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HISPANIC STUDENT DROPOUT FORUM

Friday
January 10, 1986
9:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Federal Building
1961 Stout Street
Room 239
Denver, Colorado 80294

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P R O C E E D I N G S 9:30 a.m.

1
2 MS. KURTZ: Ladies and gentlemen, the
3 meeting will come to order. This is a community forum
4 on the subject of the Hispanic dropout problem sponsored
5 by the Colorado Advisory Counsel to the U.S. Civil
6 Rights Commission.

7 We have sort of a combined program at
8 this point with a number of speakers who are scheduled
9 with specific times. And then if any speakers cancel,
10 and then for sure between 4:30 and 6:00 in the afternoon,
11 we will hear from other people who may have something
12 that they wish to say.

13 The purpose of this forum is to find
14 out the magnitude of the Hispanic dropout problem,
15 to discover its causes, its consequences, and its
16 cures, the three C's. Now the jurisdiction of the
17 Civil Rights Commission, and hence the jurisdiction
18 of this Advisory Committee is limited by the Civil
19 Rights Act that creates this. The basic things that
20 we can do as relates particularly to the subject at
21 hand, because there are some other matters, are to
22 investigate any complaints alleging that citizens
23 are being deprived of their rights, to investigate
24 any charges of lack of equal protection based on race,
25 color, religion, sex, age, handicap, or national origin,

1 or in the administration of justice, to evaluate the
2 laws and policies of the Federal Government with respect
3 to discrimination or denial of equal protection of
4 the laws on the same grounds, and finally to act as
5 a national clearing house for civil rights information;
6 that is, the national group may do that. We may do
7 for the state what the national group may do for the
8 nation.

9 Accordingly, one of the questions that
10 we are seeking information about is whether or not
11 there is discrimination involved in the differential
12 dropout rate among Hispanics. And that discrimination
13 has to be defined as relating to race, color, religion,
14 sex, age, handicap, or national origin.

15 I will go a little more into the format
16 of how we will conduct this meeting in a couple of
17 minutes. But I want to ask Bill Muldrow, who is the
18 Acting Regional Director of the U.S. Civil Rights
19 Commission, to add a little bit to the discussion
20 of how we legally can conduct the proceedings today.
21 Bill?

22 MR. MULDROW: Thank you, Maxine. I would
23 like to welcome all of you here and say how much we
24 appreciate your cooperation and your willingness to
25 come to provide us with information and participate

1 in other ways.

2 Maxine has indicated the basic function
3 of the Commission and the committee is to collect
4 information on the civil rights issues as it involves
5 matters within the jurisdiction of the Commission
6 involving discrimination and equal protection of the
7 laws. I would like to emphasize a couple of things
8 about this proceeding.

9 We are not an enforcement agency. We
10 are not here to receive allegations of criminal or
11 illegal activities; in fact, we're prohibited by law
12 from doing so except under certain conditions. If
13 you have allegations of that nature to make, you should
14 make them to the committee, a committee member individually
15 or to the committee in executive session so that we
16 can follow through and provide opportunity to investigate
17 more fully and give people a chance to respond to
18 such allegations.

19 We are interested in the information
20 that you have for us, and the information received
21 will be recorded so that we have an accurate transcription
22 of all that is said. If any of you have any objection
23 to having your presentation recorded, let us know
24 and we will refrain from doing so during that period.
25 But we hope that you would allow us to record it to

1 enable us to have an accurate record of it.

2 We will be receiving, as Maxine said,
3 also any written information, references to other
4 sources of information, reports, anything that you
5 would like to put into the record, and we will keep
6 the record open for a period of ten days so that you
7 will have time to do that.

8 I would just like to mention we would
9 appreciate it if all of you will record your attendance
10 here on the sign-up sheets at the back of the room
11 there. And if you wish to provide information or
12 speak in the public session which will begin at 4:30
13 this afternoon, there's a sheet there for you to sign
14 up for that, also, so that we can take you in the
15 order in which you sign up. At that time, you will
16 be allowed an abbreviated period for making a presentation.

17 I think that's all I have to say, Maxine.

18 MS. KURTZ: Thank you, Bill.

19 The way this has been structured is that
20 we invited certain organizations that we knew had
21 information that we needed for this investigation
22 to make formal presentations. We are under no illusions
23 that we know all of the people who are working in
24 this field. We simply structured this in its early
25 stages to get at least a minimum amount of information

1 so that we can start our work.

2 We have asked each speaker to give a
3 fifteen minute presentation, followed by a five minute
4 question period from the committee. I will have to
5 keep that time very strictly, because we have a very
6 crowded agenda.

7 I will also ask that when a speaker is
8 called, that that person will come up to the rostrum
9 that's in the middle of the aisle over there and state
10 their name, address and a telephone number where we
11 may contact that person for more follow-up information
12 if we find it desirable to do that in order to prepare
13 the report which we will have to make to the U.S. Civil
14 Rights Commission of the proceedings that we have
15 held here today.

16 Now I'd like to ask the members of the
17 Advisory Committee to introduce themselves. And we
18 are missing one member, Dr. Gwendolyn Thomas of
19 Metropolitan State College who had to be out of the
20 city today. The other eight members are all here.
21 And I'll ask, starting at that end, if the members
22 of the committee will please introduce themselves
23 to the audience.

24 MR. TREPANIER: My name is Al Trepanier.
25 I'm a Director of EEO Compliance for the Manville

1 Corporation.

2 MR. ATLER: I'm Larry Atler. I'm an
3 attorney and businessman.

4 MR. CISNEROS: My name is Gilbert Cisneros.
5 I work in the Community Relations Department at the
6 Adolph Coors Company.

7 MS. BERKOWITZ: Sandy Berkowitz. I'm
8 with the League of Women Voters.

9 MR. SLAYBAUGH: I'm Pete Slaybaugh.
10 Originally with Conoco, now one of the unemployed
11 that they refer to as retired.

12 MR. ELLIS: I'm Steven Ellis. I'm an
13 attorney.

14 MS. KURTZ: I'm Maxine Kurtz. I work
15 for the City and County of Denver as a Personnel Research
16 Officer, and I chair the committee.

17 I think unless there's anything else
18 that anyone wants to say, we can probably start now.

19 All right, our first speaker is going
20 to be Mr. Roy Brubacher of the Colorado Department
21 of Education.

22 MR. BRUBACHER: Madame Chair, members
23 of the committee, my name is Roy G. Brubacher, Assistant
24 Commissioner of Colorado Department of Education located
25 at 201 East Colfax, Denver, Colorado. Telephone number,

1 866-6678. I do have copies of my statement which
2 I would like to submit to the committee.

3 My purpose is to provide members of the
4 committee an overview of the dropout problem in Colorado.
5 My statement will include a description of the dropout
6 rates by ethnic group most recently reported by local
7 school districts. I will also point out the progress
8 Colorado public schools have made during the past
9 ten years.

10 To place in perspective, it is necessary
11 to review a number of indicators. The first indicator
12 that must be examined is the graduation rates. In
13 1983-84, 32,954 Colorado seniors received their high
14 school diplomas, reflecting a graduation rate of 80.5
15 percent. The graduation rate is the number of high
16 school graduates measured against the ninth grade
17 enrollment four years earlier. Within a state, the
18 graduation rate does not take into account the number
19 of students moving into or out of the state. The
20 national graduation rate is unaffected by student
21 mobility between states.

22 Highlights: Colorado graduation rates
23 showed a steady decline from 1973-74 to 1979-80, but
24 are now increasing. With the 1983-84 rates, 3.9 percent
25 percentage points higher than those in 1979-80.

1 The national graduation rates show a
2 similar pattern of decline from 1973-74 to 1980-81,
3 followed by an increase from 71.2 percent in 1981
4 to 72.6 percent in 1983.

5 Over the ten year period from 1973-74
6 to 1983-84, Colorado's graduation rates were consistently
7 higher than the national average by 3.8 to 7.9 percentage
8 points. I have included for your benefit some graphics
9 within the statement that you may refer to from time
10 to time.

11 The second indicator that must be reviewed
12 is the high school equivalency program. Colorado
13 residents who have not completed a high school program
14 are given an opportunity to earn a high school equivalency
15 certificate through the general educational development
16 testing program commonly known as the GED Program.
17 The GED certificate is often accepted in place of
18 a high school diploma and can be used to fulfill college
19 entrance prerequisites and employment requirements
20 in many cases. The GED examination consists of five
21 components: writing, mathematics, social studies,
22 science and reading skills.

23 Highlights: In 1984, 8,877 people were
24 tested, and 6,385 certificates were issued from Colorado.
25 Forty percent, or 2,554 of the successful test takers

1 were 17- to 19-years old.

2 Between 1974 and 1980, there was a 59
3 percent increase in the number of people taking the
4 test in Colorado, from a low of 7,378 in 1974 to a
5 high of 11,752 in 1980. Since 1980, the number of
6 test takers has declined steadily. National test-taking
7 patterns are similar, increasing through 1980 and
8 declining thereafter.

9 The percent of test takers who passed
10 the GED and received certificates increased from 66
11 percent in 1974 to 72 percent in 1984.

12 Finally, it is necessary to review student
13 dropout rates. Dropouts are students who leave school
14 or terminate their education prior to their normal
15 graduation date. Some of these students may return
16 to school at a later date, and in some cases, in many
17 cases in other states. Others may elect to earn to
18 their High School Equivalency Certificate through
19 the General Education Development Program. The dropout
20 rate is the percent of student membership who leave
21 school in a single year.

22 Highlights: In 1983-84, 6.3 percent
23 of the students in grades 10 through 12 dropped out
24 of school. The dropout rate was highest for Hispanic
25 students (11.8 percent), and American Indian/Native

1 Alaskan students (11.1 percent), followed by Asian/Pacific
2 Islanders (7.3 percent), Black students (6.8 percent),
3 and White students (5.3 percent).

4 Colorado statewide dropout rates increased
5 from 1974-75 through 1977-78, and have declined steadily
6 since, from a high of 9.8 percent in 1977-78 to 6.3
7 percent in 1983-84. The decline occurred for all
8 ethnic racial groups in the state.

9 In 1983-84, the dropout rate was highest
10 in districts located in outlying cities. There was
11 7.9 percent. And in rural mountainous districts,
12 7 percent. It was lowest in rural agricultural districts,
13 3.7 percent. And in urban districts, 6 percent.

14 During the last ten years, the greatest
15 decline in dropout rates occurred in urban districts
16 whose rates declined from 8.7 percent to 6 percent,
17 and districts in outlying cities whose rates dropped
18 from 10.7 percent to 7.9 percent.

19 To summarize the dropout rates, if we
20 look at the American Indian/Native Alaskan, in 1974-75
21 school year, we were experiencing a 23.1 percent dropout
22 rate. By 1983-84 school year, that rate had been
23 reduced to 11.1.

24 The Asian/Pacific Islander in 1974-75
25 was dropping out at the rate of 11.4. By 1983-84,

1 that percentage was reduced to 7.3.

2 Black students in 1974-75, the dropout
3 rate was 11.2. In 1983-84, the dropout rate was 6.8.

4 Hispanic students in 1974-75, the dropout
5 rate was 14.1 percent. In 1983-84, it was 11.8 percent.

6 White students in 1974-75, the dropout
7 rate was 7.5. In 1983-84, it was 5.3.

8 State totals then in 1974-75 was 8.5
9 percent. In 1983-84, 6.3 percent.

10 Looking at districts in different settings,
11 the rural agricultural districts in 1974-75, the dropout
12 rate was 5.6. By 1983-84, it was 3.7

13 Rural mountain districts, we experienced
14 an increase in the dropout rate over the ten-year
15 period. The dropout rate changed from 1974-75 to
16 6.9 to 7 percent in 1983-84.

17 Outlying cities reduced from 10.7 to
18 7.9.

19 Suburban from 7.5 to 6.6.

20 Urban from 8.7 to 6 percent.

21 I'm sure you've noticed I have not included
22 the data for the 1984-85 school year in my statement.
23 The data for the previous year is reported in the
24 fall of the year. During November, the Department
25 moved to a newly renovated building, and as you can

1 well imagine, such a move disrupts the flow of work.
2 I have examined some of the 1984-85 information and
3 believe the final analysis will reflect a continuation
4 of the reduction of the dropout rates.

5 It is important at this time that I describe
6 the combined effort directed toward the reduction
7 of the dropout rates that has been developed in Colorado
8 during the past three years. Working collectively
9 with 177 school districts, colleges and universities,
10 the Colorado Department of Labor, the Governor's Job
11 Training Office, the Colorado Association of Commerce
12 and Industry, and the Colorado Business/Education
13 Steering Committee, a pyramid of dropout programs
14 have been set in place.

15 The pyramid of programs is designed to
16 strengthen the prevention efforts at the elementary
17 level, the retention efforts at the middle school
18 level, and the recovery and transition from school
19 to work or post secondary school at the high school
20 level.

21 When one examines the dropout problem,
22 it becomes apparent that no single factor can be identified
23 as a major contributor to the increase or decrease
24 of the dropout rate. Research indicates economic
25 status, housing, health care, emphasis placed on the

1 value of education by parents, family stability, school
2 climate and school sensitivity are all major contributors
3 to the dropout problem. Too many times the dropout
4 effort is found to concentrate on one age group, mostly
5 high school students. It is our belief the effort
6 should be a K-12 effort and should start early with
7 a prevention program and conclude with a transition
8 thrust.

9 Mr. Doug Johnson, Director of the Career
10 Development/Equity Unit of the Colorado Department
11 of Education, who is scheduled to speak immediately
12 following my statement, will be describing some of
13 the activities designed to address dropout prevention,
14 dropout retention, and dropout recovery, and transition
15 that are actively being pursued in the state at this
16 time.

17 The Department is appreciative of this
18 opportunity to appear before this Commission. It
19 is hoped that the information you receive during this
20 forum will lead to the formation of policy that will
21 enhance addressing the total problem on a long range
22 basis and will not lead to quick-fix efforts that
23 have little or no lasting effect. Thank you.

24 MS. KURTZ: Thank you, Mr. Brubacher.

25 Are there any questions from the Committee?

1 MR. MULDROW: Mr. Brubacher, among the
2 possible causes or reasons for the dropout rate, you
3 didn't mention anything about discrimination or lack
4 of equal opportunity for Hispanic students. Do you
5 consider that to be one of the possible factors also?

6 MR. BRUBACHER: At this point, no. I
7 think the access is there. I think there needs to
8 be some additional kind of assistance in many communities
9 for students that are involved or have a tendency
10 to drop out. But I think the access is there, the
11 programs are there, the state has made an effort and
12 many school districts are making a concentrated effort
13 to develop dropout or retention programs throughout
14 their system.

15 MR. MULDROW: Do you think the language
16 problems or difficulties might be one factor?

17 MR. BRUBACHER: In some cases, but not
18 in a great many cases. But I think that's also true
19 with the Asian American and so forth.

20 MR. CISNEROS: I have a question. Mr.
21 Brubacher, on page four of your statement you state
22 that the dropout rate was highest for Hispanic students,
23 and it really averages out to about 11.8 percent per
24 annum, correct?

25 MR. BRUBACHER: Yes.

1 MR. CISNEROS: If you multiply that by
2 four times, you basically -- let's see if I'm correct,
3 you get a percentage of about 47 percent for a statewide
4 average of Hispanic dropouts, correct?

5 MR. BRUBACHER: That's correct. The
6 figures here are annual rates, so you would multiply
7 them --

8 MR. CISNEROS: So basically we're --
9 for every ten Hispanic students who start school annually,
10 four or five drop out?

11 MR. BRUBACHER: Yes.

12 MR. CISNEROS: Okay.

13 MR. BRUBACHER: You will notice the second
14 thing would be true with the American Indian/Native
15 Alaskan or you know, the Black students or the White
16 students. So you would multiply that by four.

17 MR. CISNEROS: Thank you.

18 MS. KURTZ: Any other questions?

19 Thank you very much, Mr. Brubacher.

20 MR. BRUBACHER: Thank you.

21 MS. KURTZ: I want to take note of the
22 fact that we have a number of young people here, and
23 I want to assure you that you are indeed welcome to
24 listen to the proceedings here today.

25 Since we've increased the audience rather

1 significantly since we started, I will mention the
2 fact that we have a general sign-up sheet in the back
3 by the folding doors there. And we also will have
4 an open period for discussion by the people who are
5 not on the schedule between 4:30 and 6:00 this afternoon.
6 So that if anyone else wishes to speak to this group,
7 we will certainly entertain your views.

8 Mr. Doug Johnson?

9 MR. JOHNSON: Madame Chair, members of
10 the Commission, my name is Douglas Johnson. I'm a
11 Director with the Colorado Department of Education
12 located at 201 East Colfax in Denver. Telephone number
13 is 866-6680.

