide a
15 valid measure to our communities. What you've pointed
16 out may or may not be some of the same measures that
17 those folks are going to bring forward. So I'm guessing
18 there may be some conversions over time between these two
19 groups. Yeah?

20 MS. GEBHART: And I think that's why we are
21 here talking with you and coordinating with CDE, because
22 at some point these will cross, or merge, or whatever, so
23 we're trying to make this as collaborative and open a
24 process as we can, so that at the end we're not cross
25 wise, but we're all going down the same road.



1 MS. SCHROEDER: Okay. And it's a good road
2 that I strongly support. Thanks a lot.

3 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Board, other questions?

4 MADAM CHAIR: Thanks so much for coming.
5 Really appreciate it. You know, I'm so glad you're here,
6 because I really think that the top-down approach to
7 accountability and centralization of high stakes testing
8 has been detrimental to parent engagement, to the
9 students, to teachers, so I'm glad that you're thinking
10 what's the best for your districts, how can you best
11 support learning in your district.

12 So my question is, that I'm a little
13 confused on, is what do you need permission from, so to
14 speak, from CDE? Because when I look at your slide, it
15 looks like you're doing the student achievement results.
16 You're doing student growth. You're doing perception
17 surveys. We have no oversight over that. PYP
18 implementation. You're already doing that. Audits. So
19 in other words, what are you asking for, so to speak?
20 Like, a waiver, or a different model, or a different way
21 of reporting, or different assessments, different
22 valances in the formula, or you're just beginning to
23 think about those details? Because you know, I'm glad
24 you're raising the question, and you know, districts need
25 to meet the needs of their constituents, so you're



1 thinking that way. I'm just confused on the -- what does
2 CDE have to do with some of the things you've proposed?

3 MR. HANSON: Madam, we talked about the fact
4 that that very question may come up, and the group has
5 informed me that I may not answer that question, so I'm
6 going to turn it over to somebody else.

7 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Do you want me to
8 answer it, Brian?

9 MR. HANSON: Please do.

10 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I think that, as you
11 can see, we're laughing about this because this is a new
12 venture for all of us, and so we're not exactly sure what
13 the -- and we're respectful of the fact that we are on as
14 an informational item, but we also want to make sure that
15 as we proceed that we're not doing all this work only to
16 find out that there are these obstacles that everybody
17 knew about ahead of time.

18 And so what we are hoping for is to continue
19 the partnership and collaboration, and support from the
20 Board after you've had a chance to review this and
21 understand it, but support soon, because this work needs
22 to start right away, that we have your support and
23 assurances that there aren't any known obstacles that
24 would prevent us from doing it, because if we can
25 identify those obstacles, we can probably find a way



1 around them. But if we don't know what they are still
2 too far down the stream, then I think it creates distrust
3 amongst everybody, and I don't want that to happen,
4 because this project should go forward. So that's -- so
5 you know, we want to work. We've been working.

6 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Initial phases.

7 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Yeah, initial phases.
8 We believe for sure we have the year timeout. We're not
9 asking for a waiver. We could be, and probably will be,
10 asking for more extensive timeouts, but I think we aren't
11 really sure what 1323 means yet. I think we're still
12 trying to figure out what all of that looks like. But we
13 will be back as we figure this out, and we're hoping that
14 you will also reach out to us and say, "Well, here's
15 something that maybe none of us thought about. We're
16 going to need to figure out a way. It's either a clear
17 obstacle, or we're going to need to figure out a way
18 around it." But we're hoping that, sorry, in June that
19 we would be able to get some of these assurances, because
20 it would give us time to come back and move forward,
21 because we really want this work to start right away.

22 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Go ahead.

23 MR. HANSON: Oh yes, very well stated.

24 Thank you.

25 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: So what -- I guess I'd



1 like to ask the question, what do you need from this
2 board? Would it be helpful if we came up with a list of
3 things that are possible, so that you're not stabbing in
4 the dark, wondering what's possible? What are the broad
5 outlines that the -- what are the outlines that the Feds
6 require? What does state law require? Where are there -
7 - where is there ambiguity in the way the language is
8 interpreted? What might you be able to propose, so that
9 you're not just, you know, wondering? I mean, I think
10 that would be helpful, if we could draw up something like
11 that to give to districts, so that you could be thinking
12 along the lines that are consistent with what the law
13 requires (indiscernible).

