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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
RACE TO THE TOP  
GRANT REVIEW

Phase 1 and tier 2 State Presentation  
The State of Colorado

8:30 a.m.

Wednesday, March 17, 2010

Holiday Inn  
550 C Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C.

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 LT. GOVERNOR O'BRIEN: Good afternoon.  
3 I'm Barbara O'Brien, the Lieutenant Governor of  
4 Colorado. Thank you very much for this  
5 opportunity to present to you.

6 Governor Ritter sends his regards. He  
7 is in one hundred percent support of this  
8 proposal and asked me to lead the process to  
9 develop our proposal because of my deep roots in  
10 educational reform.

11 I personally wrote the Charter School  
12 Act of 1992. The organization I ran created the  
13 Colorado Preschool Program and we played a key  
14 role in passing a valid initiative, Amendment  
15 23, which stabilized public school funding.

16 So I have 20 years of experience in  
17 education reform and it's a big part of my  
18 portfolio as Lieutenant Governor. If we are  
19 selected, I will chair the Leadership Investment  
20 Board for Race to the Top.

21 I want to give you a quick roadmap to  
22 our presentation, all-given overview of the

1 political and policy environment: Commissioner  
2 Dwight Jones, who personally oversaw the  
3 turnaround of 11 schools, and he opposed the  
4 achievement cap in the district he ran and is  
5 going to talk about why this plan will work;

6 Associate Commissioner Rich Wenning is  
7 going to talk about how our data system will  
8 drive results and the power of data  
9 conversation;

10 Nina Lopez is, or will be, CEO of Race  
11 to the Top and has roots in the charter school  
12 movement. She is going to talk about how we  
13 will execute our plan and will expand on our  
14 great teachers and leaders strategy; and then  
15 Linda Barker, our friend, is the Director of  
16 Teaching and Learning at the Colorado Education  
17 Association and she will talk about why the  
18 collaboration that runs through our proposal is  
19 real and how the leadership of CEA moves the  
20 needle with their members for planning, and then  
21 will return it to the Commissioner who will pull  
22 it all together.

1           I am proud to be part of this capable  
2 team. We are completely committed to executing  
3 this plan. The Governor and I, as you might  
4 know, end our terms in January, but we have  
5 absolutely no doubt at all that this plan will  
6 continue.

7           We worked on bipartisan support. Three  
8 governors over 20 years from both parties have  
9 built momentum for this reform agenda and it was  
10 signed by the President of the State Board of  
11 Education who is a republican. We did not  
12 politicize this process. It is Colorado's  
13 reform plan.

14           This team understands the reform  
15 process. We know when to pressure the system.  
16 We have all worked on charter schools. We have  
17 innovation schools. We have school takeovers,  
18 pressure on the system.

19           We also know when reform needs buy-in.  
20 The Standards and Assessments Movement for  
21 Colorado was a leader. We designed our charter  
22 system so that it was locally driven and we now

1 have one of the most vibrant charter sectors in  
2 the country.

3           And the development of the teacher and  
4 student identification system all required buy-  
5 in, so you'll notice that balance in our plan.

6           We believe in some key things that are  
7 in this proposal: individual self-reliance with  
8 community support, incentives get better  
9 behavior than mandates, measurable goals,  
10 flexible strategies at the local level with  
11 public/private partnerships for sustainability  
12 and accountability at every level.

13           In particular, we believe that this is  
14 a case where you need serious collaboration  
15 because no one can do this work alone. We have  
16 two game changers in our proposal: the power of  
17 the data conversation that you will hear about  
18 and the public outreach which led to the public  
19 excitement about this agenda, which led to a  
20 very high level of trust among stakeholders all  
21 over this state leading to collaboration  
22 becoming one of our central strategies.

1           We can execute this plan and it's my  
2 pleasure to introduce to you Commissioner Jones.

3           COMMISSIONER JONES: Thank you,  
4 Lieutenant Governor. Good afternoon.

5           During our presentation, we will be  
6 crystal clear about our focus and our focus is  
7 absolutely about getting better results. We  
8 think that achievement matters most, so we have  
9 built our whole plan to be tightly focused on  
10 how we get the results that the U.S. Department  
11 of Education is wanting to get and what we're  
12 wanting to get in our state.

13           We also understand clearly that this is  
14 hard work. We've made a conscious decision, as  
15 you, hopefully, been able to read throughout our  
16 plan that we plan to do this work with our  
17 educators and not to our educators. So that  
18 collaborative nature is how we really built this  
19 effort.

20           We understand clearly through  
21 experience and in going forward that if we're  
22 going to get the kind of results that we want

1 for students, then we have to get our plan down  
2 to the classroom level. We understand clearly  
3 that teachers in the classroom are in front of  
4 25 kids. That ultimately is what will deliver  
5 the results that we need to get in Colorado.

6 Let me try to give you a quick example  
7 of that. We've taken the Secretary very  
8 seriously about his charge to turn around our  
9 lowest-performing schools. We identified them  
10 early. The Secretary has School Improvement  
11 Grants and has really targeted funds for states  
12 to get to work and it's very hard work.

13 One of our districts trying to do as  
14 we've asked started that work early. Now, in  
15 their early efforts to try to make tough  
16 decisions, they made those decisions in  
17 isolation and immediately was getting push-back  
18 from one of the buildings that was going to be  
19 targeted for turnaround.

20 Linda Barker, who you'll hear from  
21 later, went out on her own, was not asked, and  
22 met with the teachers in the building, used the

1 growth model data that you're going to get some  
2 examples of and showed the teachers what the  
3 results currently were and why we had to do  
4 something to get better results, totally got the  
5 teachers on board without asking, just felt the  
6 need that that needed to happen for that school

7           So that's an example of the level of  
8 cooperation that we have in our state to do this  
9 very difficult work.

10           At this time, I want to get right to  
11 it. So I'm going to turn it over to Rich  
12 Wenning who is the Associate Commissioner and he  
13 will share with you the results we expect, as  
14 well as the plan on how we're going to reach  
15 them. Thank you.

16           ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER WENNING: Thank  
17 you, Commissioner, and good afternoon.

18           The results we expect really start with  
19 the end in mind and that's our statutory bright  
20 line principle in Colorado of getting all kids  
21 ready by exit.

22           So we have in our statutes the goal of

1 one hundred percent of students being college-  
2 and career-ready by graduation and we're  
3 delighted that the President's blueprint for  
4 ESEA embodies that focus, as well.

5           That clarifies we're in and the focus  
6 of our accountability and performance management  
7 systems to really focus on one really critical  
8 thing and that's to maximize every student's  
9 progress toward reaching college and career  
10 readiness.

11           And that clarity supports a basic and  
12 powerful conversation, particularly with  
13 teachers, parents and students about how much  
14 progress a student made, whether it was good  
15 enough to get him on track to that destination  
16 and, most importantly, how we're going to  
17 improve, now, what do we do when we see a  
18 performance not where it should be.

19           And that destination of college and  
20 career readiness that we seek for all students  
21 drive the ambitious goals that you saw in our  
22 proposal.

1           So what gives us the confidence that we  
2 can raise proficiency and post-secondary  
3 readiness at the pace that we expect? First,  
4 we've got a balanced and coherent investment  
5 strategy across all four assurance areas. Our  
6 proposal hangs together.

7           At the center of the strategy, though,  
8 is getting breakthrough educator collaboration  
9 about performance and practice. And we do this  
10 through providing outstanding instructional  
11 improvement technologies with incentives for  
12 use, providing students and educators the tools  
13 that we've not provided before to meet the  
14 results that we actually expect of them.

15           And also critically, these  
16 instructional improvement strategies are an  
17 aligner between our accountability system  
18 signals and the performance management practice,  
19 tools that we expect educators to use.

20           So underpinning that collaboration is a  
21 new conversation about performance driven by  
22 SchoolView and the Colorado growth model.

1           And I should note that while we've made  
2     some progress with the growth model and  
3     SchoolView, we have a long way to go and that's  
4     really where Race to the Top comes in.

5           We've done a decent job of shelling  
6     results, but our goal now and our focus with  
7     these investments and the provide and perform  
8     elements are to bring results together with  
9     instructional practices and high-quality digital  
10    content that's made available, again, to  
11    teachers, to parents, to students.

12           Let me just quickly brief a few slides  
13    on SchoolView and the growth model here.  
14    SchoolView is -- this is a simple portal that  
15    navigates for the public and educators, all of  
16    our performance information and provides access  
17    to learning resources that we're going to be  
18    developing through Race to the Top.

19           The Colorado growth model itself  
20    presents a simple way of understanding the  
21    distribution of progress and achievement  
22    throughout all of our schools, districts and

1 states always arranged in a common way of  
2 looking at growth on the horizontal axis and  
3 looking at achievement on the vertical with the  
4 centerline reflecting a year's growth and a  
5 year's time; the horizontal line showing the  
6 average percent for efficient and advanced in  
7 our state at that particular grade stat.

8           The public has gotten very used to this  
9 kind of display and easily helps us identify the  
10 lower-performing schools and the highest-  
11 performing schools.

12           And this illustrates one particular  
13 school and one particular district. It shows  
14 all the middle schools in Denver and shows one  
15 of our exemplary schools, West Denver Prep  
16 Charter School, a school with more than 80  
17 percent of students eligible for free or  
18 reduced-price lunch.

19           And this tell us with a 79 median  
20 student growth percentile that the typical  
21 student in West Denver Prep is making more  
22 progress than 79 percent of the kids in Colorado

1 with the same starting point.

2           This quickly shows the clarity about  
3 this school for our educators to benchmark and  
4 shows a school that we want to replicate and  
5 where we want to invest to get much more of this  
6 kind of school. If this can become the norm,  
7 rather than the exception, we'll have no problem  
8 meeting our performance goals.

9           For an educator that has a password, we  
10 can now go into individual students and look at  
11 a grade stat. These are all the students that  
12 in sixth grade -- and all of the information I'm  
13 showing you has been anonymized -- the  
14 highlighted students are all eligible for free  
15 or reduced-price lunch and we can see their  
16 dramatically different growth rates against  
17 achievement, always achievement and growth.

18           It allows teachers quickly to focus on  
19 which students need the most focus because  
20 they're not making enough progress to catch up.

21           And then lastly, and perhaps most  
22 importantly, is what we provide for parents and

1 students, a single report that shows the  
2 student's entire trajectory while they've been  
3 in Colorado, regardless of what school or  
4 district they've attended before.

5           This is a critical element for  
6 motivating the kind of conversation that we want  
7 to have with a parent, with a teacher and with  
8 the student. And that conversation, again,  
9 should be in plain language and focuses on how  
10 much growth did my child make, is it good enough  
11 for them to get to the destination and what are  
12 we going to do together to get that done.

13           That focus on the user permeates  
14 everything we do when it comes to accountability  
15 and performance management.

16           And let me leave you just with two  
17 anecdotes. A principal came up to me from  
18 Denver and reported that they had been  
19 celebrating the gains their students were making  
20 for years doing their own growth analysis  
21 without benefit of looking at how the whole  
22 state was doing and they were celebrating that

1 improvement. They received their Colorado  
2 growth model data and then realized that what  
3 they had been celebrating was actually subpar  
4 performance compared to other schools in the  
5 state with the same kinds of students they had.