14 I would like to submit to the Commission
15 copies of my prepared statements, and I would like
16 if possible to have you have a copy of them because
17 there's a page on the back I'd like you to reference
18 to as I speak.

19 As Mr. Brubacher stated in his presentation,
20 my purpose is to give the Committee some examples
21 of efforts that are taking place in Colorado. And
22 I wish to state that these examples are just a smattering
23 of what is happening in the state of Colorado at the
24 local level with school districts as they address
25 the dropout problem.

1 The efforts in Colorado through the Title
2 IV programs and the Colorado Education Act of 1985
3 have been directed at supporting and assisting local
4 educational agencies in developing programs that address
5 the dropout issue. Each Colorado community must identify
6 its dropout problem, prioritize it and allocate resources
7 of people and dollars to develop solutions. The state
8 role has been to assist in these efforts. School
9 districts and the state effort have been directed
10 to the total K-12 spectrum. Recently, the effort
11 has also been looking at the preschool time period
12 and what can be done to assist parents in helping
13 to prepare for school. The attached pyramid on the
14 back of your copy will give the Commission of the
15 overview of the approach the Department of Education
16 is utilizing in addressing the dropout issue. It
17 is also the pyramid that Mr. Brubacher was referring
18 to in his presentation.

19 I would like to share with the Commission
20 some examples of school district programs supported
21 by the Department that are addressing the dropout
22 issue. You will note that they demonstrate the pyramid
23 approach of dealing with the preventative early in
24 the student's life, as well as the retrieval efforts
25 of those who have dropped out of school.

1 Preschool: Pueblo 60. This district
2 is being supported by the Department through the Education
3 Act of 1985, referred to as 2 plus 2. In this model,
4 a "Home School Liaison Team" made up of staff and
5 parents working with "high risk" families and children.
6 These teams are trained in early childhood development
7 and the development of parenting skills. This model
8 also combines training for staff in identifying "high
9 risk" children and working with special needs.

10 The 2 plus 2, or 1985 Educational Act
11 has a component that is addressing the dropouts.
12 This effort is targeting the preventative side of
13 the dropout issue. All of the models being developed
14 this year are dealing with identifying "high risk"
15 youth, developing appropriate activities, and dealing
16 with teacher training. In some of the models, home
17 school liaisons are being utilized. Most are K-6
18 efforts, with two being K-12, one being a preschool
19 through 6. We look forward to the results of these
20 models, and you'll note that Dave Smith is the contact
21 person. And I can provide Dave's address or telephone
22 number if that is something that you wish.

23 The elementary school area has already
24 stated many of the efforts are a total K-12, and each
25 of the models tie together the efforts from level

1 to level. The following are example of K-6 activities.
2 As you will note, the key to many of the models is
3 a strong outreach program to the home and to the child.

4 In Rocky Ford, this K-6 model is again
5 being jointly developed with the 2 plus 2 efforts
6 of the Department. This effort centers on a home
7 school liaison person that will work with 50 families
8 of "high risk" children. This person also will work
9 with the staff as an aide with the identified children.
10 Again, Dave Smith is the contact person for that.

11 With the Aurora Public Schools, in 1985
12 a summer program for elementary level students, grade
13 1 through 5, called "We Care". A six-week program
14 to provide basic skills and multi-cultural experiences,
15 and the individual attention that provides for a secure
16 base for a continued growth and sincere liking for
17 school life. Thirty one students from four elementary
18 schools participated in this model project. All achieved
19 academic and personal growth. Ms. Cleo Breeze is
20 the contact person there.

21 The Student Analysis System is something
22 we wanted to share with you. And this system was
23 developed by Dr. Fred Holmes, and is a computer-based
24 process that can predict the probability of a student
25 dropping out if other factors don't change. These

1 are designed for the use in the elementary grades
2 and have been tested from third grade up. Eighteen
3 school districts have trained staff in the use of
4 this process and are using the results to help change
5 the course of students.

6 In the middle school/high school during
7 the 1984-85 year, eight projects were supported as
8 successful models. And again, I would like to share
9 just a couple of these with you.

10 In Colorado Springs, a project there
11 which is "Alternatives for Dropouts". This program
12 represents a four-year effort to reduce the dropout
13 rate. Through this outreach program, they were able
14 to retrieve students who have dropped out of school
15 to the degree that their 8.1 percent dropout rate
16 for 1982-83 was reduced to 1.9 percent, and in 1983-84,
17 their dropout rate of 8.4 percent to 2.4 percent.

18 As many studies on dropouts have pointed
19 out, the need for a significant person who cares has
20 been the key to the success of this program which
21 has a strong outreach component. Mr. Carlos Abevta
22 is the supervisor and contact person for that program.

23 At West High School in Denver, the project
24 to keep students in school and to encourage discontinuers
25 to renew their efforts to complete educational programs

1 through high school or equivalency levels. This project
2 centered on outreach efforts to homes, to business,
3 and in the school. 103 students were identified as
4 part of this program; 52 were still in school, 51
5 had left the formal classroom setting. The results
6 of the program indicate that those still in school
7 will remain. Those that were out of school were
8 participating in alternative programs offered by the
9 Denver Public Schools.

10 At Montbello High School, this ongoing
11 program has three components: an intensive
12 parent-tutor-student tutorial program, second, a reward
13 workshop held off of the school campus in areas of
14 high interest to students, and three, the "Warrior
15 Program" which provides incentive for students to
16 maintain good grades, to attend school regularly,
17 and to conduct themselves in a socially acceptable
18 manner. 86 students have been served through the
19 tutorial program, and the "Warrior Program" during
20 one semester showed a 28 percent increase in the students
21 having a 2.0 or above grade point. Truancies decreased
22 by 16 percent. Disciplinary problems decreased by
23 14 percent.

24 As with many of the models, the success
25 seems to be centered on a strong outreach program

1 involving parents and staff, as well as the leadership
2 with commitment coming from the administrators. Mr. John
3 Bowie, who is the principal there, is the contact
4 person.

5 In the area of retrieval, this area has
6 probably received the greatest attention over the
7 last few years. In Colorado, joint efforts have been
8 established to support local communities in bringing
9 individuals into an educational program of some type.
10 Departments of Labor, Social Services, institutions
11 as well as agencies such as the State Board for Community
12 Colleges and Vocational Education and the Governor's
13 Job Training Office have worked together with the
14 Department of Education in these joint efforts. These
15 model and programs listed in the attached pyramid,
16 which is on the back page, represent many of these
17 joint efforts.

18 Two programs I would like to briefly
19 note are the Employability Skills Process and the
20 Second Chance Program. In the Employability Skills
21 Process, this is a process that is currently being
22 used in 30 communities that focus the preparation
23 of all students towards those skills that are needed
24 for employment. These skills are on the total spectrum
25 from academic to career preparation skills. This

1 process also assists the students in seeing the reason
2 for staying in school. The student leaves school
3 with a diploma and an employment portfolio showing
4 others what their positive employability skills are.

5 The Second Chance effort, which came
6 out of last year's legislation, is another effort
7 in the Second Chance program that is designed to bring
8 individuals back into the educational stream. It
9 is directed to those who have dropped out of school
10 who are between the ages of 16 and 21. Most of these
11 individuals will be involved with alternative educational
12 programs. Currently, we have six Second Chance centers
13 being established in the state.

14 As stated in the beginning, our focus
15 at the state with the current level of support is
16 to assist at the local level in their development
17 of a program to address dropouts. From those who
18 have participated, the results of their efforts confirm
19 our direction in this effort.

20 Thank you for this opportunity to share
21 this information with you.

22 MS. KURTZ: Thank you, Mr. Johnson.

23 Any questions from the Committee?

24 MR. ATLER: Very informative, and I reiterate
25 the thank you.

1 Several questions. Number one, we would
2 surely like to know how to contact the contact people
3 that you recited in here, and also in some of the
4 programs the contact person is not noted. And that
5 would be helpful, also.

6 Number two, in particular Dr. Fred Holmes
7 in the computer program, it would be helpful to us
8 if we -- and maybe we should contact him directly
9 through you, but it would be interesting to find out
10 what the assumptions are on the computer program in
11 order to facilitate our understanding what the criteria
12 or the characteristics are of the potential dropout
13 student.

14 Three, to what extent are Federal funds
15 being channeled through the state and helping to finance
16 these programs? Is it all state financed, or are
17 there some Federal funds being involved?

18 MR. DOUGLAS: There are some Federal
19 funds being involved.

20 In terms of your first question, I would
21 be glad to provide the contact people and those phone
22 numbers. Most of them are -- for some of those programs
23 are in the Department or are part of the committee
24 that we work with.

25 In terms of Dr. Fred Holmes, Fred just

1 retired last week, but he is certainly around and
2 available to help. This was a system that he did
3 develop in terms of the student analysis system that
4 is based upon seven criteria that run the range from
5 academic results that the student is having in terms
6 of testing and in terms of school attendance, in terms
7 of problems that they might be having. There's a
8 whole sequence of factors that go into this formula
9 that gives -- again, and I want to reiterate, that
10 it's simply an indication that if nothing changes
11 in that person's life, that there is a probability
12 that they will. But it is a good system.

13 And in reference again to the financial
14 part of this, the last few years we've been able to
15 utilize some Federal funds along with state funds
16 in supporting some of these programs. Not with a
17 lot of dollars, but enough to help them get going
18 and to try some of these models.

19 MR. CISNEROS: I just basically have
20 a comment. I've been personally following the Hispanic
21 dropout rate since about 1970. And I don't really
22 see much success. I think that the last figures I've
23 seen in the early '70's to the tune of about 52 percent
24 Hispanic dropout rate. You're telling me the program
25 is successful now with about a 47 percent. Just again,

1 just a general comment, that doesn't seem like it's
2 real successful to me. Where -- you know, it seems
3 like we spent just tons and tons -- tens of millions
4 of dollars on both Federal and state monies to cure
5 the problem, and it doesn't seem like it's gone away.
6 I'd venture to say that in 1996 we'll come back and
7 maybe the dropout rate will be at 45 percent. It
8 just doesn't seem to be a real good use of Federal
9 tax monies to really cure the problem.

10 That's just a general comment. I don't
11 expect a response.

12 MR. SLAYBAUGH: There is apparently a
13 very dramatic turnaround if you just look at the charts
14 that Mr. Brubacher presented and in what you've been
15 talking about. In 1978, the dropout rate for almost
16 all of the students turned around and began to decline.
17 Is there any reason that you've seen, any reason for
18 that turnaround at that point in time? The dropout
19 rate was increasing up until then, and then it --
20 within one school year it turned around rather
21 dramatically.

22 MR. JOHNSON: In terms of the figures
23 that that chart represents, looking again at grades
24 10, 11, and 12, I think in terms of efforts at that
25 level to try to keep younger students in school because

1 of the fact that the dropout question itself, or the
2 issue itself in my own opinion started to become at
3 that time an issue that needed to be addressed.

4 The difference between before that period
5 of time was that I don't believe the people looked
6 at it as something that needed to be dealt with.
7 One of the positive things that I see happening now
8 that might impact what you were talking about is in
9 reference to the fact that it seems that finally the
10 issue of young people dropping out of school and
11 non-completing seems to be drawing the attention that
12 it needs to be in order for us to be able to accomplish
13 something, more than what we have accomplished in
14 terms of developing models and trying to get some
15 things going that work. And hopefully, those statistics
16 which again as many people have felt and stated before,
17 that the total issue, K-12 of what happens to young
18 people, not just necessarily 10, 11, and 12, what
19 happens to them, but the total issue has to be addressed
20 to see if we're really making an impact on that.
21 And I think we will.

22 In terms of some of these models, when
23 we talk about success, there have been models that
24 have been primarily outreach programs that have pulled
25 young people back in that have shown some success.

1 And by that, I mean that they have pulled back in
2 75 to 80 percent of the young people that they've
3 gone after. But they're only models. They're just
4 starting.

5 MR. CISNEROS: Do you believe, Mr. Johnson,
6 that the lack of competition for the public school
7 system has attributed to the fact of a high dropout
8 rate?

9 MR. JOHNSON: Lack of competition?

10 MR. CISNEROS: Yes. Basically the whole
11 issue of the voucher system; that if it were implemented,
12 that Hispanic students would have a better opportunity
13 to choose their own schools and go to those schools?

14 MR. JOHNSON: No, sir. I don't believe
15 that.

16 MR. ATLER: Out of these programs, was
17 there any statistical data and analysis that would
18 reflect the efficacy of the programs as it relates
19 specifically to the Chicano dropout issue?

20 MR. JOHNSON: No. Only in terms of possibly
21 looking at those who have a high Hispanic population,
22 or high Hispanic dropout in terms of relationship
23 of how successful it was there. But nothing as an
24 overall statistic, no.

25 MR. TREPANIER: Mr. Johnson, in your

1 Second Chance Program, this would appear to me to
2 be a very important area to give the students a second
3 chance. Do you have any results of what has happened
4 in that area?

5 MR. JOHNSON: Not yet. That legislation
6 went into effect during the last session, and the
7 law itself is not to enact it until July 1 of this
8 year, 1986. We have, though, started a process of
9 it, and we have one school that is open at this particular
10 time, or one center, and that's Emily Griffith Opportunity
11 School here in Denver which has about 25 students
12 enrolled in that. And we also have six other centers
13 pending right now as they pull together their plans
14 and get into operation. They plan to open before
15 the actual July 1 date.

16 MR. TREPANIER: At this point in time,
17 do you feel there's enough emphasis to get the students
18 involved?

19 MR. JOHNSON: That remains to be seen.
20 There's a great deal of work going on in looking at
21 how do we market it, publish it, get the word out
22 to the young people, especially when you're looking
23 at young people between the ages of 16 and 21. You
24 have a whole variety of folks in various conditions,
25 working, family, the whole nine yards that has to

1 be addressed.

2 But again, the key to all of those centers,
3 as with a lot of these programs, and I think the research
4 supports this, is that you have to have a strong outreach
5 program to go out and make contact people to people
6 to get those folks back in. The interest that we've
7 had around the state and the enthusiasm of those who
8 are starting to pull theirs together has been very
9 positive, and we're looking forward to July.

10 MS. KURTZ: I'm going to have to call
11 a stop at this point because of our schedule.

12 MR. JOHNSON: I appreciate it. Thank
13 you.

14 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much, sir.

15 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you.

16 MS. KURTZ: The next speaker is Dr. Charles
17 Branch of Metropolitan State College.

18 DR. BRANCH: Ms. Kurtz, members of the
19 Regional Civil Rights Commission Advisory Committee,
20 first I want to express my appreciation to you for
21 providing me the opportunity to share some ideas today.
22 I especially want to thank you for conducting this
23 forum on the Hispanic dropout problem. It indicates
24 that there is an awareness of and a concern about
25 what I believe to be one of the most costly, devastating

1 problems in our society.

2 Mr. Brubacher has provided you with
3 statistical data regarding Colorado and the seriousness
4 of the problem. And you will hear more data before
5 the day is over, I am sure. I'm not going to use
6 our limited time together to repeat those statistics;
7 however, it should be noted that we in Colorado have
8 less of a problem than other major urban areas, including
9 Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York. I attribute that
10 fact mainly to the awareness and efforts of the State
11 Department of Education, Denver Public School System,
12 the higher employment and income level among Colorado
13 Hispanics.

14 Dropouts are not just an educational
15 problem. It is a youth problem, a youth employment
16 or unemployment problem, a social problem, an economic
17 problem, and an educational problem. For instance,
18 50 percent of all crimes committed are by youth under
19 21 today. Drug abuses are increasing at earlier ages
20 among youth. There are 650,000 unmarried teenage
21 pregnancies annually. And there's an increasing number
22 of homicides and suicides committed by youth. The
23 divorce rate continues to rise, and the number of
24 people living below the poverty level continues to
25 increase.

1 The dropout problem is not a new problem.
2 According to Michael Sheridan of Washington University
3 in St. Louis, Missouri, the dropout rate has not fallen
4 since 1965, and is raising in a significant rate in
5 the large urban areas. In California, for example,
6 the rate almost doubled between 1967 and 1976.

7 The reasons youth give for dropping out
8 of school has changed very little over the past 20
9 years; many females cite pregnancy and marriage.
10 Males are more likely to say they do not like school.
11 Both males and females often cite economic reasons,
12 and dropout rates are highest for children from single
13 parent and low income families, according to Sheridan.

14 We have had the ability to identify potential
15 dropouts for many years. The descriptor of a potential
16 dropout is a minority male scoring poorly on the fourth,
17 seventh, and ninth grade level achievement test who
18 have poor grades and come from a single parent family
19 with a low income. He sees himself as a failure,
20 and dislikes school.