14 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Madam Chair?

15 MR. HANSON: Did you get an answer, or were
16 you just making a statement?

17 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Yeah, I guess that I'm
18 proposing that maybe that would help you, but maybe you'd
19 have an answer.

20 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Well, one of the -- I
21 mean, a lot of the work up to this point has been with
22 the legislature trying to get what we felt would be
23 better language. We don't feel we got the language that
24 we really needed in 1323. So it really -- I mean, our
25 presentation today was hopeful that we had really



1 specific language in 1323 to enable us to move forward
2 with this. We didn't get that. So we've kind of morphed
3 our, I guess, presentation to fit better with what
4 happened with 1323, in hopes that moving forward there
5 will be more movement in the legislature to allow these
6 type of things legally.

7 MR. HANSON: Ms. Flores?

8 MS. FLORES: And I think it would be
9 (indiscernible) very helpful if we could have a list of
10 things that were concerns from you, and from the Board,
11 and from the AG, and the department I think ahead of
12 time. That would be really helpful to know. And we
13 really -- as you saw in the discussion around
14 assessments, there's some concern around whether you have
15 to run parallel systems, and the same is true with
16 accountability. So we're not trying to get out from
17 under accountability, but we also don't want to be trying
18 to run two accountability systems at the same time, so
19 that's one of the assurances that we'll be looking for as
20 we go forward.

21 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Yeah, and just as a
22 follow-up, I wasn't suggesting we should release a set of
23 concerns, although we could do that too, but I'd like to
24 talk about what's possible. What are the possibilities
25 in the current law, state and federal?



1 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: That's exactly right.

2 Thank you.

3 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Or what changes?

4 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Or changes that are
5 needed.

6 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Thank you very much,
7 again. Appreciate you.

8 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Madam Chair?

9 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Go ahead.

10 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Also, I think it would
11 help if -- you probably have done more work than the body
12 up here, and you probably know more than we do. Can you
13 tell us about the obstacles that you think are out there,
14 that would hinder you from this wonderful thing that
15 you're proposing? I like it.

16 MR. HANSON: Who would like -- are you --

17 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Madam Chair and the
18 Board?

19 MR. HANSON: Are you the obstacle
20 (indiscernible)?

21 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I think we've
22 identified one of them, which is being required to run
23 two parallel systems, because we don't have the
24 resources.

25 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Being?



1 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Being required to run
2 two parallel systems, because we don't have the
3 resources, and we don't believe that would serve our
4 communities, and that's part of the collaboration and
5 engagement, is trying to figure out where those issues
6 are, but I think that was one that has risen to the top.
7 And I see the rest of the questions (indiscernible).

8 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Well, one other thing
9 that I would say is, if you look at the statute around
10 accountability, I would put forth that what we're
11 proposing meets statutory requirements a whole lot better
12 than our current system.

13 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: But it does meet it.

14 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: It does meet it.

15 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: So I don't quite
16 understand the two -- I'm not sure I understand even what
17 you're saying when you're saying don't ask us to run two
18 systems, because you're doing the one and expanding.

19 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: We just want to make
20 sure we're on the same page for that.

21 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Okay.

22 MR. HANSON: Madam Chair, if I could, and
23 I'm going to -- oops, sorry. (Indiscernible). I think
24 the other thing that we might want to talk about is the
25 student growth piece and the piece around assessments.



1 You know, we want to make it perfectly clear that this
2 project is not necessarily around PARCC, that the state-
3 mandated test is a summative assessment, and summative
4 assessments are important in that body of evidence that
5 you have, and I've shared this with Elliott many times.
6 In my district, my concern is not with PARCC. My concern
7 is three months of instruction lost because of PARCC, and
8 I don't get the results back for six months afterwards.