6           That's a game-changing awareness when  
7 it comes to planning for results. Where we aim  
8 for is where we want folks to get to and if we  
9 don't perform that clear line of where they're  
10 going to be, we don't have the right  
11 conversation about performance; in fact, we may  
12 be celebrating the wrong thing.

13           Another superintendent recently  
14 reported about the individual reports we gave to  
15 parents, and we've disseminated those for the  
16 first time this year, and she told me that  
17 teachers reported having the most difficult  
18 conversations they had ever had with parents.

19           The first time parents came armed with  
20 some very simple questions: Why isn't my child  
21 making enough progress to get here? I can see  
22 that clearly. Is this school any good at

1 getting that done and what are we going to do  
2 together to make that happen?

3           It's that collaboration about  
4 performance and practice that underlies our  
5 strategy and we think it's essential to bring  
6 about the results we expect.

7           I'm going to turn it over to my  
8 colleague Nina Lopez who is going to talk to us  
9 about how we're actually execute on this plan.

10           MS. LOPEZ: Thank you. Good afternoon.  
11 We are thrilled to be here and very excited to  
12 share with you our plan.

13           And, in particular, I want to talk  
14 about how we're actually going to execute the  
15 plan. So it's certainly an ambitious plan on  
16 paper and we want to talk about how we plan for  
17 the actual execution of this plan itself.

18           In particular, we think something that  
19 says Colorado works hard is our high degree of  
20 confidence and our ability to execute. We know  
21 that that's going to be critical. As the  
22 Commissioner said, none of this matters if it

1 doesn't impact what happens between a teacher, a  
2 principal and her students.

3 I'm going to talk specifically about  
4 our capacity to deliver. I also want to talk  
5 about some of the critical partnerships that we  
6 already have in place in our state and I want to  
7 highlight some of those challenging aspects of  
8 our plan, those that are the most complex to  
9 deliver on, specifically, the great teachers and  
10 leaders and turnaround section.

11 We look forward to answering questions  
12 later about any portion of the application for  
13 which you think we did not merit high points.  
14 We hope to speak with you about those later.

15 In terms of capacity, the way we've  
16 structured the Race to the Top execution will be  
17 a standalone unit with me as CEO. We'll be  
18 within the Department of Education, but focused  
19 explicitly on execution of this plan, supporting  
20 districts drawing upon the resources of the  
21 Department and really importing what we learn  
22 back into the Department itself.

1           We'll also have the guidance of private  
2 and public sector partners due to the Leadership  
3 Investment Board, which the Lieutenant Governor,  
4 as you heard before, will be chairing.

5           The team before you represent a broader  
6 set of stakeholders who at the table ready to do  
7 this work. The trust and the relationships that  
8 we have built are reflective in a broader set of  
9 community members across Colorado who really  
10 need to do this work and are prepared to do this  
11 work and I'm going to talk a little more about  
12 that.

13           We also believe that we have the  
14 accountability, not only at the local level, but  
15 also at the state level. By way of example, my  
16 own compensation, as well as that of the CFO for  
17 Race to the Top, will be based 25 percent on our  
18 ability to actually deliver on those results and  
19 we look forward to that challenge.

20           I want to talk specifically about the  
21 power of private and public partnerships. One  
22 of the things, I think, that we believe, and

1 we'll talk about later, is that we can't do this  
2 work alone and a plan that relies solely on a  
3 state education agency to deliver, we don't  
4 believe is going to be successful.

5           We've done in the past work with  
6 private and public partners, specifically the  
7 development of the Colorado growth model we did  
8 directly in conjunction with external private  
9 partners. We believe it enhances sustainability  
10 and, more importantly, what we do is leverage  
11 capacity where it exists. We don't expect that  
12 it resides in one place. We find it where it's  
13 best and draw upon it.

14           I think perhaps most importantly is the  
15 support of our LEAs. They obviously have to do  
16 this work. So the 134 LEAs that have signed  
17 MOUs represent 94 percent of all students in our  
18 state, including 95 percent of our English  
19 language learners, our students with  
20 disabilities and our students with poverty. We  
21 know that this plan will have statewide impact.

22           Either myself or the Commissioner or

1 Lieutenant Governor have personally spoken to,  
2 or met with, pretty much every superintendent in  
3 each of those LEAs, and I can tell you that when  
4 we meet with them, what we hear is this is the  
5 right work, this is the work we need to do or  
6 it's the work we're already doing in some cases.  
7 So I am confident that they understand the plan  
8 and they are standing by prepared to actually  
9 execute upon it.

10           Within those districts, one thing, too,  
11 I want to point out is obviously the support of  
12 the educators. We have a total of 35 collective  
13 bargaining agreements in our 178 districts in  
14 Colorado.

15           Of them, of those that are  
16 participating in the Race to the Top, almost all  
17 of them have global signature of their local  
18 association, as well. And so we know that that  
19 collaboration is important.

20           And I'll point out included within  
21 those are our two largest districts in our  
22 state, Jefferson County and Denver Public

1 Schools. So we're confident about the ability  
2 and the capacity and the willingness to actually  
3 do this work.

4 I'm going to talk specifically about  
5 the turnaround and the great teachers and  
6 leaders section. As I said, those are clearly  
7 complex and high challenges that any state is  
8 going to have to meet.

9 I think three things stand out in our  
10 plan in each of those two areas. One is that we  
11 have already all the legal authority we need to  
12 implement our plan. We do not need to pass new  
13 laws. We do not need to implement new policies.

14 We also have some strong critical  
15 partnerships already in place and we intend to  
16 draw upon those.

17 Lastly, within our state, we have some  
18 national examples that we intend to build upon.

19 Let me talk more specifically about  
20 turnaround. First, we have through Senate Bill  
21 163 the Educational Accountability Act, which we  
22 just passed over a year ago, a new set of

1 accountability, all of which is founded in the  
2 individual student growth measures which Rich  
3 just talked about as he gave you the example of  
4 SchoolView.

5           It all starts with individual student  
6 growth and we use that to measure school and  
7 district performance. We have clear  
8 accountability for results. Autonomy follows  
9 performance and when that performance fails to  
10 meet standards, we have increasing levels of  
11 authority to intervene up to and including  
12 closing a school and even reconstituting a  
13 school district, if needed. But we believe that  
14 transparency around results, authority to  
15 intervene and support before you even get to  
16 that intervention are critical to executing this  
17 strategy.

18           We also have some capacity already in  
19 place. Most notably, the Commissioner last  
20 year, as he mentioned, we've taken the School  
21 Improvement Grant very seriously. He  
22 reorganized our department and created a

1 standalone unit within CDE. It already exists.  
2 It's headed up by an Assistant Commissioner who  
3 reports directly to the Commissioner and they've  
4 already begun that work.

5 We also have the School Leadership  
6 Academy which already exists. Linda Barker  
7 actually sits on their advisory board and they  
8 will be critical to our leadership strategy. We  
9 know that leadership is absolutely crucial to  
10 carrying this work out.

11 And lastly, some of our key  
12 partnerships include Mass Insight and Public  
13 Impact who we've been working with now for some  
14 time and we intend to build upon the cutting  
15 edge work that they've done and incorporate that  
16 into our turnaround strategy.

17 Let me turn now to great teachers and  
18 leaders. This is the area in which we propose  
19 the largest investment in our plan because we  
20 believe that getting the fidelity of  
21 implementation aspect of the plan is absolutely  
22 critical. As we said, it's about a principal, a

1 teacher, a parent and an individual student.

2 Let me say one thing very clearly, all  
3 participating districts have agreed to implement  
4 evaluation systems for educators -- that means  
5 principals and teachers -- in their district  
6 that are based at least 50 percent upon student  
7 growth. There is no legal barrier to them doing  
8 that.

9 They have further agreed by year three  
10 of the plan to use the results of those  
11 evaluations to inform compensation, retention,  
12 individual professional development, as well as  
13 dismissal. And that commitment has already been  
14 made and they have the capacity to actually  
15 deliver on that.

16 One of the things that we think sets  
17 our plan apart is the tiered implementation  
18 strategy that we've used. As I've said, we have  
19 some national examples in Colorado. We're very  
20 proud of that.

21 What our intention is is to actually  
22 meet districts where they are with the single

1 same goal line. So I've just gone over with you  
2 what that goal line is. We know that districts  
3 are going to get there in a different way.

4 First, we have folks like Denver or  
5 Eagle County. Eagle has been doing performance  
6 for eight years and we have a ton to learn from  
7 them. Our objective is to get out of their way,  
8 not hold them back, learn quickly from what  
9 they're doing, what work for what students,  
10 under what circumstances, disseminate that  
11 information broadly and quickly to our other  
12 districts. We have our tier 2 districts that  
13 have started this work. We intend to accelerate  
14 their work quickly and then, lastly, the bulk of  
15 our districts fall in tier 3. Again, as I said,  
16 we're going to learn from those that have come  
17 before them, figure out what works, particularly  
18 on implementation, and then disseminate that to  
19 them, give them some models to build upon and to  
20 get there by the end date, the same goal with a  
21 portfolio of options of how they reach that  
22 goal.

1           Another big piece of that is our  
2 Council, the Governor's Council on Educator  
3 Effectiveness. I have the great pleasure of  
4 serving as the Vice Chair for that council.  
5 We've already started our work and its work will  
6 be focused on implementation.

7           So we know, again, from some of our  
8 districts in our state and others it's not  
9 enough to have a good evaluation system if you  
10 don't actually implement it.

11           Eagle, for example, has been doing this  
12 work for eight years, as I've said. What they  
13 figured out pretty early on was that  
14 interrelated reliability matters, so that's a  
15 great lesson we need to build upon. How do we  
16 make sure that teachers and evaluators have the  
17 same set of understanding of their evaluation  
18 system so they can implement it in a manner  
19 that's transparent and fair and rigorous across  
20 classrooms and across schools.

21           Let me just end by saying that we  
22 believe our plan is ambitious. We believe we

1 have the authority and the capacity to carry it  
2 out. We know that we can't do this work alone,  
3 so we not only have the partnerships in place,  
4 but we have a high degree of trust amongst our  
5 partners and we're ready to do this in a  
6 collaborative manner.

7           Most notably, I think we -- I think  
8 probably one of the most ambitious goals is that  
9 by the end of our -- or, actually, by year  
10 three, I should say, of our plan, we will have  
11 fundamentally changed our entire teacher and  
12 principal pipeline so it will all be based on a  
13 single statewide definition of principal  
14 effectiveness and teacher effectiveness and we  
15 will align all parts of the system towards that,  
16 so how we accredit our preparation institutions,  
17 how we hold them accountable.

18           And we will also redesign tenure and  
19 licensure so that they are earned and retained  
20 based on demonstrated performance. We believe  
21 that those are critical aspects to the  
22 sustainability of this plan.

1           So I'm going to turn now to my friend  
2   and my colleague, Linda Barker, and she's going  
3   to talk a little bit more about how this work  
4   will translate into the classroom. Thank you.