21 This definition also applies to truant
22 and disruptive students. Twenty five years ago in
23 a report titled, "The Unfinished Education" published
24 by the United States Commission on Civil Rights, it
25 was found, "That students in the southwest, Mexican

1 Americans, Blacks, American Indians do not obtain
2 the benefits of public education at a rate equal to
3 that of their Anglo classmates. This is true regardless
4 of the measure of school achievement used. Without
5 exception, minority students achieve at a lower rate
6 than Anglos. Their school holding power is lower.
7 Their reading achievement is poor. Their repetition
8 of grades is more frequent. Their over-agedness is
9 more prevalent, and they participate in extracurricular
10 activities to a lesser degrees than their Anglo
11 counterparts."

12 Now the southwest study also found that
13 Colorado was doing a better job then than the other
14 four southwest states, as it is today. For years,
15 many school systems throughout the nation have attempted
16 to lower the dropout rate by increasing and implementing
17 more and more stringent truancy rules, creating
18 intervention centers and in-school suspension rooms,
19 increasing the amount of remediation available to
20 students, systems have had special programs for unwed
21 parents, Head Start, and follow-through programs.
22 They have created alternative schools, lowered
23 student/teacher ratios and spent millions on bilingual
24 education programs. Yet the dropout rate nationally
25 continues to grow.

1 Many of these attempts have contributed
2 to lowering the dropout rate,^@as they have in Colorado.
3 But too few of them have affected enough people.
4 That should not surprise any of us given that schools
5 are only one of many contributing factors to the complex
6 problem. Schools have done more than any other agency
7 in attempting to lower the dropout rate. Too often
8 the school attempts have treated the problem in isolation
9 within the school rather than trying to affect the
10 entire school program and organization to lower the
11 dropout rate.

12 Hopefully, the results of this committee's
13 work and the Civil Rights Commission will become the
14 catalyst for bringing about dynamic change in not
15 only the formal school building, teacher training
16 programs and the profession of teaching, but in the
17 social, economic and family areas which also contribute
18 to the problem. While the work done by the Civil
19 Rights Commission in 1971 evidently had little impact
20 on the efforts to lower the dropout rate, I'm very
21 positive that your efforts will have more than an
22 impact due to the renewed interest in education and
23 equity, the increased interest in social needs, and
24 the increased interest in improving the quality of
25 life in America for everyone.

1 The major reason that I believe your
2 work will have an impact is the realization of the
3 majority of citizens now that the problem is way too
4 costly to let it continue. Given my limited time,
5 my recommendations for significantly lowering the
6 dropout rate is going to deal mainly with what K-12
7 schools, teacher education programs, and the teaching
8 profession need to do. I will also give a few examples
9 of activities that involve governmental agencies,
10 businesses, community groups, and parents.

11 I recommend that the fourteen teacher
12 training institutions in the state of Colorado make
13 a concerted effort to recruit Hispanic population
14 and people into the teaching profession.

15 I recommend that private and public funds
16 for scholarships for these outstanding students be
17 increased.

18 I recommend that Hispanic teacher education
19 faculty members be hired at a higher rate than currently
20 being done.

21 I recommend that Head Start teacher education
22 programs be started for high school, juniors and seniors
23 while in high school.

24 I recommend that we require Spanish for
25 all teacher education majors. That teacher education

1 programs increase the requirements for human relation
2 skills, and that professional educators improve their
3 human relation skills, especially with minority students.

4 Teacher trainees and professionals must
5 increase understanding of and respect for cultural
6 diversity. Teacher training institutions must require
7 more real world experiences in culturally diverse
8 urban classrooms.

9 Teacher trainees and professionals must
10 increase their skills in identifying potential dropouts
11 and what to do about it after they've been identified.
12 And teacher trainees and professionals must learn
13 how to more effectively work with all parents, but
14 in particular, minority parents.

15 To significantly lower the dropout rate
16 in public schools, I recommend that K-12 schools strive
17 towards creating what I call a family model school
18 rather than the too prevalent factory model school.
19 A factory model school attempts to take all of the
20 many fine, diverse, unique children entering the school
21 and mold them into a uniform product, whereas the
22 family model school, like a good family, is characterized
23 by warmth, cooperative spirit, and high positive
24 expectations for everyone. The family model school
25 would significantly contribute to improving the quality

1 of life within the school for all of the students.

2 Schools should make the changes necessary
3 to create a psychological environment where every
4 student can become able, responsible, and valued.
5 Characteristics of such a family school include a
6 psychological climate which is open, trusting, and
7 threat-free. An educational program designed to really
8 meet the needs of these students. It involves everybody
9 affected by a decision in the decision-making process,
10 including parents and the students, and for the faculty
11 that is committed to and capable of communicating
12 to and viewing students as able, responsible, and
13 valuable.

14 While it takes commitment, time, and
15 effort to create such a school, it is possible. It
16 took us four years in Indiana to create such a school,
17 and we're currently working on such a school at the
18 Greenlee Metro Laboratory School, which is a collaborative
19 effort between Denver Public Schools and Metropolitan
20 State College.

21 In addition, I believe that while schools
22 have the major responsibility for educating youngsters,
23 they should develop positive relationships with parents
24 so that the parents can feel comfortable in becoming
25 involved with the schools. And schools should conduct

1 many and varied parent education activities in such
2 needed areas as English as a second language, career
3 development, and sex education for younger students.
4 Schools should also make it possible for teachers
5 to visit the homes of the children who they teach.

6 At the same time, I think it is imperative
7 that youth service programs be established in the
8 Denver area like the California Conservation Corps
9 or Canada's National Youth Service Program. Business
10 and labor can help start such programs and provide
11 expertise during their operation and can integrate
12 them with employment needs in the community. School
13 business partnerships, which Colorado is already doing
14 in a limited way, should be established to involve
15 training youth while they are still in school. Programs
16 should be developed for urban youth to provide
17 opportunities for establishing and running their own
18 enterprises, not unlike Junior Achievement in the
19 rural areas. Business and civic groups, the Chamber
20 of Commerce and private industry could assist these
21 endeavors. And study programs need to be increased
22 that are available for the potential dropout.

23 In short, I believe that education is
24 everyone's business. If education is not working
25 for the Hispanic youth, then it becomes imperative

1 for schools, governmental agencies, community groups,
2 businesses, industries and parents to work together
3 cooperatively to make it work for all youth in America.
4 Thank you.

5 MS. KURTZ: Thank you, Dr. Branch.

6 Any questions?

7 MR. TREPANIER: Dr. Branch, this Indiana
8 program that you said took four years to develop,
9 this family modeling school, what have been the results?

10 DR. BRANCH: We started developing that
11 school in 1974. In '78, I was offered the deanship
12 of Metro State, so I can't give you an update on where
13 they are at this point in time. I'm sorry, I can't.

14 MR. TREPANIER: What was the involvement
15 in the teacher training and the parent program tied
16 in with that school?

17 DR. BRANCH: Well, it was massive from
18 the standpoint that we had one objective for that
19 school, and that was that a graduate would be a competent
20 learner, producer and citizen, social being, and
21 aesthetically. And everything else fell under that.
22 So the activities and decision making -- for instance,
23 as principal of that school, I had a parent advisory
24 counsel, I had a student advisory counsel, community
25 advisory counsel, presidents of banks, two different

1 banks were on it. So we attempted to really build
2 a community school serving all needs of the community
3 regardless of the age or the need.

4 Okay, I didn't answer it specifically.
5 I could give you lots of examples.

6 MR. ATLER: That's a good answer. Let
7 me ask one more question. Was your ultimate goal
8 to get the student to go on to higher education or
9 go off to a blue collar job, or --

10 DR. BRANCH: Our ultimate goal was to
11 meet the unique individual needs of every student
12 in that school to prepare that student to become whatever
13 he or she chose to become. As it turns out, probably
14 80 percent of the students ended up going on to college,
15 and many of those were from low socioeconomic home
16 environments who were in that 80 percent, I might
17 add.

18 MR. ATLER: How big of a school was that?

19 DR. BRANCH: We had 751 students. And
20 55 regular, full-time faculty members. But we utilized
21 the teacher trainees from Ball State University in
22 the process, as well as 200 RSVP retired citizens.

23 MS. BERKOWITZ: Dr. Branch, what are
24 some of the things you're doing at Greenlee regarding
25 staff development in terms of human relations and

1 that sort of thing?

2 DR. BRANCH: In 1982, then Superintendent
3 Brezinsky and I presented to the Denver Public School
4 Board for formal approval the collaboration between
5 the two institutions. When we started, all past scores
6 were not very high. Within one year, they went
7 significantly higher and continued to rise daily.
8 And there are 61 percent Hispanic youngsters in the
9 early childhood third grade school.

10 I could give you all kinds of examples.
11 The major one was that the first thing we did to plan
12 that school was to create a laboratory school advisory
13 counsel which was made up of teachers from my faculty
14 at the college, faculty members at Greenlee, and parents.
15 And everything else seemed to flow out of that. After
16 everyone began trusting one another, then it started
17 happening. And of course, our goal was to enrich
18 the youngster's lives and education enrolled in the
19 lab school, most of them from the west side community,
20 to do a better job of training teachers in culturally
21 diverse settings.

22 I think that's what you're speaking of,
23 because the human relations, the valuing, the giving
24 kids the opportunity to become somebody. School destroy,
25 parents destroy self-concepts of young people very

1 early in their lives. And that's why I'm so elated
2 to see what 2 plus 2 is doing. They're saying the
3 problem didn't start at the freshman year in high
4 school, all right? We think it starts before the
5 child ever begins school. And what we've got to do
6 is work together to solve all of those problems.

7 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much, Dr. Branch.

8 DR. BRANCH: Thank you very much.

9 MS. KURTZ: I think I'm just going to
10 take a two-minute break here for people to just stand
11 up. Sitting gets awfully long after awhile. So I'll
12 start in two minutes.

13 (Short break off the record.)

14 MS. KURTZ: Our next speaker is Dr. Frank
15 Lucero of the University of Northern Colorado. Dr. Lucero?

16 DR. LUCERO: Good morning. I am Frank
17 Lucero, the Director of the Hispanic Cultural Center
18 at the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley.
19 I also want to commend the Justice Department for
20 beginning this study.

21 The Hispanic student dropout problem
22 is massive. While the Colorado Department of Education
23 reported nearly a 12 percent Hispanic student dropout
24 rate in school year 1984-85, the National Education
25 Association has released findings indicating nearly

1 a 25 percent Hispanic student dropout rate in Colorado
2 for the same school year. The problem is further
3 intensified when one notes that the Colorado Department
4 of Education rates are given for one school year only,
5 and that freshman are not accounted for in the data.

6 Research has disclosed a number of causes
7 for dropping out of school. Primary among the causes
8 are academic difficulties, employment, pregnancy and
9 early marriage, problems with authority figures, cultural
10 conflicts which stem from the home environment, and
11 educators having neither the skills nor the cultural
12 appreciation to assist students in overcoming these
13 conflicts. These all decrease the possibility for
14 the potential dropout to feel good about the school
15 situation, and show themselves through such data as
16 increased absences, grade retention, low grades, low
17 test scores, decreased participation in school activities,
18 increased school disruption, substance abuse, and
19 few friends at school, including little interaction
20 between students and school personnel.

21 The consequences of the problem are both
22 local and national, and express themselves in a loss
23 of human capital and in increase of personal dependence
24 on the society for health and welfare services. There
25 is also data available which shows that students who

1 drop out of school have increased rates of crime,
2 as well as increased rates of substance abuse.

3 Furthermore, what happens to people who
4 do not reach their personal life goals and never
5 self-actualize? In addressing possible solutions
6 to the problem, I will speak to three major areas
7 necessitating change. First is the area of school
8 finance; while there are no easy or cheap roads to
9 educational excellence, all children are capable of
10 success in school. However, it must be understood
11 that education for students who are socially, economically
12 or culturally different requires the same dollar investment
13 that education for the average and upper-class student
14 requires. In fact, often times because of early learning
15 deficits, some children need additional help throughout
16 their school experience to successfully compete with
17 their more advantage peers.

18 The Colorado School Finance Act does
19 not allow for this. In fact, as time has passed since
20 its first inception, the discrepancy between the average
21 dollar spent on students in poorer districts and those
22 in more wealthy districts has increased.

23 The second major point to be addressed
24 is the learning situation. It has been well documented,
25 in industrial as well as educational research, that

1 expectancy as a belief or prediction of success or
2 failure has a real effect on how well people do in
3 their situation. Judgments of appropriate school
4 behavior on the part of both teachers and administrators
5 are strongly influenced by the values of the dominant
6 culture. In America today, minority students constitute
7 about 25 percent of the school population, and about
8 40 percent of all students suspended and expelled
9 from schools. In many schools, the operating assumption
10 is that different backgrounds and languages constitute
11 deficits to be corrected, rather than strengths upon
12 which to build.

13 Many school persons neither understand
14 nor appreciate cultures different from their own.
15 The problem has the effect of inferior programming,
16 lowered expectations for achievement, decreased
17 student/teacher interactions, and damage to peer and
18 school relationships for the culturally different
19 child. Often times, school personnel do not understand
20 a culturally different student's learning style, and
21 tend to initially utilize competitive teaching techniques
22 instead of cooperative teaching strategies.

23 Educational research has shown that Hispanic
24 students are more successful when placed in learning
25 situations which stress interaction, participation,

1 and companionship before being placed in learning
2 situations which stress rivalry or contests. However,
3 most post-secondary institutions do not require in
4 their teacher education curriculum courses in Hispanic
5 culture which would give the school professional a
6 stronger grasp of the needs and strengths of the Hispanic
7 student. An understanding and an appreciation of
8 the Hispanic culture will give the school professional
9 the additional skills needed to move the Hispanic
10 student to success in school.

11 The third area I will address, and where
12 I will spend more time is in the need to increase
13 democratic processes in the school. Parents, students,
14 teachers, and other community members, agencies, and
15 institutions must have a voice in the school
16 decision-making process. Democracy is a concept which
17 is based on community participation. As well as being
18 in a democracy, we are also firmly embedded in a free
19 enterprise or individualistic society. Education,
20 because it is a phenomenon that is both a personal
21 and private organism, must solve this quandary for
22 purposeful evaluation. Education then will allow
23 itself to be measured according to society's expectations.

24 Vocational agricultural programs at the
25 high school level today are not only unpopular among

1 students in society; the field of agriculture is also
2 failing us. Agribusiness, however, is popular in
3 schools, and it seems successful, especially when
4 we consider parts of the Transportation Department
5 or business and industry field within agriculture.

6 Today we see trucks carrying groceries
7 to supermarkets, animals and other agricultural products
8 to market. What about the food brokers, clerks in
9 grocery stores, bakers, butchers, meat cutters?
10 What about the restaurant worker, the clerk at McDonalds?
11 Are these people involved in agriculture, the food
12 industry, education, or all three? Where did these
13 workers attain their skills to keep inventory, to
14 give customers advice and to understand those customer's
15 needs?

16 These critical thinking skills are used
17 by today's workers in Colorado every day. They are
18 using logic and evaluation. Furthermore, it's those
19 thinking and work behavior skills that are making
20 agribusiness in America today successful.

21 In business journals, we read about the
22 exceptional businesses in any given industry. We
23 read of engineering success at IBM and Hewlett Packard.
24 With the airlines, it's Delta. Fast foods, McDonalds.
25 It's sad to read of the problems at Storage Tech,

1 United Airlines, and of the neighborhood mechanic
2 who closed the garage and now works at Jiffy-Lube.
3 The business that has responded to the era of technology
4 by training its personnel to use the technology of
5 the era has prospered.

6 When our society was in the agricultural
7 era, an educational system that responded to agriculture
8 served its purpose. However, we've gone through an
9 industrial era, and are now deep into an era of
10 technology. We need an educational system that not
11 only responds to the era, but is pro-active in the
12 use of the technology of the era.

13 We know that the child of an alcoholic
14 has a different picture of reality than does the child
15 of a non-alcoholic. Does the child of a Hispanic
16 whose language, culture, and home environment is different
17 also have a different picture of reality than the
18 child of a majority American relative to what is necessary
19 for success? Or even of what success is within our
20 society? Certain businesses, those IBM's, those Hewlett
21 Packard's, those Delta's, and some family locally-owned
22 businesses have found ways to train and motivate their
23 workers to excellence.

24 In a democracy, in an institution that
25 is designed to serve that society, the name of the

1 game is involvement. Education is one of those phenomena
2 that serves both as a public and a private entity.
3 Research and the news media have shown that to be
4 true. Education has designed processes to put this
5 phenomenon to work for school improvement. The training
6 of educators again, however, typically includes neither
7 instruction and democratic problem-solving techniques
8 nor training to facilitate learning for the socially,
9 financially, or culturally different student.