9 Here's an interesting fact. My district had
10 about 95 percent parent refusal. They had just we're
11 done, enough is enough, and there really was nothing I
12 could do to stop that. And so with my principals, we sat
13 down and said, how are we going to handle this opt out of
14 PARCC? And you know, the decision was we were going to
15 schedule the test. We would give the test, but we
16 eliminated in the classroom all pre, post practice
17 everything, getting ready for the PARCC test. Last week,
18 we did our end of the year MAP assessment, and my
19 principals came in, and they were very excited. They
20 said, "You'll never guess what happened. This year, end-
21 of-year MAP assessment, compared to previous years, we
22 had a 20 percent growth in student achievement." And I
23 said, interesting. How much time did we save in the
24 classroom by not doing all of that prep, pre? And they
25 quickly did a calculation, said about 15 percent.



1 So to answer your question, one of the
2 things that we have to figure out through the
3 collaborative effort with CDE and our districts is how
4 that state test fits in. Can it be a sampling? Can it
5 be a shorter sampling? Can it be a shorter test, a
6 version? Can it be a quicker turnaround on the results?
7 And I think, Kathy, you were at a meeting last week maybe
8 that some folks were at, and they talked about that, the
9 -- I don't want to say high-stakes test. That's not what
10 I'm going to say, but the state test can be used in that
11 form of sampling that we can get comparability of. Is
12 that correct?

13 MS. GEBHART: It was the presentation to all
14 of you from the steam (ph) panel from CU and the
15 principal from El Paso County. And I'd just add more
16 thing, which is I think what would be confusing, given
17 what you've just heard from Brian is then to have CDE
18 label Mancos under the old system. So what we're trying
19 to figure out is how to -- we get the year time out, but
20 how to avoid the labeling going forward, if that's at all
21 possible, and we work that out, because that's also part
22 of the accountability system. And we don't have an
23 answer to that. We think for the first year we have a
24 good answer, but after that we need to figure out how we
25 avoid the labeling on one external measure when we feel



1 like we're complying with the intent of the law. So I
2 think that's something (indiscernible).

3 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Yes, go ahead.

4 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: In answer to your
5 questions, well, I think there's two things that may have
6 been partially said so far. One is that we're here to
7 say that we'd like to collaborate, and it takes everybody
8 that's a part of that collaboration to say yes, we're in.
9 So we want to know if you'd like to be a part of this
10 collaboration. Now, just like us, we don't know how it's
11 going to end, and we don't know where it's going to be in
12 a year, but we said we want to collaborate, and why?
13 Because we believe that the goal is important. It's
14 important to our students and our communities, to our
15 taxpayers.

16 And the second thing is some technical
17 assistance from CDE that we do not have in our districts,
18 to crunch the numbers, to look at data, to bring a level
19 of expertise to data that we don't have. We know we will
20 need that. And if we're--if there's a collaboration
21 between the state board, CDE, and this group of
22 districts, then we can do that work together, and we're
23 not coming up with competing sets of numbers, because we
24 know that for you and for the folks that you represents,
25 you're going to need to have reliable numbers, and we're



1 going to need to be able to be in agreement on the
2 numbers.

3 I don't believe -- I believe in the document
4 you got, there was statements about the goal, but I'd
5 just like to reiterate an important part that is a part
6 of a resolution that our board adopted, and it says that
7 it's the responsibility of policymakers to create the
8 conditions for an effective accountability system that
9 produces substantial improvements in student learning,
10 strengthens the teaching profession, and provides
11 transparency to the public.

12 That is our goal, and we don't have all the
13 details fleshed out. The statutory basis for working on
14 that, the Colorado statute intends that the statewide
15 accountability system, we're looking at the
16 accountability system which includes assessments, but our
17 focus is on the accountability, not on the assessments,
18 that the system focuses the attention of educators,
19 parents, students, and other members of the community on
20 maximizing every student's progress towards post-
21 secondary and workforce readiness, and post-graduation
22 success. That is our goal.

23 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: It's ours too.

24 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Also, the statute says
25 that it intends a statewide accountability system that



1 provides more academic performance information -- that is
2 from statute -- fewer labels, and move from a punitive
3 accountability system to one that is positive and focused
4 on learning and achieving high levels of academic
5 performance. That is absolutely our goal.