5           MS. BARKER: We're fully aware that  
6   this is a competitive process -- I think as  
7   you've heard from the rest of the team members  
8   -- but for Colorado it's about the plan. It's  
9   real for our classroom teachers, our students  
10   and our parents.

11           What I'm going to do is highlight just  
12   quickly some of the topics that you've heard  
13   about before, specifically around the growth  
14   model.

15           This is a game-changer. When the  
16   Lieutenant Governor brought up the importance of  
17   data, the growth model has changed conversation  
18   in classrooms and in staff meetings across our  
19   state.

20           Without looking at a number, a state --  
21   or a stat person can look at the chart and have  
22   conversations about growth and accountability

1 with it being a threat, but it's a collaboration  
2 and it's a time to problem-solve with classroom  
3 teachers. Their growth model has been impactful  
4 in how we have conversations around student  
5 learning.

6           Teacher tours: Colorado is looking at  
7 changing 13 standard content areas. The  
8 Colorado Department of Ed and the Colorado  
9 Education Association for the first time in  
10 history toured 13 cities to talk about and ask  
11 what standards implementation meant for you.

12           We covered the state from our large  
13 urbans to our very small rurals. In fact, one  
14 community in Southwest Denver, a tiny community  
15 had 65 people show up to talk about standards,  
16 changes and implementation meant for them, the  
17 first time many of the people had met in like  
18 groups: principals, superintendents, school  
19 board members, teachers and parents.

20           The surprise for us was that this was  
21 the first time somebody had come to them to ask  
22 them what did they think and what did they want.

1 So that is a game-changer. This process the  
2 Lieutenant Governor started has 650 people over  
3 a month to really get involved in this process.  
4 That's why for us it is personal and it is about  
5 data, student achievement and collaboration.

6 The last thing I really want to  
7 highlight is -- and Nina was very clear about  
8 the importance of our evaluation system --  
9 teachers are asking for a new system.

10 They want a system that really starts  
11 at the very beginning, has mentoring and  
12 professional development, that holds them  
13 accountable, but they understand what that plan  
14 is. We're ready to take that on.

15 Reform, especially in our Colorado  
16 plan, has really been about the people. It's  
17 the people in the classrooms, parents and  
18 students that really have to implement this plan  
19 to make a difference for our students. We're  
20 looking forward to the challenge.

21 And we're real fortunate. We have a  
22 Commissioner in Colorado that knows what this

1 means firsthand. He's in the classroom, in the  
2 districts, having conversation, and not often  
3 easy conversation, but we know it will make a  
4 difference because we're all working on this  
5 together. It's my pleasure.

6 Now, Commissioner Dwight Jones.

7 COMMISSIONER JONES: Thank you very  
8 much, Linda.

9 So what you have heard is that Colorado  
10 has been a leader. We are happy to represent  
11 the west. You may have noted that we were the  
12 only western state that was selected to be a  
13 finalist.

14 If you know much about the west, you  
15 may also know that the west is very independent-  
16 minded and takes a lot of pride in their local  
17 control.

18 But what I hope you noticed more is the  
19 fact that we've got tremendous buy-in and  
20 support and that was not an easy feat.

21 There has been strong support from the  
22 field. We have 178 school districts in our

1 state. I'm happy to state that being appointed  
2 Commissioner three years ago I have visited 140  
3 of those school districts.

4 It's pretty amazing when you go out in  
5 the field, especially when you go to some of the  
6 rural districts, and you'll sit across the desk  
7 from the superintendent that's been in the  
8 district for 30 or 40 years and they will say  
9 that's the first time that the Commissioner of  
10 Education has been in their district, in some  
11 cases, been in their city and, more importantly,  
12 sat across the desk and asked me my opinion on  
13 how we can get this work done together.

14 So that kind of level support, I think,  
15 you will see gives us confidence on why we think  
16 we can get this done.

17 We also are happy to report that we  
18 have strong legislation. In Colorado, we didn't  
19 have to call a special session. I think that  
20 demonstrates that we've already been putting the  
21 pieces together.

22 Now with the resources, we can just

1 accelerate that work and really take it to the  
2 next level and get the results that we want  
3 because, again, it is really about getting those  
4 results for the kids.

5           And we've been clear about that and  
6 we'll be clear at the end of this for an  
7 opportunity that that still is what we're about.  
8 We stand ready to act in Colorado. I hope as  
9 you read our plan you were able to note that.  
10 Failure for us just is not an option.

11           We've already identified our chief  
12 executive officer to carry this out -- I made  
13 that decision early on -- and you got to see her  
14 present. You know she's going to be quite  
15 capable of getting that work done.

16           We have key partnerships. And we plan,  
17 as you saw in our plan, that there are two  
18 additional kind of non-profits that we want to  
19 put together to allow this kind of flexibility  
20 and autonomy to really get the work done around  
21 teacher effectiveness and certainly also focused  
22 on our turnaround schools.

1           There is a high level of trust in  
2 Colorado. We can get it done because we've  
3 demonstrated that we will work with districts  
4 and that will make a big difference on getting  
5 the work done, and then we've created a number  
6 of incentives.

7           So we feel in Colorado that if the  
8 Secretary is serious about wanting to place a  
9 bet on a state that can carry out the objectives  
10 that the President has outlined, we think  
11 Colorado is worth that bet.

12           Thank you very much for allowing us to  
13 share a little bit or -- a little more detail  
14 about what's in our plan. We certainly look  
15 forward to your questions.

16           Corinne Sauri: Thank you for your presentation.  
17 We've finished with about 1:45 seconds to go.

18           Ms. Barker: Yea, team!

19           Corinne Sauri: And I'll note for the record  
20 that you did make it through your entire slide  
21 presentation so that will be included as a part of  
22 your initial application. I am going to turn it over to

1 Reviewer #1 who will be our facilitator today  
2 after we add a 1:45 seconds to the clock.

3 REVIEWER #1: And with a name like  
4 [Reviewer #1] I...[laughter].

5 And I thank you for your presentation,  
6 as I'm sure everybody here does.

7 Our approach to this has been to  
8 basically follow the format that Race to the Top  
9 has asked you to follow. We prioritized some  
10 things, so we may reorganize at some point so  
11 that we get those priority items out of the way.  
12 And I don't want you to take any  
13 umbrage to the fact that we may have to cut you  
14 off if you start going and going and going, but  
15 it's not personal. It's simply we have a lot of  
16 questions that we'd like answered.

17 And I will start with Reviewer #2.

18 REVIEWER #2: Thanks. It's a pleasure  
19 to have you here.

20 Clearly, you have some very ambitious  
21 goals with regards to achievement. You have a  
22 very aggressive tactic.

1           It would be helpful if you could  
2 clarify, given those ambitious goals and  
3 aggressive timetable, what are the key elements  
4 of your plan, an absolute must that moves you  
5 towards essentially meeting those, particularly  
6 student achievement goals within the aggressive  
7 timetable?

8           So if you could spend some time helping  
9 us understand those critical key elements that  
10 you essentially put a lot of weight in and will  
11 move you.

12           COMMISSIONER JONES: Yeah, thank you,  
13 Reviewer #2.  
14 That is a question we absolutely  
15 spent a lot of time thinking about as we put our  
16 plan together.

17           It's one thing just to put down on  
18 paper what some of the goals are. It's another  
19 thing to actually create the blueprint that  
20 allows you to get there.

21           I'm going to ask Mr. Wenning to respond  
22 directly to that question and then, if there's

1 follow-up, we'll be glad to take that, as well.  
2 Mr. Wenning.

3 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER WENNING: Thank  
4 you, Commissioner.

5 Each aspect of our plan from the work  
6 on our standards and assessments to get them  
7 fewer, clearer and higher, to the work we're  
8 doing with our data systems, particularly  
9 turning those standards into specific  
10 instructional plans and providing feedback to  
11 students, to our work with great teachers and  
12 leaders to get our pipeline right and all the  
13 incentives directed through our performance  
14 management systems and our focus on our  
15 turnaround schools, our lowest-performing.

16 And we do have a number of those in  
17 Colorado.

18 Those things all work in  
19 concert to get the dramatic results we're  
20 expecting.

21 For the first time with Race to the  
22 Top, Colorado would actually have the resources

1 to do specific activities in a coherent way  
2 across each of those four assurance areas with  
3 the resources.

4 We've been good at getting our policies  
5 in place and our statutes passed.

6 It's been challenging to get the  
7 resources to actually follow through.

8 There was the first time we went  
9 through the standards movement.

10 We didn't provide the support for  
11 teachers necessary. And we've  
12 already seen what high standards in  
13 mathematics for us, particularly in Colorado,  
14 has done in terms of our needing  
15 improvements.

16 So we think that by investing  
17 strategically in each of those four areas and  
18 building, as you saw throughout the effort to  
19 create sustainable learning communities focused  
20 on all four assurance areas, using that feedback  
21 wrapped around with a knowledge management  
22 strategy -- which is another thing state

1 education agencies simply haven't done -- we  
2 think together in that coherent manner we can  
3 get those results.

4           You can't pick off one versus another  
5 among those assurance areas.  
6 They hang together as a strategy in  
7 a coherent manner to get the  
8 breakthrough performance mostly because  
9 it builds that capacity and that conversation  
10 among educators with the right incentives  
11 and the right resources to  
12 improve practice.

13           REVIEWER #2: A follow-up question with  
14 regard to data represented in your application  
15 which related to achievement gaps.

16           You had some challenges in Colorado  
17 within ethnic groups, racial groups, EL  
18 learners. You've been at this.  
19 In your application, you kind of say,  
20 you know, we're serious, but  
21 achievement gaps are real in your  
22 state.

1 Now, that's the past history.

2 How are you going to move forward  
3 differently than what you've produced  
4 in the last few years since we  
5 have the data to indicate that that  
6 data isn't particularly  
7 impressive when it comes to achievement gaps?

8 COMMISSIONER JONES: Again,  
9 we have been focused on the achievement  
10 gap. Since being appointed as Commissioner,  
11 it's one of the things that I put  
12 in our forward thinking plan  
13 as we put together a plan of how we were going  
14 to approach the work in this state as a non-  
15 negotiable.

16 It's unconscionable for us that we  
17 would have such a gap almost across the board in  
18 our state. What's nice is I come from a  
19 district that was actually number one in the  
20 state for eliminating the achievement gap for  
21 minority youngsters, for IEP youngsters and for  
22 low SES youngsters. We were number one in all

1 of those categories, so we know something about  
2 what has to be done.

3           Some early steps that we took was  
4 getting the legislature to, for the first time,  
5 put dollars towards doing something about the  
6 achievement gap.

7           We had a lot of folks talk about the  
8 achievement gap, especially around election  
9 time, but we really hadn't made any commitment  
10 of resources to really do something about it.

11           So we currently have a fixed pilot  
12 district achievement gap where we said it's  
13 important for us to learn what works, under what  
14 conditions, at what cost, with what youngsters.

15           And so that pilot is in its second year  
16 and is already starting to show that those gaps  
17 are starting to narrow.

18           And we made a conscious effort to make  
19 sure that the pilot kind of represented the  
20 different demographics of the state. So that  
21 work is under way. We are already learning from  
22 those efforts. Now, we've put into our plan a

1 way to focus and accelerate that.