10 In the past, three types of approaches
11 have been designed to combat school discontinuance.
12 The first is the punitive approach. Using this strategy,
13 students have been chastised and even penalized by
14 school persons for not meeting school standards.
15 Often, the school standard has been in direct conflict
16 with the student's socioeconomic, cultural, or personal
17 identify. In these instances, the strategy to prevent
18 school discontinuance has had the opposite effect.

19 Another approach to preventing dropping
20 out of school is a remedial strategy. The philosophy
21 of this approach seems to be that the student needs
22 some sort of cure. We tend to fit the student to
23 the school situation. Often times, the effort seems
24 to work for awhile. However, when the school attempts
25 to supplant rather than supplement the home environment,

1 the student is made to feel that the home environment,
2 its customs, language, and alliances are inferior.
3 And if the environment is inferior, so must be the
4 people.

5 It's at this point that the student will
6 typically rebel and revert back to their old behaviors.
7 The strategy then is not helped, and in fact can alienate
8 the student from the school because the school and
9 the student's needs are in conflict.

10 The third approach to the school dropout
11 prevention is the environmental approach. The philosophy
12 of this strategy is that the school environment can
13 be adjusted to meet the needs of the individual.
14 And although we cannot have separate environments
15 for each student, we can measure certain school community
16 needs and develop goals, objectives, processes and
17 programs in the content areas, in instruction, in
18 the extracurricular activities, in administration,
19 and in community participation which mirror the image
20 of the school community and can solve the problem
21 at the local and state levels.

22 As multi-faceted as is the problem, so
23 must be the effective intervention if we are to
24 significantly improve the human condition and impact
25 on this terrible waste of human resources. Educational

1 research has also designed systems to measure and
2 increase democratic processes in the use of educational
3 state-of-the-art technologies in the schools. When
4 a positive school climate interfaces with educational
5 state-of-the-art technologies in curriculum, instruction,
6 and guidance in counseling, and in a coordinated process
7 to increase democratic participation in the schools,
8 the research has shown that there will be increases
9 in student educational levels, and the decreases of
10 student's disfunctioning in the schools.

11 Yes, change does cause stress. Especially
12 when having to leap from a system based on the agricultural
13 era and into the era of technology. And moving a
14 community to assist with that change means allowing
15 those persons, those community persons to see current
16 performance levels while understanding possibilities
17 within current financial, demographic and geographical
18 limitations, and acknowledging the difference.

19 Yes, I am speaking of change, but it
20 is a change that will move education to more readily
21 serve the local community, the state, and the nation.
22 By investing human and fiscal resources in children
23 today, we can save countless future dollars in terms
24 of social services alone. The Hispanic Cultural Center
25 of the University of Northern Colorado, in coordination

1 with Hispanics of Colorado and the 2 plus 2 project
2 have designed an intervention system which utilizes
3 organizational behavior theory, and places its emphasis
4 on the organizational level and the interaction of
5 the organization with the community environment.

6 By design, the eight system components
7 interface and interact in a coordinated effort with
8 the school image to increase student development.
9 The system is a plan which is designed to supplement
10 theoretical training by practice, and is proactive
11 and developed to serve today's society in the development
12 of human resources.

13 Thank you. I would like to file these
14 materials.

15 MS. KURTZ: We have five minutes for
16 questions.

17 MR. CISNEROS: Yes. Dr. Lucero, in your
18 opening remarks you mentioned that the State Department
19 was reporting almost an 11 percent dropout rate for
20 Hispanics. And I didn't get the name of the educational
21 organization that you said --

22 DR. LUCERO: The National Education
23 Association.

24 MR. CISNEROS: Okay. My question is
25 two-pronged; they reported a 25 percent per annum

1 dropout rate. The first part of the question is who
2 is right, why the discrepancy?

3 Secondly, do you view educational vouchers
4 as a viable alternative for the Hispanic dropout rate?

5 DR. LUCERO: I'm not sure either one,
6 the State Department of Education nor the National
7 Education Association is right. We have data that
8 says something to the effect that there could be as
9 much as a 47 to 57 percent dropout rate of Hispanic
10 students in the state of Colorado.

11 Educational vouchers, I honestly don't
12 know enough about them to know if in fact they'll
13 make that significant an improvement at all.

14 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much, Dr. Lucero.
15 We certainly appreciate your coming down and giving
16 this presentation.

17 DR. LUCERO: Thank you for the invitation.

18 MS. KURTZ: Nita Gonzalez?

19 MS. GONZALEZ: Good morning. I'm Nita
20 Gonzalez with Servicios De La Raza, and I'm also the
21 Chair of the Denver Youth Employment and Education
22 Task Force. I am, however, sharing my time with another
23 speaker who is a member of the Board of Directors
24 of the agency that I work with that has a number of
25 youth programs at work with the Outreach population

1 and dropout. And Mr. Frank Quintana will go ahead
2 and address you very briefly, and then I'll follow
3 through. Thank you.

4 MR. QUINTANA: Yes. Thank you for allowing
5 us a spot to speak. I want to review how we came
6 about getting the information concerning this meeting.
7 I read it on Christmas day in the Denver Post.

8 We at Servicios deal with the fallout
9 from the public school system here. We deal with
10 the -- I don't call them dropouts, I call them force-outs.
11 And we have a number of them here in the audience
12 today.

13 It appears to me at this point that we're
14 missing the boat entirely about giving us all of these
15 of what has been done, what should be done. I understand
16 the focus of the Civil Rights Commission is to weed
17 out and to ferret out discriminatory practices. Now
18 let's start from that basis, and we can start talking
19 turkey. Let's talk about solutions on the basis of
20 there is discrimination.

21 The U.S. Civil Rights themselves has
22 done a number of studies indicating discriminatory
23 treatment of Hispanic students. And the Denver School
24 Board is notorious for discrimination. We don't have
25 to prove that right here. Just look back on the record

1 of the last dozen or so years.

2 Now when we start with these assumptions
3 there is discrimination, and there is plenty of evidence
4 for it, then we'll start getting down to the solutions.
5 We have a number of young folks that come here who
6 are the force-outs in the Denver public school system.
7 Those are the people that should be addressing this
8 group if you want to talk about discrimination. They
9 are the ones that should be talking to you, telling
10 you what the heck has happened to them in the school
11 system, the disparate treatment in about every arena.
12 That's what is happening.

13 Their parents are the secondary victims.
14 They should have time to speak. They can't take time
15 off during the school work week to come down here
16 and register their complaints. I urge that we have
17 another meeting of this type on Saturday for those
18 people who are directly involved in the dropout program.
19 If you want to hear about discrimination, those are
20 the people you go to. Those who have been discriminated
21 against, not the people who have discriminated against
22 them.

23 (Audience applause)

24 From what I hear now from the people
25 that preceded me, excluding Dr. Lucero, we don't have

1 a problem here. New York has got the problem. Because
2 their problem is larger. We're skirting around the
3 edges of everything that should be happening here.
4 The heck with New York, and the heck with comparing
5 it with other people who are worse. They're trying
6 to minimize the problem.

7 The vested interests are going to minimize
8 the problem. Look how much they're doing for us.
9 My gosh, to listen to them we don't have a problem.
10 They're solving the whole damn thing. Baloney! Each
11 of those victims that have come before you today,
12 and I think there's about a dozen youngsters, have
13 their own kinds of complaints that you should be paying
14 attention to. There is disparate treatment in this
15 school system.

16 Another thing, the title that is "Hispanic
17 Dropout" is very, very, very misleading. It's our
18 problem, the Hispanics. We're the problem. I guarantee
19 you if the student hasn't learned, the teacher hasn't
20 taught. That's where the whole thing is. It's not
21 the inverse. We've been studied, re-studied, and
22 now we're gearing up with this, the beginning of this
23 whole system. Your process here, we're beginning
24 now another study. We're going to initiate another
25 study. Study, study, study, jaw, jaw, jaw. And let's

1 not do any solutions. That's just another way of
2 avoiding the hard solutions to this thing.

3 And let's get on to the solutions. Everybody
4 has got the solutions, but they're not working. Mr. Lucero
5 said it himself; we spend more and more federal bucks
6 on this thing, and nothing is happening. That's because
7 of the invidious, persistent widespread discrimination
8 within this system here. It continues to this day.
9 Why doesn't anybody want to say it? Discrimination.
10 Does anybody know how to say it? That's what has
11 happened. Now let's go on from there.

12 Incidentally, I have a question for Mr. --
13 I'd like to have an answer from Mr. Muldrow. The
14 ground rules were, sir, that we are not supposed to
15 report illegal acts. How in the hell do you --
16 discrimination is illegal. You've put us in a --
17 where we can't -- the ground rules say that we cannot
18 report discrimination. Am I out of order by saying
19 that we discriminate in the school system? Would
20 you please explain that to us? Maybe -- I think a
21 few of us would like to know whether we should talk
22 about discrimination or not.

23 MR. MULDROW: What I meant to say if
24 I didn't say it was allegations against specific
25 individuals should be reported directly to the committee

1 in executive session so that they can be given an
2 opportunity to respond. The ground rules are not
3 that you cannot indicate there's discrimination.
4 No, that's one of the purposes of the meeting.

5 We said that we will not receive in public
6 allegations against specific individuals which we
7 would like you to report to the committee directly
8 in executive session so that we can investigate individual
9 cases on their own merits and give the people involved
10 an opportunity to present also information to us.

11 But factors involving discrimination
12 of a general nature are what we are trying to determine,
13 and we welcome those.

14 MR. QUINTANA: All right. Because of
15 the shortness of the time we had to prepare and our
16 ignorance of the format and what we can do over here,
17 we didn't do that much research on this thing. But
18 we felt that we certainly have the Complainants in
19 this action, you know, before you to justify the indication
20 that there is discrimination. These folks can tell
21 you each and everything that happened to them, and
22 it's disparate treatment.

23 MR. MULDROW: Well as I say, we don't
24 pretend that we're able to be comprehensive in this
25 meeting, and we will welcome further information within

1 the next ten days which will be entered into the record.

2 MR. QUINTANA: Okay, then we can get
3 the testimony from these children, or the sworn statements
4 or whatever else is necessary to you then.

5 MS. KURTZ: Let me -- excuse me. Let
6 me just say this; we will try to set aside a block
7 of time for the young people to talk to us this afternoon,
8 if they are willing to do so.

9 Secondly, we are not unaware of the fact
10 that the parents and the students were not put onto
11 this list simply because we didn't know how to get
12 in touch with them. And you know, hey, we don't know
13 everything. But if -- I would like to make the suggestion
14 to you, sir; if you think that we could with advantage
15 hold another meeting at a given time and would indicate
16 to us how to go about setting up that meeting so that
17 the people who are not being heard adequately here
18 today can be heard, this committee will certainly
19 consider the possibility of scheduling another meeting.
20 We're asking your help. We're not suggesting that
21 we know everything, believe me.

22 MR. QUINTANA: Okay, Maxine. The first
23 thing I would like to do is give you our brochure
24 so that we can be notified about these things and
25 we can take an active part in your process. Whatever

1 it is.

2 MS. KURTZ: Please do so.

3 MR. QUINTANA: We would like to be notified.
4 I'll enter this into the record.

5 MS. KURTZ: Thank you.

6 MR. QUINTANA: I'm not through.

7 (Laughter from audience)

8 MR. QUINTANA: I guess I made the main
9 point. We would like to have those folks.

10 Now, the key is we won't be able to stay
11 that long. Now I did think it would be impressive
12 to bring them down here. We do deal with the force-out.
13 I think we should call it force-out, because there
14 is a number of -- a lot of evidence, a plethora of
15 evidence that that is what is happening.

16 Okay, I would like to cut it a little
17 bit short because Nita would certainly like to talk
18 to you. Nita Gonzalez is heading up the Youth Component.
19 She has done an amazing job of rehabilitating a number
20 of force-outs, which shows it can be done. We have
21 a model program. I would like to introduce her as
22 the next speaker. I'm very proud of this young lady.
23 She is very devoted to her job, and she's a very great
24 asset to Servicios De La Raza. Thank you very much.

25 MR. CISNEROS: Frank, before you leave

1 though, before you leave the podium, I'd like to state
2 that I really admire you for being able to stand up
3 and tell it like it is, basically, in the situation.

4 The second point, and I think I speak
5 for all of the committee members, and they can correct
6 me if I'm wrong, but I would welcome an opportunity
7 to go someplace in the community and hold a Saturday
8 session and listen to the people. And -- because
9 I think it's a massive problem, and it has to be
10 addressed. And that the U.S. Civil Rights Commission
11 should play a role in that, however small. But we'd
12 welcome that opportunity to spend a Saturday listening.

13 MR. QUINTANA: Thank you very much.
14 We'll be in touch.

15 MS. GONZALEZ: I'll make my comments
16 very, very short. But we'd like to thank Dr. Fred
17 McEvoy and Dorothy Porter who made the time available
18 to us; otherwise, we wouldn't have had the time available.

19 I also chair the Denver Youth Employment
20 and Education Task Force, which has a membership of
21 well over 35 youth-serving agencies here in the city
22 and county of Denver. And I also share the chair
23 with the Commission on Youth with the city and county
24 of Denver.

25 And we were concerned, also, about the

1 notification of the meeting, because there are 35
2 of us strong that have been working hard on this problem,
3 and our employment and training programs as well.
4 And the issues that I'd like to bring up is that an
5 article in the American Counsel of Education in the
6 summer of 1984 entitled, "Minorities in Higher Education"
7 says the national statistics in their particular --
8 their quotation for national statistics state approximately
9 50 percent of minority students drop out of high school;
10 7 percent of Hispanics and 12 percent of Blacks finish
11 college compared to 23 of Whites. 18 percent of Hispanics
12 and 10 percent of Blacks, age 25 or older, are classified
13 as functional illiterates compared to 3 percent of
14 Whites.

15 A report published in August of 1984
16 by the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education
17 adds to the alarming statistics, "Nationally, 83 percent
18 of White students from '73 to '79 completed high school,
19 compared with 72 percent of Black students, and 51
20 percent of Hispanics." The dropout rate is enormous;
21 50 percent. It's not 14, and it's not 25. It's much
22 higher.

23 Our issue that we present at this time
24 is we don't have the statistics because the state
25 will not give us those statistics, or the Denver Public

1 Schools, about the kids that drop out in 6th grade
2 and 7th grade and 8th grade and 9th grade. And ladies
3 and gentlemen, I have 8th and 9th graders in my program
4 because they were forced out of the DPS school. And
5 they are forced out not because they are academically
6 not able to learn, or because they don't have the
7 intelligence to learn. They are all tested, these
8 kids, when they come into our program on the California
9 Achievement Test.

10 Some of the kids, a young gentleman that
11 is a 10th grader now, dropped out in 7th grade, tried
12 to get back in school, was forced out again in 9th
13 grade. He came into my program after not being in
14 school for a year and a half, and tested at 12.9 in
15 math and reading. He was forced out because teachers
16 discriminated against him because he was Chicano.

17 And while we talk about studies and
18 commissions, we are losing generations. And my question
19 to you is not will we study the situation, but will
20 we do something about it. And if not, then we as
21 a community will do something about it if it has to
22 be legally that we do something about it. But we're
23 not going to lose our kids anymore. We're not putting
24 up with that.

25 (Audience applauds)

1 MS. GONZALEZ: I'd like to also give
2 you some statistical data that I think is very important
3 for most people to recognize. And that's that here
4 in Colorado, there is an adolescent task force called
5 The Colorado Adolescent Health Task Force. And the
6 basis of their study they conducted, they conducted
7 a study and said that the task -- in developing
8 well-rounded adolescents, that there are a number
9 of tasks. And the tasks include movement toward becoming
10 independent and establishing stable functioning abilities,
11 but most of all positive self-identity. Progressing
12 through this stage is determined by how well the specific
13 health tasks are performed.

14 Well a teenager becomes a force-out,
15 a dropout or a pregnant mother, that the optimal
16 performance of these tasks are delayed. And the behavior
17 leads to more dependency on the family, or upon the
18 welfare system. Their plans for completing high school
19 and obtaining career employment are suddenly shortened
20 and shattered. The development of positive self-concept
21 is seen by the Colorado Adolescent Health Task Force
22 as the basis for responding favorably to every other
23 phase of emotional, educational, and psychological
24 health. If we cannot reinforce that identity, and
25 it can't be done if in the schools we have cases every

1 day in middle school, elementary, and high school
2 in DPS, and we can give you the cases, document the
3 cases where teachers tell Chicano and Hispanic kids
4 that they don't count. Where a teacher will grade
5 Chicano children lower, D's, and C's, and Anglo students
6 higher, A's and B's, that is discrimination. Intent
7 is there, perceived is there. And that's what we
8 have to deal with. And discrimination is alive and
9 well in the Denver Public Schools. And you're not
10 going to find that out until you talk to the parents
11 and you talk to the youth. Thank you.