6 So what we're asking is, are you willing to
7 collaborate with us to work towards that goal for our 1.5
8 percent of the students in Colorado that have different
9 circumstances that are not working so well under the
10 current accountability structure?

11 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Pam.

12 MS. MAZANEC: Thank you for coming today.
13 Thanks for the presentation, but most of all, thanks for
14 the idea. You have my support. I'll do everything I can
15 do make sure that you can move forward with this. I'm a
16 big fan of flexibility, and that's not just for our rural
17 and small districts. I think we need more flexibility
18 for our large districts, for high-performing districts.
19 So I think this is an excellent idea, and I would hope
20 that as a board we can completely support this notion and
21 move as many barriers out of your way as possible. This
22 is something that we need to have happen in this state.

23 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Steve.

24 MR. DURHAM: Thank you. Thank you, Madam
25 Chair. I think, if I understand the ask, it's whether or



1 not we think this is in the realm of possibility, and
2 you've all invested a fair amount of time and effort in
3 this, and I think at least probably most of us think that
4 flexibility is a good thing, but I think before you
5 invest a lot of other additional time and resources in
6 it, you really need a definitive statement from the Board
7 as to whether or not we're willing to really buck state
8 law, to some extent, because I don't -- I think one of
9 the things you're looking for is at least an alternative
10 to administering PARCC at every grade to every student,
11 and I'm sure the attorney generals in the back room tell
12 us that's a waiver we can't give, and I think that that's
13 probably the reason that you failed at the legislature to
14 get the language that you really wanted, that we're all
15 prisoners of -- I think probably we ought invite Arne
16 Duncan to Merino. I've been there, so --

17 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: He's in town today, you
18 know.

19 MR. DURHAM: Well, maybe you could find
20 Merino. We could send him a map or something. Might be
21 fun.

22 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: They don't have roads
23 out there, though.

24 MR. DURHAM: Oh, that's right. I forgot
25 about that. So at any rate, I think before you go a lot



1 further, I think you need a solid commitment from the
2 Board that we're willing to go absolutely as far as we
3 can, and you probably will get some hint when we get down
4 to an item a few spaces down, about our waiver request
5 and the letter of rejection that we got for the request,
6 but for the action that we took on not dinging your
7 accountability because you don't meet 95 percent
8 participation of your students. And if we can sustain
9 that position today, that might be a sign that indicates
10 we're really willing to roll up our sleeves and try and
11 help, but it's going to require a commitment not just
12 from the Board, but from the staff, to get this done.

13 So I thank you for what you're doing. I
14 think it's very important. I don't believe one size fits
15 all. I don't believe one size fits all. So I think the
16 answer to your question is we'll certainly try, but you
17 need to monitor our progress very carefully.

18 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Angelika. Or Jane, I'm
19 sorry.

20 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Jane, go ahead.

21 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Jane has not had a
22 chance to speak yet.

23 MS. GOFF: Thank you. Again, thank you all.
24 It's always nice to see all of you, other than in some
25 hotel all the time. I appreciated, and I agree with you.



1 I think when we're talking the A word, accountability,
2 it's a lot bigger than the A word, assessment. So
3 whatever the assessment program is or the structure is
4 one part of a much bigger effort, and that consideration
5 and careful thought that you've put into this. I think
6 you're looking at what is really a better way for us to
7 look at the picture of the big picture and know that
8 various things are getting accomplished inside of that
9 big picture.

10 I know this is not the day to go into the
11 weeds, but as you were presenting and talking about what
12 are some ideas for opportunities, what are some
13 enhancement thoughts and such, my mind goes crazy. And
14 then I do have some questions, and I think we can talk
15 another time about it. I'm interested in the phrase
16 "Opportunity Gap Distinguished Criteria." I'm not --
17 I'll get there, but I'm having a little trouble with that
18 combination of words right now.