2 So I'm going to let Nina just highlight  
3 a few of the things that are directly in our  
4 plan, but I wanted you to get just a little  
5 sense of how we've already started to target and  
6 believe we're going to get better results.

7 MS. LOPEZ: Sure, I'll be brief, so we  
8 can get to more of your questions.

9 I think just a couple of things I want  
10 to highlight and add to what the Commissioner  
11 already said.

12 First, I think the data that Rich  
13 shared with you, what we now have found is that  
14 actually some of our English language learner  
15 students, their growth is three times greater  
16 than some of their counterparts for native  
17 English speakers. That's not information we  
18 had.

19 The next question is is that growth  
20 sufficient to close that gap. Again, by  
21 changing the exit so it's not by X-grade, but  
22 rather, by graduation, what we can now do is

1 plot a trajectory for those students. So we now  
2 are beginning for the first time to be able to  
3 understand what their growth rates are, what  
4 trajectory they need to get there.

5           And we know that schools are doing it  
6 because not only are the ELL students that I  
7 made reference to, but we have schools that are  
8 closing or eliminating those gaps.

9           So our plan is to, obviously, identify  
10 those schools, figure out what's working for  
11 them, not just based on the student achievement,  
12 but also we have our TELL Survey data which  
13 tells us something about school conditions. We  
14 also have our CATY (ph), which is our -- I can't  
15 remember the acronym. Sorry, I can't remember  
16 what it stands for, but it essentially gives us  
17 an assessment of the district resources. Our  
18 intention is to pull those apart and figure out  
19 what happened and replicate them.

20           The last thing I'll say is we have put  
21 a pretty significant focus on our equitable  
22 distribution strategy, so we know that what we

1 need to do is several different approaches in  
2 that area. What we need is not just to have  
3 effective teachers in every classroom, but to  
4 have our most highly effective teachers in front  
5 of our students with the greatest need.

6           So we have several strategies, some  
7 that are based on incentives around recruitment  
8 and retention of those students -- of those  
9 teachers, rather, preparing them well and also  
10 focusing on increasing the effectiveness of  
11 those educators who have already chosen to serve  
12 in those schools.

13           And lastly, we have some very clear  
14 expectations for districts. We expect them to  
15 dismiss ineffective teachers particularly in our  
16 high-need schools and our high-need subjects if  
17 after ample opportunity they're unable to  
18 produce the results that those students deserve.

19           So those are a couple, I think, of our  
20 strategies.

21           REVIEWER #2: Thank you.

22           REVIEWER #1: I'd like to just follow

1 up on that, too.

2 One of the things that we noticed in  
3 there had to do with graduation rates and I know  
4 you've changed the graduation, the way you  
5 figured it out. But it seemed very flat from  
6 that point on.

7 Is there anything that you're doing to  
8 really address that?

9 COMMISSIONER JONES: Mr. Wenning, do  
10 you want to take that one?

11 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER WENNING: Sure.  
12 Thank you, Commissioner.

13 One of the most important issues is  
14 getting both the policy structure in place and  
15 getting clear about what the destination is.

16 Our focus has been on proficiency up to  
17 when two years we passed landmark legislation  
18 through the leadership of Barbara O'Brien and  
19 Governor Ritter. It related to our P-20  
20 alignment strategy, CAP4K.

21 That statute is absolutely critical;  
22 one, it sets that expectation of all students

1 getting to college and career readiness.  
2 Importantly also, it eliminated requirements for  
3 seat time for the basis of promotion.

4 We're not ready to actually put into  
5 place the structures needed to follow through  
6 with the rhetoric related to making achievement  
7 constant and time the variable. Colorado is  
8 prepared to take on the time issue.

9 We're also clear in the accountability  
10 system we're creating in Colorado that, yes,  
11 we're going to report and hold accountable for  
12 four-year cohort graduation rates, but we also  
13 recognize if we're serious about getting to that  
14 destination, we've got to think about time  
15 differently.

16 So we're also looking at five-year and  
17 six-year graduation rates to make sure that  
18 we're not creating incentives to push kids out,  
19 but reward districts for taking more time if  
20 needed.

21 In the end, it comes down to rate times  
22 time equals distance. And we're serious about

1 either improving growth rates of students or  
2 extending time to make sure that they're  
3 actually able to graduate ready.

4           We've not done that before in Colorado  
5 and we're not happy about that. But we've  
6 changed in the last two years, and in last year  
7 with our accountability act, to focus everyone's  
8 attention on what that bright line is, not some  
9 concept of just proficiency for what we've used  
10 for federal purposes, but a real bright line of  
11 a destination and then give districts and  
12 schools the flexibility to carry that out.

13           We already have one key district that  
14 is following through on that to make promotion  
15 mastery-based.

16           REVIEWER #3: Can I follow up on the  
17 question about the system that -- Ms. Lopez, you  
18 referenced, in particular, the components having  
19 to do with equitable distribution of teachers  
20 for minority and poverty schools, as well as  
21 hard to teach subjects.

22           This question is along the same lines

1 as Reviewer #2's, the capacity to deliver  
2 results.

3 In your, you know, targeted performance  
4 measures, you talked about by the end of the  
5 Race to the Top that you'd have five percent of  
6 teachers highly effective and you similarly  
7 talked in another performance measure about the  
8 percentage of ineffective principals and  
9 teachers going down.

10 But the way I interpret that is there's  
11 a huge amount of gap still there in teachers who  
12 will be not judged highly effective.

13 So how -- I mean, even though you're  
14 moving the needle on that, your targets are  
15 pretty ambitious. So how will you, in fact,  
16 achieve the results with, you know, not more  
17 substantive investment or personnel that will be  
18 highly effective in these schools?

19 COMMISSIONER JONES: Ms. Lopez.

20 MS. LOPEZ: Hopefully, I'm going to  
21 understand your question right, but if I don't,  
22 please let me know.

1           A couple of things: one, we've been  
2 working actually with a new teacher project who  
3 has really helped us think a little bit  
4 different about our teachers.

5           We have an educator ID system, but  
6 we're in the process still of building that out.  
7 So let me start by saying that our assumptions  
8 about where we start are based on the best data  
9 available, but it's not perfect.

10           We've made a couple of assumptions. We  
11 assume that essentially have teachers in our  
12 state that are a bit of a bell curve, with the  
13 bulk of them in that middle area of effective.

14           So our expectation, though, is that the  
15 number of teachers who are in that highly-  
16 effective category right now is probably pretty  
17 low.

18           So while they may be -- I don't know if  
19 you consider them high or low -- I couldn't tell  
20 from your question, sorry -- but we believe that  
21 that work is actually really challenging and so  
22 we tried to set realistic goals about what we

1     could do and then focus specifically on how we  
2     get, as I said, the most highly-effective  
3     teachers in front of the students who need them  
4     most.

5                 I'm not sure if I understood. There as  
6     more to your question about whether they were  
7     high or low.

8                 REVIEWER #3: It's just the imbalance  
9     between that percentage that will be highly  
10    effective and the rest that are, you know, still  
11    included, though they may be effective or  
12    ineffective and how with still that spread you  
13    will be able to deliver on the results for the  
14    kids. That's what I was just trying to say.

15                MS. LOPEZ: The other thing, I guess, I  
16    was going to point out is we've also focused --  
17    and I think our expectation is that the bar for  
18    our effectiveness should also go up,  
19    particularly if we're trying to get the student  
20    achievement results that we've put forth in our  
21    plan.

22                So, you know, one year's growth in one

1 year's time in some respects is a bit of a  
2 relative proposition.

3 In order for us to get the student  
4 achievement growth, we've got to also bring  
5 everyone up so that the trajectory is a little  
6 bit higher. So our bar for an effective period,  
7 not just highly effective, we expect to go up.

8 We've also focused pretty significantly  
9 on the pipeline. Colorado currently imports  
10 about half of our teaching force every year. We  
11 want to have the ability to have greater clarity  
12 about what it means to be an effective educator  
13 in Colorado so that when those folks come into  
14 the state, they're better placed, and also, most  
15 importantly, have specific preparation around  
16 student growth measures both in our preparation  
17 programs in-state as well as the accreditation  
18 standards for those programs. And also, we've  
19 made investments in things like Teach for  
20 America, as well as online and remote delivery  
21 of preparation programs for some of our rural  
22 areas. So we have a varied approach, but what

1 we know is we need to not only improve the  
2 effectiveness, but also get more effective  
3 teachers into the schools, to start with.

4 REVIEWER #1: Reviewer #4?

5 REVIEWER #4: Thank you, Reviewer #1,  
6 and thank you all for your commitment and what  
7 you're doing.

8 My question centers on a better  
9 understanding for all of us on statewide  
10 participation and, particularly, we're talking  
11 about here is how it impacts teachers.

12 You have 132 school districts and 134  
13 LEAs that are participating; yet, only 41  
14 percent of the eligible local teachers unions  
15 have signed on.

16 Can you amplify for us how you will  
17 translate into a statewide reform plan with that  
18 that delta.

19 COMMISSIONER JONES: Sure. Linda, do  
20 you want to start with that one?

21 MS. BACKER: Out of 178 schools  
22 districts, the 134 percent -- or 134 districts

1 stand out.

2           The interesting part is out of our 36  
3 districts that have bargaining contracts, the  
4 majority of those signed on. So we have  
5 districts that also don't have bargaining  
6 contracts. They meet and confer or just have  
7 conversations with the districts.

8           So the numbers were really interesting  
9 for us to try to present to you because there's  
10 all kinds of different structures in how  
11 teachers and their districts work together on  
12 their bargaining or meet and confer.

13           So the challenge really was for us how  
14 do we have those conversations in every  
15 individual district and what it meant for them,  
16 and that's why for us one of our priorities was  
17 to have that conversation face to face.

18           Like Nina said, every superintendent  
19 was contacted. We met with every one of our  
20 association leaders so that everyone really  
21 understood what the plan was and what the plan  
22 of action would be.

1           REVIEWER #4: In the application, is  
2 there a place you could point us to that would  
3 talk about that process that you went through in  
4 some detail so that we better understood the  
5 differences among the local associations?

6           COMMISSIONER JONES: Sure. I think Ms.  
7 Lopez could kind of outline the process and I  
8 could, as well.

9           MS. LOPEZ: I'm happy to outline the  
10 process. One thing I'll say is the way the  
11 notice was structured actually, it didn't allow  
12 you to differentiate between those -- where it  
13 was meet and confer versus those where there was  
14 actually a collective bargaining agreement in  
15 place. And we asked that question specifically  
16 of the department staff.

17           So the numbers that you see include  
18 those LEAs where there is a meet and confer  
19 relationship.

20           But the process itself, I think, is  
21 outlined within the application. I'd be happy  
22 to look for the page numbering and get back to

1 you.

2           REVIEWER #4: Thank you. And one final  
3 followup, if I may, Reviewer #1, is the general  
4 question to -- of enforcement as you go through  
5 executing what is an ambitious plan.

6           And the recourse language in the MOU  
7 that you entered into among your LEAs seemed to  
8 be a little bit softer on the recourse language  
9 than the guidelines that were presented.

10           And I would like to hear some followup  
11 or some amplification as to how you really  
12 intend to enforce and monitor the performance of  
13 the LEAs.