12 MS. KURTZ: First of all, we had asked
13 earlier speakers -- I think perhaps before you came
14 in, to please give us an address and a phone number
15 where we can reach you when we want to follow up on
16 the presentations that were made there. If you would,
17 please, I would appreciate it.

18 MS. GONZALEZ: Yes. Servicios De La
19 Raza, 4055 Tejon, 458-5851.

20 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much.

21 Questions?

22 MR. ATLER: Yes, two questions. The
23 first is in regard to the specific acts of discrimination,
24 and in particular the one student you cited, was any
25 access to the legal process approached?

1 MS. GONZALEZ: No, the parents, what
2 they did is usually come to us and ask that we assist
3 them in dealing with the situation at the school,
4 and if not, their students enroll in our high school
5 program. And we have been compiling the data, however,
6 to consider legal action.

7 MR. ATLER: I guess I'm a little confused.
8 Why not? Since that is a procedure that society provides,
9 why don't we take advantage of it and file --

10 MS. GONZALEZ: Because most parents first
11 of all are treated very -- like they're inferior in
12 terms of their dealings with the schools that have
13 a hard time dealing with administrators and teachers.
14 Most parents don't know that they have that accessible
15 to them.

16 We're also -- under the Youth Employment
17 Education Task have co-sponsored an organization called
18 United Parents for Progressive Education who will
19 be -- some members will be addressing the group here
20 today later on this afternoon. And those parents
21 are the ones we are also working with in organizing
22 in terms of letting -- informing other parents that
23 they have certain rights and certain processes that
24 they can take advantage of, as well as the legal process.

25 MR. ATLER: The other question I have,

1 and I'm hoping that perhaps you're familiar with it
2 because your predecessor mentioned that the Federal
3 Government had indicated that there were several studies
4 that had indicated and concluded that there was Hispanic
5 discrimination in the public schools in our state.
6 I would like to know what those are, if you could
7 cite those or provide that information to us?

8 MS. GONZALEZ: In terms --

9 MR. QUINTANA: We'll do that.

10 MS. GONZALES: Right, we'll provide that.

11 MR. ATLER: Thank you. Ms. Gonzalez,
12 what role do you see Colorado corporations playing
13 in this problem?

14 MS. GONZALES: Well, needless to say,
15 I also run an employment and training program in finding
16 out the departments up there can be real instrumental
17 in providing a strong -- being more strongly involved
18 in the curriculum development, and also influencing
19 and advising in terms of providing vocational training
20 and other training for youth so they can have transition
21 from school or have a reason to stay in school.

22 As you cited, early employment is an
23 issue with youth. In fact, many youth who need a
24 job can't stay in school because they prefer to go
25 to employment.

1 I wanted to answer one question that
2 you asked Frank and a few other people. And I want
3 to say, and I'll go on record as saying this, and
4 a lot of people may not agree with it, but I think
5 the voucher system would be the way and would be the
6 answer in this state.

7 (Audience applause)

8 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much for your
9 presentation. We will be in touch with you, but my
10 request of you is very sincere. We would appreciate
11 a proposal from you which you could send to the Civil
12 Rights Commission Office on perhaps a jointly sponsored
13 or something of the sort session at a time and with
14 the people who can tell us what the other side is
15 that we're not hearing today. And I recognize that.

16 MS. GONZALEZ: We thank you for that.
17 And we will be in touch.

18 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much.

19 Mr. Charles Batey? I guess you just
20 came in.

21 MR. BATEY: Yes.

22 MS. KURTZ: Would you please state your
23 name and address where you can be reached, a phone
24 number in case we must reach you? And then we will
25 have your presentation, please.

1 MR. BATEY: Charles Batey, B-a-t-e-y.
2 I'm with the Adolph Coors Company. It's -- the address
3 is -- what's our new address, Gil? It's a new --
4 a Federal -- it's a new office building, the north
5 office building.

6 MR. CISNEROS: NH-420.

7 MR. BATEY: 401 10th Street, Golden,
8 Colorado, 80401.

9 MS. KURTZ: Thank you.

10 MR. BATEY: My few comments will reflect
11 my limited exposure to the issue at this forum, from
12 my Civil Rights Equity background, my personnel management
13 background, my higher education background, public
14 education including a stint with the Colorado State
15 Employment Agency, State Department of Education,
16 and also my corporate community experience thus far.

17 Specifically while employed with the
18 office for Civil Rights, the former Department of
19 Health, Education and Welfare in this region, with
20 the Equal Educational Services with the Colorado Department
21 of Education, and with Pikes Peak Community College
22 in Colorado Springs, I became acutely aware of the
23 significant problems related to the Hispanic dropout
24 rate in Colorado and also of the broad consequences
25 of that problem. Particularly in the world of work.

1 First, let's consider the magnitude of
2 the problem. I think we can start by just quickly
3 reviewing some demographic data, and I'm not sure
4 if some of that data has not already been presented.
5 A recent American Counsel on Education Data, and I'm
6 referring to a publication titled, "Demographic
7 Imperatives: Implication of Educational Policy, 1983".
8 That publication suggests that one, the average age
9 of the White population is much older, and that the
10 minority population is much younger.

11 Two, minorities constitute a majority
12 of school enrollment in 23 of 25 of the nation's largest
13 cities.

14 Three, Hispanic population growth has
15 been and continues to be the highest of all groups.

16 Four, Hispanics are the most urbanized
17 groups with 88 percent of them living in cities.

18 Five, some demographic observers predict
19 that Hispanics will constitute the largest minority
20 group by the year 2000, at the very least 2015, 2020.

21 And six, as our nation becomes more
22 pluralistic and demographically diverse, including
23 our regional population shifts, policies to provide
24 educational services become more difficult to devise.

25 To go further into what the data says,

1 it is noteworthy that the Hispanic population, if
2 current trends persist, will remain in the high fertility
3 age group longer than will any other group, including
4 the Black population. Because a higher proportion
5 of Hispanics are entering the peak child rearing years,
6 the Hispanic birthrates will increase at a much faster
7 rate than any other group for at least the next 20
8 to 25 years.

9 In addition, what challenges education
10 policy measures is the large number of Hispanics who
11 are continuing to enter this country. The policy
12 makers must tailor programs to meet their different
13 cultures, background, languages, learning styles.
14 This latter part, by the way, leads to a discussion
15 of the causes of the problem which I will get to in
16 a moment.

17 What about the national completion rates?
18 1980, 83 percent of 18 to 24 year old Whites were
19 high school graduates, compared with only 54 percent
20 for Hispanics. When comparing 12th grade enrollments
21 tracked from previous 9th grade enrollments, a New
22 York State Education Department Study on New York
23 trends show, for an example, that 81 percent of the
24 White students were still in school compared with
25 only 41 percent of Hispanics.

1 The majority of the dropouts would, of
2 course, be ineligible for college enrollments. Since
3 we have at this forum representatives from the Colorado
4 Department of Education, it would be interesting to
5 get the same kinds of figures for this state. One
6 national sample shows that for high school and beyond,
7 the dropout rate is 18 percent for Hispanics compared
8 to for example 12.2 percent for Whites, 3.1 percent
9 for Asian Pacific Americans.

10 Because the alarming statistics are suggesting
11 the magnitude of the Hispanic dropout problem, we
12 also have a bleak picture of the post-secondary education
13 trend, or post-secondary education saying. Hispanics
14 who represent 7.5 percent of the 18 to 24 year old
15 quarter represent only 2.9 percent of the student
16 enrollments in four-year institutions, and 3.9 percent
17 enrollments in all post-secondary programs.

18 Close to home in Colorado in 1977, we
19 were losing 22,000 Hispanic youngsters every two years
20 from public schools. A 9 percent rate. We're currently
21 losing 12,000 students every two years, or roughly
22 6,000 every year. And perhaps this is the way we
23 should appropriately look at the picture. Not necessarily
24 romanticizing the problem with comparing dropout rates.

25 What about the cause of the problem?

1 My limited experience and interfacings suggest to
2 me that there is a set of dropout characteristics
3 of youngsters which can be identified as early as
4 the elementary school stage. In fact, our State Education
5 Agency is advocating to educators across the state
6 to consider using a student analysis system which
7 involves the use of micro-computers to record dropout
8 characteristics and come up with reliable, predictable
9 indices for early identification of probable dropout
10 students.

11 Those characteristics reflect that the
12 students have certain coping recognized behaviors.
13 The students are attempting to get away from or avoid
14 something which is intolerable rather than going to
15 something. When those identified characteristics
16 are combined with factors that are normally associated
17 with retention problems such as poverty, psychological
18 and socioeconomic abusiveness in schools, lack of
19 role models, et cetera, the dropout rate increases
20 geometrically.

21 I do not believe the cause of the problem
22 is urban or results from urban conditions exclusively.
23 My experience in working as an equity consultant for
24 the Colorado Department of Education in the San Luis
25 Valley and our state suggests that the same sets of

1 dropout characteristics apply in the valley as they
2 do as West, Montbello, and North High Schools in Denver.
3 Of course, the unpleasant or the intolerable set of
4 conditions that the students are getting away from
5 -- and by the way, the National Counsel of La Raza
6 is detecting that this situation occurs as early as
7 the third grade, those conditions result in part to
8 the lack of educators and also educational designs
9 to tailor programs to meet the increasing pluralistic
10 communities which are served by public education to
11 meet the differing cultures, backgrounds, languages,
12 life styles represented in our demographically diverse
13 society.

14 What about the consequences? I have
15 already mentioned very briefly the bleak picture of
16 post-secondary enrollment of Hispanic students. Without
17 the post-secondary training in the academic, technical
18 or vocational areas, the situation becomes serious
19 in the world of work. The popular Nation at Risk
20 Report indicates that the person who does not at the
21 very least graduate from high school will find it
22 exceedingly difficult to compete and even survive
23 in a work environment with a high form of technology.

24 At the Adolph Coors Company, the majority
25 -- the overwhelming majority of the jobs which are

1 in existence are non-entry level positions requiring
2 from the adult worker related experience and requiring
3 from the younger worker some type of post-secondary
4 training; either occupational, vocational, commercial,
5 or academic.

6 By the way, I represent Affirmative Action
7 at the Adolph Coors Company. Affirmative Action in
8 employment programs in the world of work are not training
9 programs for employment entry, are not designed to
10 provide direct services only or primarily to the
11 downtrodden or poverty-stricken individuals. Rather,
12 Affirmative Action Programs are designed to assist
13 persons who are already employed or employable, for
14 minority, women and handicapped individuals who need
15 the force behind the protected laws and the special
16 program efforts to push them to a point where they
17 can catch up with non-protected class members in the
18 employment and economic mainstreams.

19 In other words, Affirmative Action Programs
20 are designed to assist persons who are otherwise qualified
21 for desirable work, and whose race, sex, or handicap
22 condition may constitute a real barrier in getting
23 that desirable work. The Affirmative Action Program
24 is not an alternative experience or a preventive program
25 for the socioeconomic dropouts.

1 We have another trend occurring in the
2 world of work, including the industrial and the corporate
3 sectors. Because many workers are currently losing
4 their jobs to machines, and because we do not have
5 enough employment to absorb new entrants into the
6 work force, many of those positions which historically
7 have been associated with women and minorities, secretary
8 and office clerks -- by the way, we need three million
9 of those persons. Janitors, we need six hundred thousand.
10 Sales Clerks, we need five hundred thousand. Fast
11 food workers, we need four hundred thousand.

12 Many of those positions will be absorbed
13 by the replaced workers that I'm speaking about.
14 After all, those replaced workers can negotiate their
15 experiences in the world of work when applying for
16 those jobs. Believe me, currently it's an employer's
17 market. Thus, the future in employment for the dropout
18 is further dimmed, and there is the perpetuation of
19 the status quo. In other words, the vicious poverty
20 cycle continues, the trend towards the two extreme
21 levels in the work force continues. That is, the
22 executives, scientists, and highly paid professional
23 specialists at the top, robots, machines, and a host
24 of low paid workers performing relatively simple,
25 low-skilled jobs which are dull at the bottom. There

1 is a continuation of bad times for those in lower
2 incomes.

3 I think it's important to point out to
4 dropouts and to potential dropouts that with regard
5 to the world of work, even if the jobs do not ask
6 for a high school diploma or a GED, that the advancement
7 beyond getting into that door will require skills
8 and training which in turn require a high school diploma
9 or the equivalent.

10 Solutions: I can think of one immediately,
11 and I've already touched on it. The implementation
12 of a student analysis system whereby educators can
13 identify and do something about the dropout characteristics
14 of students as early as the elementary level. In
15 addition, I believe that it is important that we do
16 not give the public educators the burden of combating
17 the problem by themselves. In addition to the schools,
18 government, business, industry should have responsibilities
19 and roles to play. In fact, with those combined resources,
20 we can individualize dropout prediction methods, according
21 to varying environmental context, the prevalent dropout
22 characteristics, grade levels, et cetera.

23 Additionally, I believe it is important
24 that we continue funding and supporting the dropout
25 prevention programs throughout the state. I'm somewhat

1 familiar with the Rocky Four Program in our state,
2 and that program has become highly accepted.

3 In addition, I believe we need to emphasize
4 more that many of these students need a maturing process.
5 They can get that process perhaps through military
6 experience. Or perhaps through a community based
7 employment training program such as SER, OIC, the
8 Center for Employment and Training. Those experiences
9 can help those students recognize and realize the
10 importance of completing public education.

11 Society will pay one way or the other.
12 Either we can accelerate our support for high school
13 alternative programs, for dropout prevention programs,
14 for student analysis programs, for community based
15 employment training programs, or we can continue to
16 pay for the continuing surge of welfare recipients
17 and prison inmates. We have a choice. Thank you.

18 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much. Questions?

19 MR. TREPANIER: Mr. Batey, how do you
20 see the involvement of industry? Where can we help
21 resolve the problem, and most importantly to accelerate
22 the resolve of the problem?

23 MR. BATEY: A couple of things. I believe
24 first of all representatives from industry should
25 be encouraged by public school systems to be involved

1 with public school program education designs, program
2 curriculum designs, et cetera. Public schools need
3 to open their doors for representatives of the world
4 of work.

5 I have a concern about how -- for example,
6 how realistic are high school counselors about the
7 world of work. For an example, do counselors in our
8 schools with heavy Hispanic and Black enrollment talk
9 to Hispanic and Black students about apprenticeship
10 programs? About skilled crafts areas, et cetera?
11 I'm familiar with a couple of high schools where that's
12 just simply not the case.

13 Another way that I think that I can see
14 the industry represented as being involved is through
15 the Community Based Education Employment Training
16 Programs. Many of these programs have advisory committees,
17 have working committees that starve for representatives
18 in industry for their ideas again regarding how to
19 best realistically approach designing programs, training
20 activities, and so forth for the recipient of those
21 programs, whether it's SER or OIC or CET so that there
22 is a probability that those persons will be placed
23 in the world of work.

24 So I would say that the corporate community,
25 industry in general should be encouraged to participate

1 in both public education programs and also the community
2 based programs which in many instances serve as alternative
3 programs for public education.

4 MR. TREPANIER: Thank you, Mr. Batey.
5 Do you think that the corporate program or corporate
6 people have an understanding of the seriousness of
7 the problem and what their involvement should be?
8 And if there is not that understanding, how do we
9 get that understanding?

10 MR. BATEY: Well, I'm not sure if they
11 have the understanding. I guess I'm looking at a
12 two way communication process. If industry representatives
13 can be encouraged to be involved with education, whether
14 it's a public education sponsored program, community
15 based, or what have you, I think with the help of
16 personnel officers, with the help of Affirmative Action
17 officers and so forth, we can in turn push those
18 individuals to get involved if they're encouraged
19 again by the schools, by the community based agencies.
20 And their experiences with those programs will of
21 course trigger a greater awareness.

22 I can think of one example. A few short
23 months ago -- I'm on the Advisory Board of the Center
24 for Employment and Training. That board is made up
25 of representatives from industry. When I came on

1 the board, I suggested that we have our meetings on
2 the set -- on the locations of the corporate agencies
3 which are involved and which are represented on our
4 advisory board. And for an example, we met at Coors.
5 And I made sure that a lot of our hiring authorities
6 from the production area primarily were at the meeting.
7 And the experience for -- it was an eye-opening experience
8 for the hiring authorities. No question. It was
9 an educational process. And if we can continue with
10 that kind of forum, just with that one community based
11 agency, I believe that the Martin Marietta's, the
12 Adolph Coors Companies, the Digital's, and so forth
13 and so on, the communities and especially the hiring
14 authorities will become acutely aware of the problem.