19 And the other, on your external -- the
20 external factors and the internal list, thoughts around
21 some of that external is actually internal to our state,
22 but it's external in that it's not necessarily part of
23 the bullet points that you listed. For example, is
24 external considered something like looking at the
25 accessibility or the applicability, the application of



1 such things that we do have? For example, in the realm
2 of post-secondary and workforce readiness, what about
3 ICAP or some sort of other plan for moving toward the
4 future, which I think we all agree, if you're looking at
5 higher student achievement, it is for the further down
6 the road purpose. Ultimately, the target at the end of
7 the road is not just at a certain accountability
8 reporting timeframe. It's down the road for kids. So
9 ICAP came to mind. Some data, some recordkeeping,
10 tracking of that, how that's moving. Or related in a way
11 is the whole concurrent enrollment.

12 Are districts -- and we all know where we
13 are with the resources needs, but are districts making
14 the effort on their part, on your part, to make sure that
15 people are aware of all of the opportunities and the
16 access possibilities? So I -- and we have actually
17 chatted about that before, in the general realm of, what
18 are some other things that make for strong schools,
19 effective schools, and all of those kinds of things? So
20 to me -- and then I'm -- I'd love to talk to one of you
21 or more at some point about how facilities, how does that
22 relate to the -- it's fascinating, you know. Ideas
23 abound around that, but I'm just wondering how that --
24 how you would talk about that with your community.

25 So how is the state of our facilities or how



1 we're progressing around that, whatever that may mean,
2 including infrastructure needs. How does that relate to
3 accountability? I mean, we know. We know the answer,
4 but then my last question would be -- I'm assuming that
5 your boards are completely filled in and on board, and
6 supportive, and that there has been some initial
7 conversation in your communities, as deep down as you can
8 possibly get with diverse conversations about what this
9 means.

10 And then of course, think about the rest of
11 us out in a little bit bigger districts and how it might
12 carry over and really -- we all have a lot to learn,
13 which is great.

14 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Doug, you had a
15 response there?

16 MR. BISSONETTE: So a number of boards have
17 passed resolutions in Elizabeth. We sent out a message
18 to 2500 families that provided a link to the meeting
19 today with the supporting documentation. We've been
20 keeping them informed. Every district is at a different
21 place in their process. One size timeline doesn't fit
22 all. So I think we're aware of that concern. I'd like
23 to for everybody to just clarify some of the -- well, a
24 distinction between internal and external accountability.
25 That's a major part, and this is from the Fullan article



1 that's referenced, and it's just two sentences, one on
2 each. "Internal accountability occurs when individuals
3 and groups willingly take on personal, professional, and
4 collective responsibility for continuous improvement and
5 success for all students."

6 So that when we talk about internal
7 accountability, it's that individuals, groups taking
8 personal responsibility, collective responsibility for
9 student learning. External accountability is when system
10 leaders reassure the public through transparency,
11 monitoring, and selective intervention that their system
12 is performing in line with societal expectations and
13 requirements.

14 So that's a framework that we're working
15 with now on internal versus external. That could
16 develop, but what we believe is we need to expand the
17 internal piece, that there's so much emphasis on the
18 external that doesn't, especially in small systems, allow
19 us to put appropriate emphasis on the internal.
20 Accountability is taking responsibility for one's
21 actions. We want to embrace that more at the local
22 level.

23 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Madam Chair?

24 MADAM CHAIR: Can we move quickly, please?

25 Angelika?



1 MS. SCHROEDER: So in the discussion of
2 flexibility, we all worship at that particular altar.
3 It's important, because our schools are different, our
4 kids are different, but we also need comparability, and
5 my biggest worry is if we get too far off track here, and
6 everyone is doing everything else, particularly for the
7 small districts, you will, again, have the reputation of
8 not being able to provide a comparable education that the
9 big school districts offer, and I don't want to see that.

10 I think I want a family across the state to
11 be confident that their particular -- they can stay in
12 their community, and their children will get a world-
13 class education. And so I want to warn you a little bit
14 about getting too far off track in terms of being able to
15 do some kind of comparison for all kids across the state.
16 I think that's where this comes from. It's not a desire
17 to make one size fits all. It's a desire to give
18 confidence to all that we're providing a good education
19 for all our kids.

20 So I don't want us to keep worshipping
21 flexibility to a degree that makes everyone so different
22 that we go back to -- I mean, one of the great things
23 about the statewide assessments is that we're seeing some
24 of the awesome performances of kids in rural districts.
25 That has actually, to some extent, served some of the



1 districts that really couldn't demonstrate how great they
2 were. So let's just keep that in mind as we're moving
3 forward, please.