14           COMMISSIONER JONES: Sure, Reviewer #4,  
15 I'd be glad to respond to that.

16           Initially, like we shared during our  
17 presentation, we really met with the state had  
18 direct face-to-face conversations about the plan  
19 that we were developing, as well as what it  
20 would mean for the local districts and would it  
21 would mean to sign on.

22           There was a time line differentiation

1 that made it somewhat difficult because as we  
2 made a collaborative effort to put our plan  
3 together, in some cases districts were going by  
4 a leap of faith saying that, Mr. Commissioner,  
5 you say you're going to do this, this and this;  
6 yet, we don't get to see a finished product.

7           And so we were still developing a plan  
8 while we were having conversations around the  
9 state getting local boards and certainly local  
10 schools districts to make a commitment to it.

11           Now that we have the plan and they've  
12 had a chance to see it, because one of the  
13 things we immediately did -- we finished our  
14 plan -- and when we sent it in was we also  
15 posted it online and got it immediately out to  
16 the districts so they can get a better  
17 understanding of what they signed on for.

18           So I'm happy to report to you that I'm  
19 not as concerned about districts not signing on.  
20 We actually have a lot more districts that want  
21 to sign on now.

22           And so I'm --

1           MR. REVIEWER #4: I'm sorry,  
2 Commissioner. Just to be specific, just to the  
3 recourse language if they are signed on and  
4 they're committed, but then you're a year into a  
5 four-year grant and they're not performing as  
6 you would like. What is your recourse --

7           COMMISSIONER JONES: Yeah. Our  
8 recourse would be --

9           REVIEWER #4: -- with the funding and  
10 the other sorts of things that are important to  
11 you?

12          COMMISSIONER JONES: Yeah, thank you.  
13 Sorry to interrupt.

14          The recourse will be similar to kind of  
15 how we put together our School Improvement  
16 Grant.

17          The Secretary has been very clear that  
18 the substantial additional dollars means we've  
19 also got to get substantial increases in  
20 achievement. So the same thing. We're clear  
21 about the districts that are signing on will  
22 have to implement the whole plan, that we will

1 support and give them a lot of technical  
2 assistance in doing that, but the expectation is  
3 clear, that they are expected to do all of the  
4 different components that are in the plan

5 Failure to do so, we would start to  
6 remove grants immediately from districts if we  
7 weren't able to support them and get them in a  
8 better place to carry out what's required.

9 REVIEWER #4: Thank you.

10 COMMISSIONER JONES: Sure.

11 REVIEWER #1: I've got a question I'd  
12 like to ask and that is this: Can you  
13 specifically address the STEM program with  
14 respect to the inclusion of engineering and  
15 technology and how it's going to be implemented  
16 throughout your entire program?

17 COMMISSIONER JONES: Rich, do you want  
18 to take that one?

19 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER WENNING: Sure,  
20 Commissioner.

21 STEM, like each of the content areas,  
22 will be an integral part of the sustainable and

1     exemplary learning communities that we create.

2             As we were putting the plan together  
3     and we had conversations with our STEM  
4     community, we wanted to make sure that we  
5     weren't going to treat this as something  
6     completely separate, but absolutely integrated.

7             So as we roll out our standards and our  
8     new assessments and particularly our work on  
9     creating outstanding digital content, we're  
10    going to be doing, in conjunction with our  
11    institutes of higher education, our private  
12    sector industries that are focused on science  
13    and technology and mathematics, and as we create  
14    the learning communities, which we then have  
15    resources for through the Race to the Top  
16    proposal to identify this outstanding digital  
17    content, to interweave that work into the  
18    implementation of our standards, we think that  
19    that represents a very coherent whole.

20            The collaboratives that we've put forth  
21    in this, the contents collaboratives will have a  
22    specific STEM content collaborative focused on

1 that work.

2           But it's not, again, to do this  
3 separately, but it's -- we're capitalizing on  
4 our strong districts, our university partners,  
5 our private sector and non-profit partners with  
6 funding to both document, capture and then make  
7 available to all the educators in the state what  
8 we think is the most outstanding content related  
9 to STEM, again, just like we do for each of the  
10 other subject areas.

11           But we do believe that by having that  
12 focused STEM content collaborative and then a  
13 regional deployment that's not simply dependent  
14 on the state is what is going to permeate our  
15 STEM focus throughout.

16           REVIEWER #5: I have a question and  
17 since we've already touched on the growth model,  
18 as well as the teacher evaluation business, I  
19 think I'm going to have a follow-up question to  
20 that. And, again, thank you for your time  
21 today.

22           Can you explain how you will include

1 subjects in grades that are not currently part  
2 of the growth model in the state testing system  
3 to create growth measures for student  
4 performance and, thus, include all educators in  
5 your evaluation model.

6 COMMISSIONER JONES: Yes, we certainly  
7 can. I'll have Ms. Lopez respond to that, but  
8 that's a big conversation that we had around our  
9 state as we were developing our plan as we look  
10 at new accountability and performance measures  
11 for teachers, that it cannot just be in the  
12 state tested areas, how do we also get to the  
13 other content areas.

14 And it's one of the reasons that when  
15 we refined and refreshed for our standards that  
16 we made sure we did all 13 model content  
17 standards at the same time which was very  
18 ambitious and difficult, but we were able to get  
19 it done.

20 Ms. Lopez, do you want to respond  
21 directly to the question?

22 MS. LOPEZ: Sure. It's a great

1 question and, actually, a couple of things: one,  
2 part of our strategy around the educator  
3 evaluation, as I said, is a tiered -- it's a  
4 tiered implementation plan with us really having  
5 full implementation in year three.

6 We've aligned that so that it coincides  
7 with the development of new assessments. So  
8 we're adopting new standards. We're about to  
9 adopt common core standards.

10 We need new assessments, not just for  
11 untested, but certainly for our tested subjects.  
12 So we would try to coordinate and align the time  
13 table for the evaluation with the development of  
14 those.

15 With respect to the development of  
16 assessments in non-tested subjects, we've really  
17 embarked on a focus -- and I think that this is  
18 really consistent again with the blue print --  
19 which is really expanding the footprint of our  
20 interim and our formative assessments and really  
21 narrowing the blueprint of summative the  
22 assessments. I'm not suggesting that we intend

1 to get rid of summative assessments. We  
2 certainly know that they are critical and expect  
3 that they will be a key part of the role of the  
4 common core standards.

5           However, our expectation -- and this is  
6 in our plan specifically around assessments --  
7 is that every participating district, and, in  
8 fact, even those that are not, will have the  
9 ability to either purchase, validate their own  
10 or develop assessments within non-tested  
11 subjects.

12           And, in fact, some of our districts  
13 have already started doing that work around new  
14 content standards. So we'll be focusing more  
15 upon interim and formative assessments in those  
16 non-tested subjects.

17           REVIEWER #5: Okay. And I understand  
18 that that makes the assessments available. How  
19 does that become growth measures that can then  
20 be used for evaluation?

21           COMMISSIONER JONES: Mr. Wenning.

22           ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER WENNING:

1 Thanks.

2           One of the benefits of the Colorado  
3 model is that it's highly flexible and not  
4 assessment-dependent. It doesn't require a  
5 vertical scale. It's adaptable to other states,  
6 and I should have noted that several other  
7 states are also using it.

8           So as we're develop interim  
9 assessments, one of our -- one of the things  
10 we'll be focusing on with Massachusetts, Indian,  
11 Arizona and other states that are going to join,  
12 is embedding those interim assessments directly  
13 in the visual tools that you saw.

14           And so we can run growth measures that  
15 are comparable from our summative assessment,  
16 which, again, as we change our summative, the  
17 growth model doesn't need to change; it's  
18 adaptable.

19           And with the resources that are in the  
20 Race to Top proposal, we'll be able to align our  
21 growth measures using interim assessments that  
22 are vetted by the state as aligned with the

1 common core. That's a key issue. And we know  
2 that the industry is going to have to catch up  
3 with the common core, as well.

4 But we are going to be very deliberate  
5 about selecting a set. We expect all districts  
6 to adopt. The state will make sure that the  
7 growth measures are capable and we will embed  
8 multiple interim assessments.

9 That's why we have that kind of  
10 investment in SchoolView, so that that can then  
11 be used as part of the teacher impact report  
12 looking at summative and interim and provide  
13 that to districts so they have a good body of  
14 evidence for teacher evaluation.

15 REVIEWER #5: And if you could give  
16 us some references, not right this minute, but  
17 before we leave from the proposal that describes  
18 what you just described. Thank you.

19 REVIEWER #3: So I wanted to, if I  
20 could, probe for a little while two specific  
21 areas of your proposal. Essentially, they  
22 relate to D-3, which is referenced on pages 42

1 to 50, and also D-5, which is referenced on  
2 pages 103 to 108.

3 So in D-3, let me take that first, in  
4 your application you describe a number of  
5 activities, initiatives that you plan to  
6 undertake to support the transition to enhance  
7 standards and high-quality assessments.

8 And I'm particularly picking up on what  
9 -- I can't remember who said it earlier, but the  
10 first wave of standards --- and that I think you  
11 said that one of the things you recognize in  
12 looking back is you didn't enough support. You  
13 know, they were out there for people by osmosis.

14 So I think that D-3 responds to that,  
15 you know, concern about how you actually take  
16 the core incentives that you are all kind of  
17 collaborating on and then really translate them  
18 into building a model to improve instruction.  
19 That's sort of the idea.

20 So I was trying to understand a little  
21 bit more -- and maybe you can just focus me on  
22 what's the goal -- you know, what the actual

1 plan is related to goals, initiatives and  
2 activities that are aligned to perform  
3 standards. I mean the outcomes in these areas  
4 that are not just the performance measures you  
5 have that are largely described right now as  
6 participation, you know, that LEAs will  
7 participate, but it's really the more  
8 substantive like results that you'd be looking  
9 for to benchmark this particular area about  
10 transmission.

11           And then the second part of that is  
12 that, you know, well, how will you be collecting  
13 data along the way to use for continuous  
14 improvement?

15           I mean, this is a huge investment. I  
16 want to kind of crystalize what the outcomes  
17 would be and how are you going to measure the  
18 results so it feeds back into the system so that  
19 it continues to be more effective?

20           Sorry, that's a long question, but --

21           COMMISSIONER JONES: Mr. Wenning, do  
22 you have a feel for that?

1                   ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER WENNING: I  
2 think I have a feel for it. You may need to add  
3 a few clarifications.

4                   But I do want to talk about the rollout  
5 strategy in terms of the content collaborative  
6 work, the knowledge captured and the R&D, and I  
7 think that may get to what you're looking for  
8 there.

9                   So it's nice to say you're going to  
10 have collaboratives. We -- you know, we've  
11 tried that before without resources.

12                   What our goal is first is to identify  
13 the leaders in our state. We have some  
14 outstanding districts and we have some  
15 outstanding university partners.

16                   We find the most capable with the  
17 highest performance already and we work and co-  
18 develop specific tools for -- particularly,  
19 creating formative items and we think we have to  
20 start there first.