15 MR. TREPANIER: Thank you.

16 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much. We
17 appreciate your presentation.

18 MR. BATEY: Thank you.

19 MR. KURTZ: The last speaker for the
20 morning session is Dr. Gilbert Roman.

21 DR. ROMAN: Ms. Kurtz, members of the
22 Commission on Civil Rights, the Chicano students that
23 are here, I must also say that I am heartened -- I
24 am not heartened, I should say. I am heartened that
25 I am here, but I am not heartened by what I have heard

1 this morning, particularly the early parts of the
2 presentations. I don't feel better, for example,
3 that Colorado has a lesser problem than some of our
4 sister states in the southwest. If we had a problem
5 of 5 or 25 percent, for example, instead of 47, 57,
6 60 percent, which is probably more accurate on the
7 dropout problem, I would still feel it was too much.

8 Every Chicano student who does not graduate
9 is lost to an ever-widening cycle of poverty. I am
10 not going to present you with some solutions because
11 educators like Dr. Lucero who spoke earlier are much
12 better qualified than I to provide these. But I will
13 outline some areas of concern that I have identified
14 as areas that need attention and correction.

15 I have a number of statistics and other
16 introductory materials which I am not going to present
17 to you. I have them in the handout that I'm going
18 to give you, thereby saving not only time, but also
19 not -- also I won't have to be repetitive as I would
20 be if I made a presentation like that.

21 I will, however, take the opportunity
22 to simply mention that WICHE, or the Western Interstate
23 Commission for Higher Education in their studies has
24 indicated that 55 percent of Hispanics have not completed
25 high school between 1973 and 1979, and that's compared

1 to 72 percent of Black students and 83 percent of
2 White students. Recent studies indicate that these
3 numbers have not changed dramatically.

4 I will forego, as I indicated, to the
5 rest of my material on that kind of data in order
6 to go on with the more serious part of the presentation.

7 It has become clear that our collective
8 future depends upon our ability to understand and
9 adapt to an era of technology. This can only be
10 accomplished by informed citizenry. Chicanos in particular
11 need to address the critical imperatives of promoting
12 educational access and retention in order to keep
13 pace with the demands and challenges of today and
14 tomorrow.

15 One of the things I have observed in
16 Colorado which does not speak well for some school
17 districts, and that's some school districts, is the
18 absolute lack of Chicano representation in school
19 administrations. Not only is there usually a paucity
20 of Hispanic faculty, but also in the middle and senior
21 levels of administration. This includes guidance
22 counselors, assistant principals and principals.
23 School superintendents, except for very small southern
24 Colorado school districts, are almost exclusively
25 non-minority. In those districts or schools within

1 a district where there are large concentrations of
2 Mexican American children, faculty and administrators
3 who happen to be Hispanic would certainly be an asset.

4 Another area of concern is that of the
5 inordinate suspension/expulsion rate of Chicano children
6 far disproportionate to their percentages, and usually
7 greater than the rate for non-Hispanics. This phenomena
8 resists scientific or social explanations and can
9 only be attributed to uncaring, uninformed and tremendously
10 biased administrators who cannot or will not deal
11 with the underlying causes of behavior in minority
12 children.

13 Some programs in place ostensibly to
14 assist minority children are sometimes not vigorously
15 managed or administered in such a fashion as to cause
16 success. Such programs are remedial programs, bilingual
17 education and some learning disability programs, such
18 as vocational education and early childhood programs.

19 Even more devastating than mismanagement
20 or benign neglect is the refusal by some school districts
21 to apply for necessary funding that would address
22 the needs of Hispanic children. Students need to
23 enter the academic marketplace with the skills necessary
24 to compete. This requires commitment from all sections
25 of our society. Educational institutions need to

1 provide quality programs and adequate academic support
2 services to ensure students the opportunity to acquire
3 the skills necessary to compete effectively.

4 At this point, I am going to make a statement
5 that may not be very popular in some educational circles
6 that is necessary for me to say in here today. It
7 behooves us to open-mindedly critique reports that
8 have been coming out recently that some of the programs
9 that are geared towards minority students such as
10 Chicanos are not working. Some of those, for example,
11 have been in the area of bilingual education. Okay,
12 I think that it is not -- it is important that we
13 look at those very, very critically to look to see
14 whether or not -- what the research data is, what
15 the universe is, and what it is that they're trying
16 to say. If we find that it is not a program that
17 is working, then collectively we need to design a
18 new program incorporating a new program. Incorporate
19 those concepts that did work. For example, in the
20 bilingual programs the parental involvement program
21 as part of that particular program did work very,
22 very well.

23 Please note I did not say develop a new
24 program. Only to go back to the beginning so that
25 nothing that we have done in the past that won't make

1 any sense at all to us now that we'll know that we
2 have failed. I guess I'd go back to programs that
3 we know have failed Hispanic students; the bottom
4 line here is that we must support programs that teach
5 English and educate our children so that we can be
6 competitive.

7 Three variables that have been identified
8 as critical to Hispanic student achievement are family
9 income, the educational attainment level of parents
10 and educational opportunities available, and also
11 a caring and wanting to be sensitive, and more critically,
12 a competitive faculty administration.

13 One of the major factors which has contributed
14 to the myriad of problems confronting the Hispanic
15 communities of problems confronting the Hispanic
16 communities is under-representation of Hispanics in
17 decision-making bodies. This is evident at the federal,
18 state, and local level. Hispanics are unrepresented
19 in all agencies funded by the federal government,
20 and the same is true at the state and local government
21 level. We do not, for example, have a Hispanic member
22 of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education. I
23 think that is a tragedy. It is time the Hispanics
24 aggressively worked to increase participation and
25 influence in these decision-making bodies. It is

1 time that Hispanics examined the issues, develop
2 recommendations and work to implement them. Hispanics
3 must take more action in civic matters that affect
4 their lives and shape the future of their children.
5 Chicanos cannot and must not abrogate their responsibility
6 to others who do not share their sense of urgency
7 and consideration for Chicano children.

8 I recognize that the pursuit of equity
9 and excellence in education is a goal shared by Hispanic
10 communities in the nation as a whole. Quality education
11 is critical to changing those adverse conditions that
12 limit the potential for human development. Furthermore,
13 we cannot continue to ignore a principal reality of
14 our times, that opportunities for upward mobility
15 will increasingly be reserved for those with an education.

16 Education is defined as a remedy for
17 social and economic hardships. However, it has not
18 been equally accessible to all segments of the nation,
19 such as Chicanos. As noted in numerous national reports,
20 Hispanics are severely under-represented as students,
21 administrators and faculty at the university level.
22 And as previously mentioned, the Hispanic high school
23 dropout rate is higher than the completion rate.
24 Throughout the elementary and secondary levels, Hispanic
25 students are consistently falling behind the Anglo

1 students, and there is only a sprinkling of Hispanics
2 on the school boards and school personnel.

3 I see Hispanic children as victims of
4 a "push-out" system. Mr. Frank Quintana earlier used
5 the word "force-out". I agree. I'm going to use
6 the word "push-out". The school district does not
7 have a mechanism in place to address the special programs
8 and problems concerning -- that are endemic to Hispanics.

9 Elected officials must be held accountable
10 for the failures and shortcomings of the educational
11 institutions to respond to the specific needs of
12 Hispanics. These officials are entrusted with the
13 duty to ensure equity and excellence in their programs.
14 If they are not fulfilling this responsibility, the
15 Hispanic community must take an active role in selecting
16 appropriate individuals who will work toward meeting
17 their needs. This action should be of a nonpartisan
18 nature as it is in the permanent interest of our collective
19 communities to ensure quality education.

20 In summary, I believe we will all recognize
21 the need for partnerships with all sectors of society
22 to develop effective educational programs. Parents
23 and students, elected officials and concerned citizens
24 must all take the initiative and act to promote the
25 educational development of Hispanic students. Schools

1 must, however, as the front lines in the battle, more
2 adequately address the problem. Not just with remedial
3 programs which come too late, but with preventative
4 programs that encourage retention, that recognize
5 Hispanic cultural differences, and that speak to the
6 survivability of Hispanic students from Kindergarten
7 through their senior year in high school, and perhaps
8 on to college.

9 Thank you very much.

10 MS. KURTZ: Thank you, Dr. Ramon. Any
11 questions?

12 (Pause.)

13 MS. KURTZ: Thank you.

14 DR. RAMON: Thank you.

15 MS. KURTZ: If there are no questions
16 -- since there are no questions, we're going to now
17 recess for lunch. We will resume at 1:00 o'clock
18 in this room. And I certainly hope that you will
19 be able to return for this afternoon's session to
20 listen to the additional speakers.

21 (Luncheon recess off the record.)

22 MS. KURTZ: I have a couple of announcements.
23 Number one, the subcommittee -- the advisory committee
24 met over lunch, and we have decided that we are going
25 to hold four more -- five more forums. One is going

1 to be in Durango, one is going to be in Grand Junction,
2 one is going to be in Greeley, one is going to be
3 in Pueblo, and there will be another one here in Denver
4 for a number of people who found out sort of at the
5 last minute about this and did not have the time to
6 prepare. There were people who called us that we
7 could not accommodate in today's presentation, so
8 we are going to hold five more forums before we make
9 any decisions about what we are going to do as a --
10 on the basis of the information we have collected.

11 We do not have dates yet. We are going
12 to have to work with the people in those various parts
13 of the state to get their assistance and cooperation
14 in setting up the meetings. If any of you come from
15 any of those portions of the state, in other words,
16 northern Colorado, southern Colorado, and the two
17 halves of the western slope, and are willing to assist
18 us in setting up forums in your part of the state,
19 would you contact Ken Weber. And I'm going to ask
20 Ken to stand up again. He's standing over there in
21 the corner. Would you please contact him, give him
22 your name, address, and telephone number so that we
23 can contact you about helping on the arrangements.
24 Because you folks who might come from those outlying
25 parts of the state know your communities far better

1 than we do and who you should contact and how to reach
2 the press and so on.

3 I think with that, we will then resume
4 our presentations. I will reiterate the fact for
5 the speakers who may be just coming in for the first
6 time, we're asking speakers to give their name, address,
7 and a telephone number where we can reach you if we
8 want to follow up and get more information about particular
9 points as we proceed with our studies and analysis
10 and our report.

11 Father Canas, please?

12 FR. CANAS: Good afternoon. I'm Fr. Eugenio
13 Canas, Vicar for Hispanic Ministry for the Archdiocese
14 of Denver, or rather all of northern Colorado.

15 In the following words that I will give,
16 I will try to address more specifically the cause
17 of the problem and some possible solutions to this
18 problem. For I am certain that the magnitude of the
19 dropout problem has been adequately expressed, and
20 certainly the press makes us very well aware of that
21 magnitude.

22 However, in one of the primary steps
23 that I took in preparing this testimony was checking
24 with some students as to why they see some of their
25 peers dropping out, especially the high school level.

1 And at many levels or many instances, the answer was
2 always peer pressure. Peer pressure that forces them
3 to -- it makes them easy for them to drop out. But
4 beyond that in our contacts with families throughout
5 the country, but more specifically here in Colorado,
6 one of the primary concerns of families has been in
7 the last few months the problem that they face in
8 motivating their children to continue in school and
9 to excel in school. So we may say that one of the
10 primary causes of that is the lack of motivation that
11 the individual has, as well as in many instances a
12 lack of motivation that the family may not be able
13 to provide those students.

14 A further cause as I see it is the whole
15 misunderstanding of the term "Hispanic". By using
16 the term Hispanic, we fail to understand the diversity
17 that exists within that community whose common traits
18 may be language, or even cultural customs or attitudes.
19 But if we lump them all together, we find it difficult
20 to arrive at specific causes of this dropout problem.

21 By this, I would mean that many of the
22 members of the Spanish speaking community of northern
23 Colorado may have their roots more in other areas
24 of Colorado or northern New Mexico with very little
25 ties to New Mexico. Others are coming in from other

1 parts of the United States; some from the border regions,
2 and naturally, some from Mexico and other parts of
3 Latin America.

4 In trying to lump the whole community
5 into one, we may also fail to see some of the specific
6 problems such as that of the seasonal farm worker
7 population whose roots may go all the way back to
8 the border areas of Texas, or they may be traveling
9 within the state. And I think that in trying to say
10 that the dropout problem among Hispanics is great,
11 we fail to recognize the specific problems that the
12 seasonal farm workers, or as they are commonly referred
13 to, migrants face, not only here in Colorado but throughout
14 the country.

15 Among some of the solutions that I see
16 is that while there are many groups even here in the
17 metro area concerned about the problem of dropouts,
18 there is the need for coordination, or at least a
19 sense of some collaboration. Efforts have been made
20 through individuals on their own trying to bring these
21 various organizations together to address this specific
22 problem. But it remains basically a volunteer effort,
23 and with a volunteer effort organization is more
24 difficult. I think that we may need to see the schools
25 or other government agencies taking the initiative

1 in bringing the resources of these various segments
2 of the community who are interested in doing something
3 about the problem.

4 If family motivation is indeed a cause,
5 the solution addressing the needs of family would
6 have to imply a concerted effort. Very often, we
7 find ourselves as a church being asked to be interested
8 and concerned for the needs of the family, but we
9 only touch one aspect of the family. And I think
10 the efforts between the schools and other public and
11 private institutions, not just the schools and churches,
12 would certainly be able to bring a better sense of
13 improving the situation of the family.

14 If family is also a cause, I think we
15 need to understand the situation of the family;
16 specifically here in the metropolitan area where we
17 find that statistics shows us that 19.5 percent of
18 Hispanic households are headed by females, 12.9 percent
19 by males, therefore indicating a huge percentage of
20 Hispanic families headed by single parents.

21 Comparing that to the Anglo population,
22 statistics that have been worked through La Raza Agency
23 indicate that as opposed to 19.5 percent of families
24 headed by females, in the Anglo sector it's only 11
25 percent. So that very often these kind of figures

1 indicate the need of looking at the situation of the
2 family.

3 If the family is the cause, perhaps a
4 solution would be a greater insistence upon day care
5 and the first years of education for students, for
6 statistics that have been presented indicate that
7 very often the problem of dropouts needs to be addressed
8 in the earlier years rather than in high school.
9 Then perhaps day care and other efforts of that nature
10 are in order. However, as there is a call for that,
11 we see more and more government, especially the Federal
12 government, backing out, lessening their commitment
13 to this sector of education.

14 As an example, we were faced in the past
15 few months, especially again with the seasonal farm
16 worker population who have no particular school district
17 or area that is concerned about them. But government
18 and volunteer agencies, when the Federal government
19 dropped their funding for day care, a lot of these
20 children were faced without any education attention
21 whatsoever.

22 And finally I would say that the -- as
23 extensive as the problem may be, or as great as the
24 needs are, we do need to -- as a society need to look
25 at the methods of financing of schools for the great

1 inequity that exists throughout the state, as in other
2 parts of the country where the poorer school districts
3 or the smaller tax base are less equipped and able
4 to afford the educational opportunities for students
5 who already face many other problems.

6 Thank you very much.

7 MS. KURTZ: Thank you, Father. Questions
8 from the committee?

9 (Pause.)

10 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much.

11 Is Mr. Cortez here? Luis Cortez?

12 MR. CORTEZ: My name is Luis Cortez,
13 902 Elston Court, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 80907,
14 599-3299.

15 My sole purpose to be here today as I
16 spoke with Dr. Weber as we read the publicity that
17 was forthcoming to southern Colorado was to encourage
18 you as a committee to hold a forum in southern Colorado.
19 Obviously, the lunch was more productive than perhaps
20 not able to be digested, so we appreciate that. And
21 I would be one, at least from my community, who would
22 help you in terms of attempting to set up a forum
23 in Pueblo if those dates are forthcoming.

24 MS. KURTZ: Thank you.

25 MR. CORTEZ: But please allow me at least

1 to make my presentation. My presentation will focus
2 primarily on what we feel are the problems in Colorado
3 Springs, and perhaps it will help you in your planning
4 as you plan to hold your forums in the southern part
5 of Colorado.

6 I thank you for that. I'm especially
7 grateful, because I am from southern Colorado, and
8 the publicity that went out was that the forum was
9 going to be held primarily for those from the metropolitan
10 area of Denver. But the problems that are faced
11 in Denver are certainly the same problems that are
12 faced by our Hispanic youth in our community.