4 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Madam Chair?

5 MADAM CHAIR: Yes.

6 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I also want to say that
7 we don't want to keep you from really flying. In other
8 words, there was a study done on a large school district
9 recently. They were given a lot of opportunity to
10 innovate, and after about five years, a big study was
11 done that these people kept doing the same thing. They
12 didn't, you know -- they didn't leave the box. They just
13 kept repeating some of these old, tried-out things that
14 really didn't work. So expand your wings. Do what you
15 think is right for your kids, and I think that you will
16 have success if you do that. And given all the
17 guardrails that you, you know, place there, I think you
18 will.

19 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Thank you.

20 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Can I make one comment,
21 Madam Chair? Angelika, in response to your statement, we
22 -- I think it's important for us to tell you that that
23 comparability piece is very important to us as well, and
24 in our groundwork, so to speak, we have had several
25 conversations with higher ed, who has assured us that



1 they can offer that comparability, that kids that are
2 kids that are in this pilot, then we can hold them up
3 against kids who are not in the pilot and have that
4 comparability. It's very important to us as well, so
5 just so you know that.

6 MADAM CHAIR: I haven't had a chance to say
7 a word (indiscernible).

8 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I just wanted to do one
9 sentence to answer --

10 MADAM CHAIR: One of the disadvantages of
11 being the Chair, you have to be loud.

12 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Madam Chair, I just --

13 MADAM CHAIR: Go ahead.

14 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: -- wanted to answer Ms.
15 Goff's question, which is the opportunity distinguished
16 criteria came from the Opportunity Gap Project, which was
17 based on a book that was best research around closing the
18 Opportunity Gap around the country, and so we sided to
19 that, and so that's where those criteria came from. We
20 tested that. A school in your district won a Gold Award
21 just recently, and there are things we're going to change
22 as we go forward, but that's where it came from. So I
23 just wanted to answer that question really briefly.

24 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you, and I -- yes.

25 Thanks for the mention for my -- couple of the schools,



1 and we're really happy about that. It was just the
2 combination of those four words all together.

3 Opportunity, gap, distinguished --

4 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: We really like them.

5 MS. SCHROEDER: -- criteria. Thank you.

6 MADAM CHAIR: Thank you very much for
7 coming, and obviously you've had a very good response to
8 your presentation. It was excellent. For myself, I
9 totally understand. I think we have all -- I know that
10 we've all struggled with the nature of the PARCC testing,
11 this big, encompassing sort of monster with 20 legs, and
12 having grown up in a rural district myself, I certainly
13 understand the problems. Oh yes, we turned that off
14 early, yes, having a private conversation. And I've also
15 served on the NASB Rural School Council, and so I find,
16 you know, we have the same problems in all the states.

17 In Colorado, we have -- and I don't have
18 exactly, but like, 78 percent of our school districts are
19 rural, but only -- it's almost the exact (indiscernible)
20 22 percent of our students go to those rural schools. So
21 where those other 78 percent of the kids are naturally
22 gets a lot of the attention, but I totally understand
23 that rural schools have entire different kind of
24 questions, and I was very impressed with your
25 presentation. We've all struggled with the nature of



1 PARCC and the being bureaucratic nature, which is -- I
2 mean, it's difficult for everybody, but it's particularly
3 difficult for you.

4 I will be very, you know, interested in
5 following the procedure, seeing how this all works out.
6 Certainly, you have not said anything that I don't
7 approve of. We struggle with the nature of the rules,
8 the laws that come down to us, and so we'll have to see
9 how we can work through this, but I like what you had to
10 say. I'm really impressed with it, and thank you for
11 your presentation, driving all the way here from Merino.
12 Now we know where it is.

13 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Far.

14 MADAM CHAIR: You did a great job. Thank
15 you.

16 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Thank you.

17 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Thank you. Appreciate
18 it.

19 (Meeting adjourned)

20

21

22

23

24

25



1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

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

Verbatim Reporting & Transcription, LLC

1322 Space Park Drive, Suite C165

Houston, Texas 77058

281.724.8600