21                   Once we have the standards, we have --  
22 there are learning objectives. We need to start

1 develop formative items for classroom practice.  
2 That will be the work of the content  
3 collaboratives, whether it's in the area of  
4 STEM, mathematics, reading, et cetera.

5           We have funding in the plan for  
6 documentation, so those collaboratives will not  
7 just be doing it on their own. They will both  
8 have a University of Colorado Denver partner  
9 working with us that's ready to go from day one  
10 to really facilitate those collaboratives and we  
11 will have video production and other efforts to  
12 document what they're developing. So they're  
13 not going to be responsible for all of the final  
14 work product.

15           That becomes the digital content  
16 associated with implementing standards. The  
17 formative items that are developed will be  
18 readily shared across all educators in the state  
19 through SchoolView, so that there is a basic  
20 knowledge management function there.

21           In addition, you probably noticed that  
22 we're funding a research collaborative, a

1 research consortium that will have multiple  
2 university partners. That will be part of those  
3 collaboratives, as well.

4 We will document their practice  
5 implementation. We didn't choose who was going  
6 to get money on this. We're looking for folks  
7 to step up, form each of those collaboratives,  
8 develop content, focus on formative items,  
9 documentation and then widespread sharing and  
10 follow-through, but follow-through through  
11 research because we know there's a great deal of  
12 R&D going on in this Race to the Top proposal.

13 We also have other approaches for  
14 generating that kind of content through also an  
15 open market space, so we're inviting both our  
16 most highly-effective educators to contribute  
17 content, but also any educator in the state will  
18 be able to share content and upload that to  
19 SchoolView and look at -- and then ask other  
20 educators to rate the value of that content to  
21 their own practice.

22 We've included incentives, thousand

1 dollar royalties for educators with highly-rated  
2 content, coupled with our excellent summative  
3 assessment and interim, we'll see change. If we  
4 don't see change, we're not going to be  
5 investing further in that particular  
6 collaborative.

7           So it's content generation,  
8 particularly focused on formative items, with  
9 documentation and dissemination very  
10 deliberately and research to determine use and  
11 usefulness in the classroom.

12           REVIEWER #3: But, I mean, that's not  
13 the only aspect of the whole rollout related to  
14 the transition. Could you elaborate maybe on  
15 another aspect? That was helpful.

16           ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER WENNING: So in  
17 addition to the work -- we basically have a two-  
18 prong strategy in each case: work that the state  
19 rolls out in terms of training and support  
20 directly from CDE staff, and we'll be able to  
21 increase our state specific capacity in  
22 providing direct support. And that support will

1 be focused based on a tiered strategy of need.

2 Our most highest-performing districts  
3 will get less support from us because we're  
4 actually drawing on them to support others.

5 Those districts that are struggling and  
6 schools that are struggling are going to get  
7 much more intensive support and then our lowest-  
8 performing are going to get extremely intensive  
9 support from the Department.

10 That's where we'll be focusing our CDE  
11 staff, our content specialist that we already  
12 have on board to directly assist educators in  
13 implementing those standards.

14 So it's really that two-prong strategy  
15 of both really building the capacity of the  
16 field by investing in their own strengths and  
17 providing very focused CDE staff support  
18 directly to the districts that need it the most.

19 But we know that we have scarce  
20 resources. We have to focus on those where  
21 performance challenges are greatest to make sure  
22 they make the biggest strides in implementing

1 the new common core and getting solid practice  
2 for each of their classrooms.

3 REVIEWER #3: I just wanted to hold up  
4 if anybody else had a question on D-3, because I  
5 want to raise a question on D-5, so it's not  
6 confusing.

7 REVIEWER #5: And by the way, these  
8 do overlap.

9 You know, when you talk about  
10 professional development, it comes up several  
11 times during the proposal. So we're really  
12 talking about, you know, our resources and  
13 professional development going out to educators  
14 and then asking the question about how do you  
15 know whether those are making a difference and  
16 then what do you do when you find that out.

17 This is actually more a related  
18 question, but it has to do more with the  
19 logistics of rolling these things out.

20 We noticed in your proposal that you  
21 referenced change agents and you also referenced  
22 a large number of consultants in the first year

1 that are going to jumpstart the initiative.

2 So could you please explain how you're  
3 going to find these people, identify them, what  
4 their qualifications would be, in general terms,  
5 and also the plans for continuation of effort  
6 after the consultants leave and you're on your  
7 own.

8 COMMISSIONER JONES: Thank you. Ms.  
9 Lopez, do you want to take the first stab at  
10 that?

11 MS. LOPEZ: Sure. I noticed your  
12 question wasn't specific to a section, so I'll  
13 speak in general terms and then, if there's a  
14 specific one, please let me know.

15 So in general, I guess I should start  
16 by saying that -- I hope this doesn't come off  
17 the wrong way -- we don't generally have a  
18 problem attracting people to Colorado. It  
19 doesn't mean that people don't like living other  
20 places, but every single one of us here is a  
21 Coloradan by choice, not by birth.

22 And we are very excited. We think this

1 is true, certainly, of all the states that are  
2 lucky enough to receive this grant. This is  
3 great work and we hope to be able to attract the  
4 best and the brightest, not just from our state,  
5 but also nationally, perhaps even  
6 internationally.

7 In terms of the consultants, there's a  
8 couple of things to think about. So our plan  
9 really focuses on using one-time investments in  
10 a smart way, so there's a number of items that  
11 are infrastructure-building, whether it's the  
12 data systems, even the sustainable learning  
13 communities.

14 I'll give you an example. We have  
15 districts right now. The Commissioner and I  
16 were out in Montross, Colorado, the western  
17 slope, and had a superintendent from a small  
18 district say, "Love the new content standards.  
19 They're fabulous, but my God, we just spent  
20 three years redoing our curriculum. Can you  
21 just give us one?"

22 The same conversation, different

1 district, Boulder Valley, great district. You  
2 know, it's got high achievement. They've  
3 already started to realign their curriculum.  
4 What doesn't happen is we don't get Boulder's  
5 curriculum connected to Telluride's curriculum  
6 or even making it available to them.

7           So what we intend to do through all the  
8 things, in part -- and I think that Rich talked  
9 about it -- is creating those communities.

10           Once we create those communities, we  
11 don't need to continue to pump dollars into them  
12 to make them sustainable. So the building out  
13 of the infrastructure is a one-time investment.

14           And, obviously, if it works -- our  
15 expectation is not that we build it and people  
16 will come, but that if it's valuable, that it  
17 will work, that folks will want it.

18           So we're not going to assume that we  
19 know what works best. That's why our focus on  
20 data is not just about more information. It's  
21 about getting folks the information they need  
22 and focusing on what information they need to be

1 able to make decisions.

2           In terms of consultants, again, I guess  
3 I'm not sure which one in particular, but a  
4 number of areas, I think particularly with the  
5 budget, it is the distribution method that was  
6 set up by statute, was interesting and it made  
7 -- I mean, we are very comfortable with our  
8 budget.

9           But it took -- it takes a lot of time  
10 and research to figure out project by project  
11 and then district by district what portion is  
12 from the state and what portion is from the LEA  
13 share.

14           That's not a project that we expect we  
15 need to go through the entire four years of the  
16 grant period. And in fact, our districts are  
17 standing by ready to have those conversations in  
18 the first 90 days around specifically how  
19 they're going to execute their plan and what  
20 resources they're going to use.

21           So there are some items that are front-  
22 loaded because we need to build those

1 structures.

2           And also, a part of our strategy is  
3 focused, again, on those public-private  
4 partnerships, such as the Colorado Center for  
5 Educator Excellence.

6           There are some pieces of our work that  
7 we need them to do. We don't need them to do  
8 that same amount of work throughout the four-  
9 year period.

10           Our expectation is we contract with  
11 them to do that work while we're identifying  
12 what those model evaluation systems look like  
13 and then we decrease the funding over the four-  
14 year period because they don't have the same  
15 volume of work.

16           If districts determine that that's a  
17 value add for them, then they will decide to re-  
18 purpose a number of their professional  
19 development dollars.

20           What we found -- and this is true, I  
21 think, in any state -- there's an incredible  
22 amount of funding that goes into professional

1 development. What we don't always give is the  
2 right information to districts. They don't  
3 always have the information available to  
4 understand what's working, nor do we necessarily  
5 make it available to them, at least not in  
6 Colorado, in a manner that really takes  
7 advantage of economies of scale.

8           So if I have ten educators in a large  
9 district that need this program, what we want to  
10 do is connect them with the ten educators in  
11 another district that also need that program, as  
12 opposed to requiring that district to now  
13 purchase that program for every single educator  
14 in their district, irrespective of whether or  
15 not the rest of them need it.

16           And so we're really talking about  
17 changing the structures and really changing how  
18 we do business so that when -- we don't need to  
19 stick around and be continuing to put in the  
20 same amount of resources.

21           We also -- at the end of the grant  
22 period, again, we want to figure out what works

1 and I think it will be incumbent upon us as a  
2 state to continue to invest in those efforts  
3 that have the greatest return on investment, and  
4 that means both looking at our federal dollars  
5 and also our state and local dollars.

6 REVIEWER #5: And just one quick  
7 little extra question, but it's still the same  
8 question, which is describe the change agent for  
9 me. Who is the change agent?

10 MS. LOPEZ: I will answer quickly. I  
11 know Rich may want to add, as well.

12 In general, they already exist. So we  
13 already have folks across our state who are  
14 already doing this work. In some cases, they  
15 may be parents; in some cases, they may be  
16 superintendents.

17 We know when we look across our state,  
18 there are certain superintendents that other --  
19 that their colleagues look to. And so the idea  
20 is how do we put them in a position with the  
21 greatest amount of information to be able to  
22 actually work with the relationships they

1 already have in place.

2 We will be adding some more capacity,  
3 so in the short term as we're trying to roll out  
4 an incredible amount of change over time, we  
5 also will be adding some capacity.

6 But in most cases, what we're talking  
7 about is not plopping a person in the middle of  
8 a new locale, but identifying those folks who  
9 are already in those communities who are already  
10 leading change or are opinion leaders.

11 REVIEWER #3: I wanted to go back to  
12 this -- the earlier point you raised about the  
13 whole rollout now for the professional  
14 development. This is now the D-05 question  
15 which was tacked to the D-3.

16 And, you know, it has -- I mean,  
17 overall, I guess what I'm trying to get at is  
18 not only how you're rolling out, but how you're  
19 going to use information and employ it for  
20 continuous improvement.

21 Now, this D-5 is on providing effective  
22 support for principals and teachers, so this is

1 the whole, you know, professional development,  
2 the coaching, induction, et cetera.

3 But part of that criteria also asks  
4 specifically how you plan to measure and  
5 evaluate, you know, these supports for the  
6 purposes of improving effectiveness.

7 So could you comment on that particular  
8 intent as part of this proposal? Well, I'm  
9 looking at you, but anyone.

10 COMMISSIONER JONES: Nina.

11 MS. LOPEZ: There is a lot in D-5. D-5  
12 is a broad category.

13 REVIEWER #3: It's not so much what is  
14 in there. I guess I just want to know all those  
15 -- you have some really, you know, important  
16 things there. It's a lot. But how will you  
17 constantly be extracting -- you know, the point  
18 you raised about what's working, what's not and  
19 then feed it back.