13 I'd also like to extend my appreciation.
14 My understanding is that your committee is made up
15 of volunteers, and I think it's very commendable that
16 you take your time from your own busy schedules to
17 express at least some concern and interest for our
18 youth. And I think I can speak perhaps for the majority
19 of the Hispanic community in the Springs that we appreciate
20 that.

21 I'd like to read for you a quote from
22 the document that was forthcoming from the Commission
23 on Civil Disorders, 1968. And I quote, it states,
24 "Education as a democratic society must equip children
25 to develop their potential and to participate fully

1 in the American life. For the community at large,
2 the schools have discharged this responsibility well.
3 But for many minorities, and particularly for the
4 children from the barrio, the schools have failed
5 to provide the educational experience which would
6 overcome the effects of discrimination and deprivation."

7 In this particular quote, I substituted
8 the word "barrio" for ghetto, but I think the meaning
9 is still there.

10 I will attempt to address the four major
11 areas, and I'm sure that prior to my arriving here
12 that some of the concerns that I have have been addressed,
13 and so I'll try to make my comments as brief as possible.
14 As Father Canas has indicated, I think there has been
15 sufficient evidence provided that the magnitude of
16 the problem is certainly one that ought to concern
17 us, one and all. But what I would like to do in support
18 of an invitation to southern Colorado is to give you
19 some information that I think is very relevant, and
20 certainly expresses a concern that we have there,
21 specifically in Colorado Springs.

22 In 1979-1980, our district which happens
23 to be the largest district in El Paso County reported
24 a dropout rate of 401. At that particular point in
25 time, perhaps the district was not too concerned in

1 terms of race or ethnicity as far as the dropout situation
2 was. In 1980-1981, 453 dropped out. In 1981-1982,
3 616 dropped out. In 1983-1984, 694. In 1984-1985,
4 785. That to me is a very serious problem.

5 I think one of the pertinent and germane
6 questions that frequently arise, at least from our
7 community, is how are these dropouts reported to the
8 Colorado Department of Education. And that is a very
9 interesting fact. In 1979-1980, out of the 401, 355
10 were reported to the Colorado Department of Education.
11 In 1980-1981, 269 out of a total of 453. In 1981-1982,
12 out of the 616, 205. In 1982-1983, 659, 157 were
13 reported. In 1983-1984, 694 dropped out, 202 were
14 reported to the State Department. And finally, 1984-1985,
15 out of 785, 175 were reported to the Colorado Department
16 of Education. That's a 2.2 percent dropout rate in
17 School District 11 in El Paso County.

18 The interesting question then arises;
19 what happened to those 610? At the board meeting
20 where these particular figures were presented, the
21 administrator for the Alternatives for Dropout Program
22 indicated and gave us a list of 14 alternatives whereby
23 these 610 kids were placed. It included night school,
24 GED Programs, job corps, military, vocational technical
25 education, and some were referred to the local community

1 college.

2 I think that's all well and good. And
3 I think a point that I think should be made here is
4 that with a 2.2 figure that was reported to the State
5 Department of Education, it makes our School Board
6 and our educational system look very good. I think
7 the figure that they should be attacking is the 785.
8 And I might report to you that out of the 785, which
9 is the most current statistics, about 27 percent that
10 could be accounted for were Hispanic students. And
11 that's not to say that, as someone else indicated
12 earlier in the morning, that there are some students
13 who are dropping out of the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th
14 grade in our particular district that are not accounted
15 for and who are lost in the system.

16 Frequently, we are told by the school
17 district that the stereotypic definition of a dropout
18 is that he is not able to learn. I would like to
19 afford you again with some statistics that relate
20 specifically to two tests that were given by the school
21 districts to 376 dropouts. The tests that were given
22 were the ITBS, which is the Iowa Test of Basic Skills,
23 and the Test of Academic Skills in reading. And I
24 think we as educators indicate that if you have the
25 ability to read, whether it be in Spanish or English,

1 you're going to be a success.

2 It was interesting to note based on a
3 method of measuring reading ability for these particular
4 students, 70 percent fell into the average and
5 above-average reading level. I think the point being
6 here that we're not dealing with a bunch of dummies.
7 That if students are afforded the opportunity, they
8 can succeed. And I think they can succeed as mainstream
9 students within the high school area.

10 Recently it was reported by the National
11 Clearing House for Bilingual Education, Volume Eight,
12 Number Six in December of 1985, and it was a national
13 study that was done by the Scholastic Aptitude Test,
14 the SAT Test that is given primarily to those students
15 who are getting prepared at the high school level
16 to go on to college. And I think you have to take
17 this particular information with a grain of salt,
18 because it only relates to those students who at any
19 particular time in the junior or senior year feel
20 the capacity that they can go on to a college level,
21 or a college degree.

22 The point that I am trying to make after
23 I give you these statistics, and I hope you can grasp
24 onto that, is the fact again that although progress
25 for our people, the Hispanic people is slow, there

1 is some progress being made. And let me quote from
2 this particular article: "From 1984 to 1985, the
3 average verbal score for Puerto Ricans rose from 358
4 to 368. For Mexican Americans, from 376 to 382."

5 Not a very significant gain. Don't get
6 me wrong. But it's a gain that I think we ought to
7 pay attention to. Mexican Americans increased their
8 math scores from 420 to 426; Puerto Ricans from 405
9 to 409, American Indians from 427 to 428. Asian Americans
10 who have traditionally and typically been good at
11 math decreased one point from 519 to 518 on the math
12 portion of the test. So I think what it gives us
13 is hopefully an idea that perhaps with the proper
14 attention that our students, regardless of what research
15 has indicated, are capable of going on.

16 The second point that I would like to
17 address would be to the cause of the problem as I
18 see it from our particular point of view in El Paso
19 County. This information that I am about to share
20 with you was garnered by a group of us from the Hispanic
21 community in El Paso County that took it upon ourselves
22 to do a survey under the auspices of the diocese,
23 our newly created Catholic Diocese in Colorado Springs
24 as a forerunner to a process that the Church is trying
25 to attempt. And we attempted to identify problems

1 that the Hispanic community at the grass roots level
2 was concerned about.

3 The number one problem of course was
4 education. And followed very closely to that concern
5 was housing. One of the overlying themes that came
6 out of that particular survey, and I'll be the first
7 to tell you that it was nothing scientific, but perhaps
8 it gives us a better indication than some of the studies
9 that I have read recently about the Hispanic dropout
10 rate. One of the main concerns was the desecration
11 of Hispanic students' self-esteem. And they were
12 talking straight across the board by teachers,
13 administrators, counselors, social workers, janitors,
14 and also including their peers.

15 Some of the quotes that were given to
16 us, and I could outline a hundred of them, but I think
17 they're very interesting. "I made it through high
18 school despite and in spite of the teachers." "It
19 was a White man's system, and I was just passing through."
20 These two comments were made by two students from
21 a particular high school in Colorado Springs that
22 are now lawyers.

23 "I left because they would not listen
24 to me." "My coach told me that I could end my athletic
25 career by (unintelligible)". And that's Buena Vista.

1 "And I could get my diploma in breaking and entering."

2 Secondly, I think over and above this
3 that there is a negative attitude by the total system.
4 And one of the things that frequently came out was
5 that speaking Spanish with a heavy accent immediately
6 defined that particular student as a handicap. And
7 that this continuing handicap actually impedes the
8 learning process. Hispanics do not fit the White
9 European immigrant mode, and because they come from
10 varying types.

11 This is an interesting comment, and I
12 think it kind of coat tails on what Fr. Canas has
13 indicated. The comments that are made is that Hispanic
14 people cover, in terms of color, the spectrum from
15 being blond and blue eyed all the way to being Black.
16 But anthropological concerns notwithstanding, the
17 majority of those people that we talked to said that
18 culture was more important than color, regardless
19 if they were Puerto Rican, Central or Latin American,
20 Mexican from Mexico, or people who were native born
21 to the state of Colorado and the United States.

22 They exemplify a conquered people; therefore,
23 they should be kept as such. Some are reluctant to
24 assimilate; therefore, they should be considered alien
25 to the American way of life. Invalid and ineffective

1 instruction.

2 Substance abuse, and certainly pregnancy.
3 So what do we do? We talk about the consequences
4 of the problem. And I think again there has been
5 a litany of concerns that have been expressed to you
6 this morning. An over-representation on the welfare
7 rolls, over-representation in the correctional systems
8 in the state of Colorado. I read recently, as a matter
9 of fact two or three days ago that the Chairman of
10 the JPC for the State of Colorado indicated that he
11 was angry for the 2,000 prisoners that are incarcerated
12 in our state correctional system. It costs the taxpayer
13 \$25,000 a year. Wouldn't it be great to have ten
14 percent of that money channeled into the school system
15 to help prevent the dropout rate?

16 It's represented in unemployment and
17 underemployment, drug abuse as I mentioned before.
18 Mental and emotional problems and over-representation
19 in mental institutions. Inadequate housing, physical
20 health problems, and under-nourishment, of course.
21 I could relate a litany of ills that affect those
22 who do not educate or do not become educated. But
23 the bottom line is that our community, the state and
24 the nation end up footing the bills for those less
25 fortunate than us because of an insensitive system

1 that overtly or covertly denies them access to a better
2 quality of life.

3 Possible solutions: since the famous
4 or infamous Risk Report, whatever your orientation
5 might be, indicted the educational system on a national
6 basis, the concentrated effort by those not only inside
7 of education but outside of education is to start
8 pointing fingers in terms of who is to blame. Teachers
9 are blaming parents, teachers are blaming parents
10 where both parents work in the household. Parents
11 are saying that the schools are not sensitive. Politicians
12 are saying that it's too much. Educators are saying
13 we're doing a good job, and parents perhaps are giving
14 up and taxpayers are reluctant to pay or vote for
15 bond issues that might perhaps help alleviate the
16 problem.

17 I think there still has to be a reunification
18 or a re-establishment of viable and quality multilingual
19 and bilingual programs at all levels. I know it's
20 a political controversy, and perhaps when the bilingual
21 program was in place here at the state, perhaps we,
22 the Hispanics have to take the blame for not making
23 that successful. Maybe we didn't market it well enough.

24 Role models in all phases of education
25 I think has been touched on. Community and parent

1 involvement, curriculum changes which I think has
2 always been a concern, transitional programs to mainstream
3 Hispanic students into whatever programs they might
4 want to get into, early identification of potential
5 dropouts, and finally, and I think it answers perhaps
6 a concern that Mr. Cisneros has, or a question that
7 he posed earlier, finally I would recommend that the
8 Hispanic community take an objective look at the Equity
9 and Choice Act of 1985. The NEA position says that
10 it will segregate our students, but I think there's
11 a segregation -- a more insidious segregation that
12 takes place when that segregation is based on a sad
13 economic base, and based on poverty. And I'm a member
14 of NEA.

15 Private programs maybe perhaps should
16 be established throughout the states. Colorado hopefully
17 could be one of those. I know for a fact that it
18 needs refining and fine tuning, but I think it's a
19 very, very viable alternative for us. The public
20 schools in my opinion are not doing the job. We have
21 to seek out other alternatives.

22 The only other suggestion I would make
23 relative to the Equity and Choice Act of 1975 is that
24 it not be restricted solely to Chapter One children;
25 that perhaps we could make it straight across the

1 board. Of course, that's a political situation which
2 perhaps can be addressed at another issue.

3 I thank you for your attention. I would
4 close again by inviting you to visit us down in Southern
5 Colorado. And I thank you.

6 MS. KURTZ: Thank you, Dr. Cortez.

7 Any questions?

8 (Pause)

9 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much.

10 DR. CORTEZ: Thank you.

11 MS. KURTZ: Jose Ortega?

12 MR. ORTEGA: My name is Jose Ortega.
13 I'm from Colorado Springs. I reside at 2028 Rowanoak,
14 80906, 471-4679.

15 And I know I just -- from listening to
16 Luis, I know that you've heard a lot of statistics,
17 and I'd like to carry my message to you, but in a
18 different way. I'd like to carry you through the
19 actual process of a dropout, talking through it, if
20 I might. So my subject is about dropouts, and you're
21 hearing it from a dropout.

22 Racism as a way of life throughout the
23 Colorado Public School System; if we do not look at
24 our history, we may never know where we have been,
25 which would have helped to tell us where we are going.

1 Let us look at some of the systems which
2 we have developed in order to process all of those
3 who make up the ingredients in the melting pot, including
4 those who many consider may be too well done, for
5 the systems which have by far exerted the most influence
6 in the formation of this country and our lives are
7 the government, religious institutions, the media,
8 and our education system.

9 Let us look at one of these, the media.
10 The image makers. The books have never, ever given
11 a true account of what actually happened at the Alamo,
12 what happened during the Mexican American War, the
13 causes of it, or do they write correctly about the
14 truly indigenous people of this continent. We still
15 prefer to worship at the alter of the Grand Dames
16 who came over on the Mayflower. And the movies, possibly
17 where most of it was created, an image that persists
18 to this day that we are sly, thieving, lazy, dirty,
19 greasy. None of this has changed.

20 Their influence, the media's, is so powerful
21 they even manage to get La Raza arguing amongst themselves
22 about the virtues of labeling ourselves Chicanos,
23 pointing out that it was a derivation of chicanery,
24 which few of us, including myself, had any idea of
25 what chicanery meant.

1 None of this has changed. Television,
2 the same image. To this day, I have had to argue,
3 cajole, exhort people to clean up their act. "Freebie
4 and the Bean", which started out as a innocent Walt
5 Disney film, and turned into a television show. You
6 get the bean, you take the bean, the derivative of
7 that is beaner, and you get a Sergeant Rodriguez who
8 is the inept Sergeant. And then you have the very
9 clever Anglo Lieutenant who is always picking up after
10 him. AKA Pablo, a disgraceful program which I personally
11 had an effort in seeing that it was removed, and I'm
12 very proud of that fact.

13 "Chico and the Man". What I'm trying
14 to portray is that we have the image. We have the
15 stereotype. It's established. So let's continue
16 to develop this scenario.

17 The ever-increasing number of these people,
18 the Latinos, the Spanish Americans, Mexican Americans,
19 Spanish Americans are causing problems for this country.
20 We have already learned through our God-given right
21 of manifesticity that we are best suited to the handling
22 and care of the less fortunate. We have to come up
23 with some answers. Let us use them for our own profit.
24 And I'm going to use administrators as an example.

25 Let us use them for our own profit, because

1 that is the American way. But we must devise a way
2 to process them so as to not appear unkindly or unjust.
3 Let's put them through our systems, which will serve
4 to label them again, and find special categories for
5 them. Let's put them in our schools, and we can even
6 call them "high risk".

7 Everyone that's in the business of the
8 helping services has a high risk profile. You can
9 easily put someone in their place. You can put them
10 in a category. They're easy to understand that way.
11 Some of the characteristics of high risk individuals
12 in the mental health field. Low identification with
13 viable role models. Low identification with and
14 responsibility for family processes. High faith and
15 miracle solutions to problems. Inadequate interpersonal
16 skills. Inadequate intrapersonal skills. Inadequate
17 systemic skills. Inadequate judgmental skills.

18 Now we have developed a profile, and
19 this will help our people in the system then deal
20 with those masses, but they will be able to do it
21 in an efficient, economic and cost-saving manner.
22 That, too, is the American way. That leaves more
23 time for them to get out on the ski slopes.

24 Enter the counselor or the teacher.
25 The counselor or teacher who most often does not have

1 considerable real or vicarious experiences which might
2 enable them to understand what the students are saying,
3 or to be able to see life as he or she sees it. The
4 good job that the image makers have done on these
5 people who come into play, it's a revelation. They
6 say it's true, these people are different. They must
7 have a problem. But it's not my fault that they are
8 of a color, that they are low income, that they speak
9 a different language. It has to be their problem.

10 Enter our scenario the Chicano child.
11 In the process of growing up, all adolescents endure
12 some level of the crisis stage in their maintenance
13 or establishment of an ego-identity. The Chicano
14 is no different in his quest to establish a social
15 and self-identity. And we all know how important
16 and essential that is to good mental health, stability,
17 and aspiration.

18 His first attempt at school is to appear
19 normal, although he carries the stigma of the image
20 makers. In his search for ego-identity, his interest
21 might lead him to seek realistically integrated studies
22 on the history of Spanish or Mexican Americans offered
23 in such a way that would appear normal and in the
24 nature of things to study as part of the American
25 cultural heritage.

1 The counselor and the teacher do not
2 understand this interest. Why does he want to be
3 different? Why can't he be like us? They come to
4 a point where they say, "I've tried, but I just can't
5 understand these people."