20 MS. LOPEZ: I'll give two concrete  
21 examples. And, again, if it doesn't answer your  
22 question, please do ask more.

1           The first -- boy, it went right out of  
2 my head. Sorry. The first is the educator  
3 impact reports. So the educator impact reports  
4 are not something we're going to post on the  
5 Web.

6           They are really a document that comes  
7 to an individual educator and gives them  
8 information about their students, at its  
9 simplest level, giving the growth data you just  
10 saw.

11           Our -- and this is why we need these  
12 funds. Our plan builds upon that so that it  
13 actually is a tool to improve.

14           There's a variety of ways it might do  
15 that. The first is if you've got an educator  
16 impact report, particularly if you've got the  
17 non-tested subject areas and using interim  
18 assessments and you're getting them in realtime  
19 in the middle of the school year.

20           But to give an example, let's say you  
21 have a teacher and it turns out that none of  
22 their students are making any progress on

1 fractions. The purpose of the Colorado Center  
2 for Education Excellence is to identify  
3 professional development resources, either based  
4 on our own experience in our state or, perhaps,  
5 based on what we've learned from other partners  
6 inside or outside of our state, what actually  
7 works for teaching fractions.

8           And it might be an actual professional  
9 course. It might be video of our most highly-  
10 effective teacher in teaching fractions across  
11 the state that they can click on and see it.

12           The idea is that linkage of  
13 information. I think that's one example.

14           The other thing -- and this is sort of  
15 a theme, I think, that runs throughout -- is we  
16 want to fundamentally change the relationship  
17 between our preparation programs and our  
18 districts.

19           What I heard over and over again from  
20 districts, as well as -- not just our  
21 institutions of higher ed, but our alternative  
22 preparation programs, too, the prep programs --

1 and, in fact, we have a number in our state, at  
2 least two that have said we want you to hold us  
3 accountable for outcomes.

4           They've approached the Department to  
5 say we want to do this work. We want to know  
6 whether when our teachers get to the classroom  
7 are they actually having a measurable impact on  
8 student growth.

9           But we don't have any information right  
10 now to tell us that. And so we're really  
11 talking about fundamentally changing the  
12 relationship between the preparation provider  
13 and the employer.

14           So where do they go, who do they teach,  
15 how long do they stay, are their students  
16 learning, what is their induction program, and  
17 that theme, I think -- I hope that our intention  
18 came through -- is that that's really what runs  
19 throughout, that there is a linkage between --  
20 and I think your point about continuous  
21 improvement, if we don't have the information  
22 and transparency, there's no way for us to know

1 what's working.

2 REVIEWER #3: Thank you.

3 REVIEWER #1: Reviewer #4:

4 REVIEWER #4: Throughout the proposal,  
5 and, thankfully as well today, in your  
6 presentation, SchoolView is an important element  
7 in your plan.

8 And I'm curious and I have two related  
9 questions about SchoolView.

10 One is how do you monitor the  
11 effectiveness at the local level of the user? I  
12 mean, how do you ensure that this isn't just a  
13 stay down, use this? How are you sure that at  
14 the bottom level that this is an effective  
15 program?

16 COMMISSIONER JONES: Mr. Wenning.

17 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER WENNING: Sure.

18 I'm going to give a very simple answer  
19 and that it's going to be the improvement seen  
20 in the schools and that's going to be one test.

21 And the other issue is going to be  
22 actually visiting the schools and knowing what

1 folks are using.

2           But within SchoolView, and something  
3 we're very excited about, is our ability to  
4 connect all educators, that educators are  
5 providing feedback on the usefulness of the  
6 tools.

7           We'll be using 2.0 social collaboration  
8 tools within this. And so it's not just the  
9 state walking into the door and asking you, but  
10 rather, we'll be able to monitor use through it,  
11 but also to the ratings of the content that's  
12 posted there.

13           So we do expect to have continuous  
14 feedback provided. And that's the nice thing  
15 about social collaboration software, you get  
16 feedback fast.

17           Another aspect -- so we'll have a great  
18 feedback loop.

19           The way we've organized our  
20 accountability system in the state, we've made  
21 our new planning structure a linchpin. We've  
22 created a very simple planning structure that

1 requires root cause analysis, researched-based  
2 strategies and budget.

3 All of that gets published on  
4 SchoolView, too. Basically, the improvement  
5 plans of every school and district in the state  
6 to their specific strategies is going to become  
7 a relational database that will be able to --  
8 and remember, the public is going to be able to  
9 look at -- combined with the digital content and  
10 the evaluation of the value of that content by  
11 educators, we'll get outstanding feedback and  
12 know what we want to change.

13 Moreover, the way we're populating that  
14 content is both through vetted approaches, which  
15 we will develop, we'll vet, note they're  
16 aligned, approve them and put it there, but  
17 we'll also have that marketplace.

18 Both, though, will have immediate  
19 feedback. That's another strength of having  
20 those collaboratives. The CE folks will be  
21 involved in that. We're going to -- one thing  
22 we've never had a challenge with is getting very

1 blunt feedback on how we're doing and we'll have  
2 at least three ways of getting that feedback,  
3 both through the technology, as well as through  
4 the on-the-ground work of those collaboratives.

5 REVIEWER #4: That helps a lot. Thank  
6 you. And could you -- if you can tell me where  
7 I can find that in the application, that will be  
8 very helpful.

9 And then the following question is I  
10 believe there's a reference to an additional  
11 grant related to your state longitudinal data  
12 system, a 17 million dollar grant.

13 If for some reason you were not  
14 successful in obtaining that grant, have you  
15 made provisions for supporting the SchoolView  
16 work without that grant?

17 COMMISSIONER JONES: Mr. Wenning.

18 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER WENNING: Sure,  
19 thanks Commissioner.

20 Two things: At the recommendation of  
21 the Department, we included the app. for SLVS in  
22 two places. We included it in Race to the Top

1 and we included it in the SLVS. And now it  
2 turns out that SLVS won't be -- we won't know  
3 about that until June and we'll know about Race  
4 to the Top first.

5 Win or lose either competition, to get  
6 where we've been has been a public-private  
7 partnership. We started with private resources  
8 to develop SchoolView and our funders are still  
9 going to stick with us on this.

10 Our partners are going to pursue I-3  
11 grants that have helped construct this. So we  
12 actually have been pretty resourceful in finding  
13 private sector resources to continue to build  
14 out the functionality.

15 In addition, because really one of the  
16 first times under Commissioner Jones' leadership  
17 and the Governor's leadership, we're providing  
18 something of value to the field.

19 The field wants more. That's what we  
20 keep hearing: "Please can you get this next  
21 version out? We're ready for it." We know that  
22 will put pressure on our state legislature to

1 begin investing in technology and research and  
2 development at the state level.

3 So we're confident that, win or lose  
4 these federal grants, we're going to be able to  
5 drive that work with SchoolView because it's  
6 valued by the field.

7 And once we hook parents on that  
8 information, it's going to be very hard to ever  
9 turn back.

10 REVIEWER #4: Thank you.

11 REVIEWER #2: Let me follow up on  
12 particularly specifically SchoolView parents.

13 No habla engles and I don't have  
14 a computer. How am I going to get access to my  
15 child's progress? How does School View or other  
16 systems address the diversity in Colorado and  
17 the need to inform parents on how their students  
18 are doing?

19 COMMISSIONER JONES: Mr. Wenning.

20 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER WENNING: Well,  
21 two things: one, we want to make sure that  
22 parents that aren't comfortable with technology

1 become more technologically savvy.

2           So we're trying to make it a very  
3 straightforward user experience and make sure  
4 that we have everything translated into multiple  
5 languages.

6           But we only know that's part of the  
7 effort. So we want to make the technology --

8           REVIEWER #2: So it will be translated  
9 into --

10           ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER WENNING:

11 Absolutely, absolutely. We've already done that  
12 with the student reports, as they're translated  
13 now into seven languages.

14           And we're going to be able to make the  
15 entire SchoolView -- you know, provide a Spanish  
16 version, for example. That's critical for our  
17 state.

18           But we know that there are barriers to  
19 using technology in many households. So one of  
20 the key features that we believe in is  
21 everything you see needs to be available in a  
22 print summary, as well.

1           Documents, we've already began  
2   discussing cable spots to get this word out.  
3   But anything that's available on SchoolView will  
4   also be available through a translated document,  
5   in a paper format.

6           And that's still not good enough  
7   because we know that's just part of it.

8           Our other work is going to be working  
9   with our parent networks in the state. And  
10   we're delighted that the Parent Information  
11   Resource Network in Colorado is very  
12   enthusiastic about the growth model in  
13   SchoolView. They think it's terrific.

14           And what we absolutely have to do is  
15   capitalize on our parent networks. We have a  
16   set of parents that have helped really craft our  
17   accountability legislation. We'll continue to  
18   engage them.

19           A key focus throughout our plan is  
20   whether change agents or this idea of Mavins, if  
21   you can find parents that are highly motivated,  
22   make sure they're working collaboratively, use

1 the structures that are supporting parents  
2 throughout our state to learn, and be the  
3 spokespeople and to help support parents  
4 directly in their own communities.

5           So it's both working with the capacity  
6 of individuals, working together through our  
7 Parent Information Resource Centers, having  
8 outstanding print documents so what you see is  
9 not just available on the Web, but is available  
10 in your libraries, available to you as a parent,  
11 and then let's make the technology as useful as  
12 possible.

13           And we've been very deliberate about  
14 that, interviewing parents and teachers about  
15 what they want to see when they access the  
16 technology.

17           REVIEWER #1: One of our concerns  
18 centered around the alternative pathway to a  
19 teaching certificate, especially the small  
20 number of teachers that seem to be taking  
21 advantage of it.

22           Can you explain why that's the case?

1           COMMISSIONER JONES: Ms. Lopez.

2           MS. LOPEZ: Sure. Well, a couple of  
3 things: one, as I said before, about half of our  
4 teaching force actually comes from out of state  
5 and is prepared out of state. So, in general,  
6 the in-state preparation programs only represent  
7 about a half of a fraction of that.

8           In terms of the alternative pathways  
9 themselves, we've actually just recently revised  
10 the legislation. We've had a history of  
11 legislation.

12           We started this over -- gosh, I think  
13 2000, or late 1990s actually, with our first  
14 legislation that opened up those pathways. We  
15 pretty dramatically changed them so that we've  
16 made it easier for those pathways to come into  
17 existence and that the number of providers is  
18 also broader.

19           As a result, we've already seen this  
20 fall the number of applicants coming in. So we  
21 expect that the number of pathways will  
22 increase.

1           And, again, I think some of our  
2 strategy is specifically around the grow your  
3 own strategy for our rural areas. We expect to  
4 also increase the number of educators that are  
5 coming through those pathways.

6           REVIEWER #1: Okay.

7           MS. LOPEZ: I don't know if that  
8 answered or not, but --

9           REVIEWER #1: We also had a question on  
10 the critical shortages subject and subject  
11 areas. How is this being monitored? How will  
12 you monitor it? I'm sure you're monitoring it  
13 now. Could you explain to me about that?

14          COMMISSIONER JONES: On the --

15          REVIEWER #1: Monitoring of the  
16 critical areas, subject areas that are shortages  
17 of teachers.

18          COMMISSIONER JONES: Linda, do you want  
19 to take that one?

20          MS. LOPEZ: I can do it, too.

21          MS. BARKER: Go ahead, Nina.

22          MS. LOPEZ: So right now, our primary

1 method is by looking at emergency  
2 authorizations, essentially, which is how we  
3 identify shortage areas, principally.

4 We also have, as I said, in part, part  
5 of the legislation, Senate Bill 160, we created  
6 which streamlined the alternative pathways.

7 We also changed the requirements for  
8 satisfying the highly-qualified requirements in  
9 our state. So they are not just based on course  
10 work or clock hours, but also demonstrated past  
11 experience which doesn't answer your first  
12 question. Sorry.

13 But it is primarily at this point or  
14 today has been through those emergency  
15 authorizations.

16 We expect as the educator inducement  
17 system gets rolled out, which is, as I said, has  
18 already started in our state, it will then --  
19 and actually included within that system is the  
20 preparation path, the competence -- not  
21 competence -- the course work and the past  
22 experience and that will give us a much more

1 robust body of information around the skills  
2 that our educators have.

3 REVIEWER #1: Thank you.

4 REVIEWER #3: I have a question about  
5 your unique strategy around the turnarounds, the  
6 center.

7 So I'm just curious in terms of how are  
8 you going to hold that center accountable for  
9 delivering on the large investment and the  
10 results you're expecting there?

11 And what happens with that about  
12 sustainability long-term? I mean, after Race to  
13 the Top, there's an external, you know, entity  
14 and you're interested, but you're not running  
15 it. So where does the commitment for making  
16 sure that stays alive -- because as much as I'd  
17 like to see all the low-performing schools go  
18 away by X-time, I think we're going to be in  
19 this for the long haul.

20 So I just -- how will you guarantee  
21 that, you know, somebody is going to be looking  
22 over that and that it's going to be around?

1                   COMMISSIONER JONES: Yeah. On the  
2 turnaround center, there's a couple of  
3 approaches.

4                   And, actually, thank you for the  
5 question and the opportunity to clarify.

6                   Even though we want to start a non-  
7 profit to allow nimbleness, as well as to make  
8 sure that we research best practices, that still  
9 is going to be connected to the Colorado  
10 Department of Education.

11                  So we are not just giving that away.

12                  REVIEWER #3: Okay. But describe the  
13 connection.

14                  COMMISSIONER JONES: Sure.

15                  REVIEWER #3: Specifically, where the  
16 bottom line hits the road or results.

17                  COMMISSIONER JONES: Yeah, I'll be glad  
18 to.

19                  You probably heard during our  
20 presentation that I've already started a unit  
21 that focuses on turnaround within the Colorado  
22 Department of Education. I don't plan to

1 dissolve that unit if we're funded with Race to  
2 the Top.

3 That unit will still actually oversee  
4 the turnaround effectiveness center and we will  
5 actually identify different components and how  
6 we want to administer certain work, what  
7 research we want to do to figure out what's  
8 working and as well as holding ourselves  
9 accountable.

10 Now, a couple of components that -- you  
11 may have also noted that we have partnered with  
12 Mass Insight, because we think for turnaround  
13 schools in Colorado, that we're going to be  
14 looking at ninety to a hundred of them based on  
15 the metrics that we've been using.

16 The Department had not built that kind  
17 of capacity. We want to build that capacity  
18 through the center, but not just turn it over.  
19 We're going to stay connected and ultimately we  
20 will be funding the grants that will be going  
21 out to support that work. So we will still BE  
22 closely connected.

1           And, again, I've put an Assistant  
2 Commissioner that answers directly to me, not  
3 through a Deputy, but directly to me so that we  
4 stay focused on that.

5           The other piece for sustainability I  
6 think is critical. One of the things that we  
7 know is that when the dollars run out on Race to  
8 the Top, we want to continue to do that work  
9 because we don't think we'll be done.

10           But we think how we can do that -- and  
11 that's why we wanted the public-private  
12 partnership -- we want to actually match the  
13 dollars that will come out of Race to the Top  
14 through private.

15           We have a lot of private funders right  
16 now that are really wanting to support that  
17 work, but it hasn't been coordinated or  
18 organized.

19           So we believe that we can coordinate  
20 those dollars and continue to fund that work and  
21 fund those districts that are taking the hard  
22 steps to try to turn around their lowest-

1 performing schools.

2 REVIEWER #4: Commissioner, just to  
3 clarify on that, too -- and that was most  
4 helpful and I'm glad Reviewer #5 asked that --  
5 but the turnaround office is oversight then for  
6 the turnaround center.

7 So in other words, there aren't dual  
8 tracks?

9 COMMISSIONER JONES: That is absolutely  
10 correct. It is oversight.

11 Right now, the turnaround office is  
12 doing the turnaround work for the School  
13 Improvement Grants.

14 Once you approve our Race to the Top  
15 application, then we believe that that will be  
16 oversight and will help set direction, as well  
17 as our partnership with Mass Insight.

18 But that will -- we will downsize that  
19 department, but it will still have a high level  
20 that will answer directly to the Commissioner.

21 REVIEWER #3: But I guess that's what I  
22 was trying to get at, is where is the bottom

1 line, where the rubber hits the road.

2 I mean, who has got the accountability  
3 to fire, hire, release the money because I  
4 didn't see that there was going to be any, you  
5 know, governing board. I thought that somebody  
6 maybe said something about advisory.

7 So I still am trying to get some -- you  
8 know, just be clear in a very simple way of  
9 where the rubber hits the road on this, because  
10 you can have oversight and direct, support and  
11 all that, but I want to know the accountability  
12 bottom line.

13 COMMISSIONER JONES: And let me say  
14 that that will rest directly with -- in the  
15 Commissioner's office, that we will actually  
16 contract for that support with clear  
17 deliverables, and that will come directly  
18 through the Assistant Commissioner, but directly  
19 through me as Commissioner.

20 And then I will also be the direct  
21 person that will appoint that board. So that is  
22 a piece, based on what I know and what we've

1 done and how hard that work is, that I'm going  
2 to keep my hand directly in it. So it is me.

3 REVIEWER #5: I want to thank you.  
4 We are barreling through our questions and we  
5 really appreciate your sharp answers to these  
6 questions. It's very helpful for us to get  
7 through these.

8 I apologize. I need to go back to  
9 alternative certification for just a minute,  
10 pathways to certification, and this is just one  
11 further clarification question about that.

12 Reviewer #1 had already asked a  
13 question about, you know, the participation  
14 rates, which you've answered.

15 But it appears that there are a lot of  
16 approved programs that could offer alternative  
17 certification in the state, but some of them are  
18 dormant at a given time and then some are active  
19 and some are more active than others.

20 And so the question arises about the  
21 quality and the content of those programs. Why  
22 are some dormant, why are some, you know, more

1 popular, and how do you reactivate a program  
2 that hasn't been activated or why doesn't it  
3 just go off the books, you know? So just some  
4 general questions about that.

5 COMMISSIONER JONES: Sure. Ms. Lopez,  
6 you want to continue.

7 MS. LOPEZ: Sure. Just three things  
8 really quickly.

9 The first is that there are many of our  
10 preparation paths in the past that historically  
11 have been created just for a single purpose.

12 So, for example, we have some charter  
13 schools to become authorized as alternative  
14 pathways and really they're not looking to serve  
15 more than their own schools.

16 So in many cases, historically, what  
17 we've had is a lot of alternative preparation  
18 providers that are not looking to serve more  
19 than a very limited number of schools or  
20 districts.

21 Again, we believe that as part of the  
22 streamlining process that occurred as a result

1 of Senate Bill 163 -- or 160, I'm sorry, that it  
2 will make it more attractive and easier for  
3 folks who really want to be a true, statewide  
4 alternative pathway provider to come into our  
5 state.

6 The second thing I just want to say  
7 really quickly is we actually already started  
8 the work of revising how we hold our preparation  
9 programs accountable.

10 And so we're looking at the Teacher  
11 Performance Standards, which are part of that  
12 process. As I said before, we're also starting  
13 some work both through Blue Ribbon that the  
14 Commissioner co-chairs around the clinical  
15 preparation, as well as TPAC. I can't remember  
16 what it stands for, but it stands for looking at  
17 performance assessments within our preparation  
18 paths.

19 So we're embarking on a variety of  
20 pathways that will allow us to essentially  
21 identify which preparation programs are  
22 succeeding for a variety of reasons: one, again,

1 we want to increase that link with the  
2 employers.

3 We also want our teacher candidates and  
4 our principals candidates to be able to figure  
5 out who's actually doing a good job. I want to  
6 go teach ELL students down in Durango. Who's  
7 actually doing a good job of preparing teachers  
8 to go into that environment and succeed.

9 And what Rich spoke about before is  
10 changing the marketplace so that folks can  
11 figure out where best -- or which preparation  
12 path is going to serve them.

13 REVIEWER #5: Okay. So in some sense,  
14 some of these programs are just (inaudible) and  
15 they were created and maybe not used anymore.  
16 That's very helpful. Thank you.

17 REVIEWER #1: And we're going to turn  
18 to Reviewer #2 who is going to ask the last  
19 question.

20 REVIEWER #2: I need to clarify a  
21 question.

22 You were asked in your application the

1 budget for education in Colorado. The question  
2 was very specifically has the amount of money  
3 budgeted for education gone up or down over the  
4 last year and the application indicates that  
5 actually the amount of money in education has  
6 gone up, but it's a smaller percentage of the  
7 total state budget.

8 Help me understand. Can you clarify  
9 that?

10 LT. GOVERNOR O'BRIEN: We have in our  
11 constitution Amendment 23, which I helped pass,  
12 which forced the legislature to restore funding  
13 cuts over the previous decade, plus inflation.

14 So the idea is that by 2011, the state  
15 funding for education would be on par with 1991  
16 equal with student population growth and  
17 inflation.

18 So basically it's going to make us even  
19 and that is coming up to an end. So, yes,  
20 you're right. Up until now, there have been big  
21 additions to education, even when other programs  
22 are being cut, but we are now starting to look

1 at cuts to public education to balance the  
2 budget as we budget for the incoming fiscal year  
3 because we Amendment 23 will have run its course  
4 and we have cut everywhere else.

5 And our administration's perception --  
6 and we're not entirely in agreement with  
7 everyone on this...

Ms. Barker: Just on this one issue. [Laughter]

8 LT. GOVERNOR O'BRIEN: -- is that education has to  
9 help share the pain, even though we hate to do  
it.

10 So we will be seeing some cuts to  
11 public education, but it's the only part of the  
12 budget that has, you know, five-and-a-half  
13 percent increases, things like that, even during  
14 this economic downtime.

15 REVIEWER #1: I think that's about it.  
16 We have one minute and 20 seconds.

17 REVIEWER #4: I just have a very quick  
18 one. You are closing the achievement pilot, when did that  
19 start?

20 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER WENNING: That  
21 started two years ago, so it would have been in  
22 2008.