6 Back to the Chicano student. "Sometimes
7 when I think in Spanish, I find it easy to see myself
8 telling my teacher or counselor about my fears, about
9 my insecurity, about my real desire to achieve. But
10 I'm afraid they won't listen. I know there is an
11 open door policy, and I always see the Anglo students
12 go in and out. But I never see Raza going in unless
13 it is to be disciplined."

14 The result of all of this lack of
15 communication on the part of the teacher and the counselor,
16 no attempt is made to reach out to aid, abet, and
17 support the efforts of the Chicano in order to assist
18 in the integration of his identify, to reassure acceptance
19 of him as a person, or to encourage and further motivate
20 his aspirations.

21 On the part of the Chicano, his reaction
22 is withdrawal. Withdrawal from societal channels
23 which would normally facilitate identity formation,
24 and otherwise assist in his maturational development.
25 The end product, the dropout, the push-out.

1 Or we have those who conform who are
2 not behavior problems, who still do not get the required
3 assistance and do finish the high school program;
4 many of them functionally illiterate or borderline.

5 I charge that under the Colorado Child
6 Protected Services Act, the Colorado Public School
7 system is guilty in the act of commission or omission
8 by individuals, institutions, or society as a whole
9 and any conditions resulting from such acts or inaction
10 which deprives children of equal rights and liberty
11 and/or interferes with their optimal development.

12 Solutions: it's extremely difficult to
13 recommend strategies for change given our present
14 system. A system of institutionalized racism, given
15 that actor in Washington, given our conservative
16 legislators, given our top school administrators,
17 given the apathy of the general public. But other
18 Chicanos perhaps more optimistic than I have concluded
19 in a study which was done on this very same problem
20 in the very early 1960's, "Often the failure or lack
21 of success in school of economically deprived children
22 is due to the lack of empathy and understanding."
23 This was said twenty years ago about the children
24 in Colorado, presented to the General Assembly. That
25 teachers have for them the lack of empathy and

1 understanding.

2 Few teachers in Colorado schools come
3 from economically deprived backgrounds, and others
4 do not always understand the special problems of the
5 children from such backgrounds. It would seem that
6 the greatest single factor encouraging aspiration
7 within minority group youth is the example of an
8 environment that displays a clear and visible evidence
9 that people with their minority characteristics who
10 apply themselves have succeeded to a degree proportionate
11 to their numbers in society.

12 Number two, it is virtually impossible
13 to avoid the conclusion that children should be started
14 off in their mother tongue, and that the home language
15 should be the springboard for the proper and timely
16 development of the second language. It is not the
17 shrinking world that justifies the study of foreign
18 languages and demands the conservation of the mother
19 home language resources of our people. The wisdom
20 of the ages dictates it.

21 Other suggestions will occur to those
22 who recognize bilingualism and multilingualism as
23 of great value, and not un-American. Not only in
24 our relations with the rest of the world, but also
25 in the enhancement of the human spirit in the development

1 of the highest order of humanism.

2 That's all I have.

3 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much, Mr. Ortega.

4 MR. CISNEROS: Mr. Ortega, I'd like to
5 see what your views are in terms of the local level
6 in terms of parent participation. How can Hispanic
7 parents make the school district more accountable?

8 MR. ORTEGA: I have worked with community
9 action programs in trying to get that kind of effort
10 going. Community organization efforts I think they
11 are essentially talking about. And I think the reality
12 that they saw when they made the effort, and you know
13 the effort for them is extremely difficult given all
14 of the normal problems that they have living -- not
15 living, existing. So you do get them motivated, because
16 there is a definite concern. I will never accept
17 the fact that there is not a concern from the parents.

18 But then they're met at the school, which
19 to them usually is -- appears to be a foreign environment.
20 And then the greeting that they give is half-hearted.
21 It's really insincere. So I have never ever blamed
22 them for ceasing their effort within a very short
23 period of time.

24 MR. CISNEROS: Thank you.

25 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much, sir.

1 three sabbatical leaves where I've taken my family
2 around the world, and I've visited schools in 42
3 countries. And if you could see what people in other
4 countries are doing in their schools, I think you'd
5 realize that we need to get all of the potential out
6 of all of our students that we can. And from what
7 I've seen, the group that we're not getting the potential
8 out of is the minorities, especially the Chicanos
9 and the Blacks.

10 Now I had a little presentation, but
11 before I get into that, I'd like to just respond to
12 a few of the people that were talking here, because
13 it's very interesting to me to listen to the different
14 people that have addressed you. I think Dr. Branch
15 was certainly right about the family being crucial.
16 And to me, especially the ages from the time the baby
17 is in the womb until five years old is a crucial time
18 for a person in their life. And I worked with the
19 International Education Association when I was working
20 on my doctorate going around the world. I was comparing
21 15 and 16 year old students in five countries as to
22 their self-concept. And at Stockholm, Sweden at the
23 Headquarters of the International Education Association,
24 I said, "Look, let's give me the bottom line here
25 now. Why do some students make it and other students

1 don't?"

2 And I was told by the heads of that
3 association in Stockholm that there were two main
4 reasons; one was was the kid born in a first or second
5 world country, or was he born in a third or a fourth
6 world country. If he was born in a first or a second
7 world country, he stood a much better chance of getting
8 a good education. If he was born in a third or a
9 fourth world country, his chances were almost nil
10 of getting a good education.

11 The second thing that they said that
12 was the same all over the world was that the number
13 one factor as to whether the kid would get an education
14 or not was the home.

15 Dr. Lucero's comments were interesting
16 to me because he did say that a lot of times we don't
17 build on the strengths of these people. You know,
18 we're always putting down the -- we're always talking
19 about the negative things, but teaching these students
20 for 25 years, I see a lot of plusses. For example,
21 in Denver I can tell you unequivocally that the Chicano
22 kids are the most socially adaptable kids. And I
23 can go into that more if you have any questions about
24 it. But I can say that, much more -- well, the Blacks
25 are close, but much more socially adaptable than the

1 Anglo students.

2 Another thing here is that -- let's take
3 the socio-economic groups of the upper class to the
4 middle and the lower; and people call me a lot of
5 times, and they say, "Where should I put my kid?
6 In what kind of high school?", or something. And
7 I say, "Look, if you want to educate your kid," and
8 most of us are from the middle class, I say, "Put
9 your son or your daughter working and living with
10 the upper class in the lower class. Because you'll
11 learn from that experience -- your child will, of
12 going with the upper class and going with the lower
13 class."

14 And a lot of minorities are from the
15 lower class. And there is a lot of very positive
16 values that the lower class has that the middle and
17 the upper don't. And by the way, I've had students
18 at Lincoln test me on that, and this would take awhile
19 to explain to you how they did that. But they did
20 go and live and work with the upper and the lower
21 class, and they came to me afterwards. These were
22 middle class kids, and they told me what they gained
23 from that.

24 I certainly think Fr. Canas was right
25 about lumping of the names. You know, this name thing,

1 when I first came to Lincoln I was teaching Hispano
2 history, and it was weird because the first class
3 I walked into, these two rows over here were filled,
4 and these two rows over here were filled. And they
5 were looking at each other daggers, you know. And
6 they were all Spanish surnamed. And I found out that
7 the militant Spanish surname would refer to themselves
8 more as Chicanos; the conservative Spanish surnamed
9 would refer to themselves more, Latin American, Hispanic,
10 Spanish American, I don't know, all of the names.

11 And I switched my goals in that class,
12 because I said, "I hope by the end of this semester
13 that we've had the Hispano history that you will appreciate
14 that side over there why they think as they do, and
15 this side over here will appreciate why perhaps the
16 militants think as they do."

17 So the lumping of names -- by the way,
18 it's very interesting in the advance placement scores
19 that came out for May of 1985. The Spanish surnamed
20 are put into three groups; Chicano/Mexican American
21 is one group. This is advance placement scores where
22 students take a test. If they pass that test, then
23 they don't have to take let's say freshman English
24 in college, you see? Well, this is the total; all
25 over the country, they broke it down ethnically.

1 But the Spanish surnamed were broken into three groups;
2 Chicano/Mexican American, the second group was Puerto
3 Rican, the third group was called Hispanic Latin American.

4 Now the average score for that test was
5 3.6, and by the way, the Anglos or the Whites or Caucasians
6 were 3.05. So that was the mean score, the average
7 score. The Chicanos were 2.93. The Puerto Ricans
8 were 3.04. Here is the interesting thing; I would
9 have bet you that the Asiatics would score the highest.
10 The Asiatics scored high, 3.21. But the highest group
11 in that scores were under the label Latin American
12 or Hispanic. They scored 3.25. So when you're labeling
13 here, it presents a certain type of a problem.

14 By the way, another interesting thing
15 about those scores; all of the ethnic groups, the
16 boys scored higher than the girls, but the Spanish
17 surnamed, all of the groups, Chicano, Puerto Rican,
18 Latin American, whichever they labeled them of the
19 three, the girls scored higher than the boys. But
20 all of the others, Asiatics, Blacks, Caucasians, Whites,
21 the boys scored higher than the girls. But not the
22 Spanish surnamed. The girls scored higher than the
23 boys. That was interesting to me.

24 Luis Cortez; I was interested in his
25 statistics. And he was right, also. And it brought

1 me back to several of his comments. And the last
2 gentleman, Jose Ortega, I think he's right. I mean,
3 I've been teaching in Denver for 25 years, and I get
4 the feeling, you know, the gut reaction, just the
5 reaction that the Chicano is being used in our society
6 for profit. And also, I think that their history
7 has been poorly portrayed. When I would teach Hispano
8 history, you see, they get credit for that rather
9 than the regular American history. And I taught that
10 for seven years at Lincoln. And when you teach something,
11 then you see it a little closer. And I taught that
12 for seven years, and I think he's right about their
13 background and culture not being properly portrayed.

14 By the way, when I went from Baker, I
15 worked two years on my doctorate at Greeley. And
16 then I decided, "Well, I want to go to a high school."

17 Well, I went downtown, and I said, "I
18 believe I'd like to go to either West, North, or East."
19 This was at the Denver Public Schools, you know, downtown.
20 And I said, "That's where I want to go to now. I've
21 taught 11 years in Junior High. I'd like to go to
22 Senior High."

23 So they had some kind of meeting in some
24 office. And they came out of there, and they said,
25 "We're going to put you at Abraham Lincoln."

1 And I said, "Abraham Lincoln?" You know,
2 I didn't even ask for Abraham Lincoln. I don't know
3 anything about Abraham Lincoln. I wanted to be in
4 the inner-city.

5 And they said, "Well, we've had some
6 trouble at Abraham Lincoln with the Chicano students,
7 and we want you to go over there and teach Hispano
8 history."

9 And I said, "Well, I don't understand.
10 Why me? Why do you want me to go there?"

11 And they said, "Well, we were told that
12 you had the 9th grade playground at Baker for four
13 years, and that you got along very well with the Chicano
14 students at Baker."

15 And I said, "Yes." I said, "That's right."

16 "Well, we've had trouble with the Chicano
17 students at Lincoln." This was in 1971. "And we
18 want you to go over there and teach Hispano history."

19 And so I did go over there. And by the
20 way, after the first day I was in class with all of
21 the Hispanic surnamed kids, the leaders went down
22 to the principal and they said, "What is this blond,
23 blue-eyed guy doing teaching us our culture?"

24 And the principal, who was named Dr. Braynard,
25 he said, "Look, you let him teach you for a semester.

1 And if you decide that you don't want him, we'll take
2 him out of there and put another teacher."

3 Well, they went down after the semester,
4 and they said that's the person that they want.

5 Well, the key to my success with them
6 was that he agreed when I went to the school that
7 I could take my Hispano students on any field trips
8 that I wanted. Nothing was forbidden. And I could
9 bring any speaker in to talk to my students that I
10 wanted.

11 And over the next seven years, they'd
12 have about one a week. And I've got a huge file of
13 everybody from the most militant to the most conservative
14 speakers that came into the school and talked to the
15 students, you know. But those comments were interesting
16 to me.

17 Okay, now these are just a couple of
18 observations that I made in teaching. Now at Baker,
19 we used to bet at the beginning of the year which
20 teachers are going to make it with these kids and
21 which teachers aren't. Because you see, after the
22 end of the first semester at Baker in those days,
23 about 40 percent of the teachers, they were gone.
24 Those kids ran them out of here. I mean, and it was
25 very interesting to us older teachers to watch which

1 ones were going to make it and which ones wouldn't
2 make it.

3 And sometimes some big Marine veteran
4 or something, you'd think, "Well, he's going to make
5 it with these kids." They would run him out of there.

6 Another time, you'd see some little girl,
7 22, 23 that had gone to Michigan State or something,
8 and you'd go by her classroom, and everything was
9 beautiful. And I thought a lot about that. And what
10 I saw was that with those students, if they felt that
11 that teacher up in front of them had their best interest
12 at heart, that teacher -- they went with that teacher
13 all of the way. If they thought that teacher was
14 being condescending or let's say was a little racist
15 or didn't want to be in there teaching them, they'd
16 run that teacher out of there. I can tell you that.
17 And that was an interesting thing for me to see.

18 In my teacher training program at UNC
19 where I went and got my doctorate, I noticed a negative
20 thing is that in those teacher training programs,
21 you rarely meet a professor that has ever taught in
22 the inner city. You're just not going to find him.
23 Not only that, you would meet professors that would
24 make false statements about the inner city.

25 One day in class, I had a professor say,

1 "There's not as much academic freedom in the inner
2 city."

3 Well, I waited, you know. And then --
4 I probably got in trouble with that professor, but
5 I said, "Doctor, that's not right." I said, "You
6 have more academic freedom in the inner city, because
7 basically the principals, they come by, and if things
8 are nice and quiet in that classroom, you can do just
9 about anything you want."

10 And you know, they would make statements
11 like that that I knew from teaching in the inner city
12 that were not right.

13 Well, at any rate, in the teacher training
14 programs, you rarely met professors that had ever
15 taught in the inner city.

16 A second thing was I took the student
17 teachers at Loretto Heights College, because I needed
18 to make some money while I was going to UNC. And
19 I found in supervising student teachers that a lot
20 of student teachers have a lot of misgivings about
21 going in and doing their student teaching in the inner
22 city. They would much rather go into the suburbs
23 and do their student teaching.

24 Well, after I talked to them about it,
25 and from my point of view a teacher is much more crucial

1 and important in a person's life in the inner city
2 than they are in the suburbs, I had a lot of the girls
3 at that time go into the inner city and teach. And
4 they had very good experiences. These were kind of
5 upper/middle class Catholic girls. But they went
6 into the inner city schools and had a good experience
7 there.

8 But those two things I'd say in the teacher
9 training program; you don't have professors in these
10 schools that have taught in the inner city, and you
11 don't have a lot of the student teachers going in
12 there doing their student teaching.

13 As far as busing goes, or integration,
14 because I haven't heard anybody talk about busing,
15 but I've taught for some classes outside of the Denver
16 Public Schools. And in my research, I found out a
17 funny thing. The busing worked where the principal
18 wanted it to work. If the principal -- this is all
19 over the United States. If the principal said, "This
20 integration, this busing is going to work", it worked
21 in that school. If the principal was a little wooshy-washy
22 about it, and he said, "Well, I'm not sure if it's
23 going to work", then that's the way it went in the
24 school. But if the principal had the attitude, "This
25 isn't going to work in this school", it didn't work.

1 It was a funny thing I found. I mean, that one key
2 person was crucial as to whether the integration,
3 the busing, whatever you want to call it, worked.

4 So my time is up.

5 MS. KURTZ: Thank you, Dr. Larson. Any
6 questions?

7 MS. BERKOWITZ: I have one. In the years
8 that you have been in DPS, how effective have the
9 human relations training programs that you've seen
10 been?

11 DR. LARSON: I think -- they have some
12 value. I wouldn't know how much, you know. I mean,
13 like they've tried to wise us up like about the Asian
14 students that have come in, you know, about somewhat
15 of their culture and things. And I wouldn't think
16 it would have any negative effects.

17 I'm surprised somebody didn't ask me
18 the question about why the Chicanas do better than
19 the Chicanos.

20 MS. KURTZ: Well, we're going to have
21 to not ask that question because you've already used
22 your time.

23 Thank you very much, Dr. Larson. We
24 appreciate your contribution.

25 Representative Scherer, please?

1 REPRESENTATIVE SCHERER: Thank you, and
2 thank you for the opportunity to appear before you.
3 I will try to give you a little bit of the point of
4 view of the legislature, I think, on this problem.
5 And I must say that I'm sure my personal feelings
6 will surface in some of the areas.

7 The Colorado State Legislature, I feel,
8 the House Education Committee in particular, and myself
9 certainly feel very strongly that this is a serious
10 problem and one that needs addressing. However, as
11 with many of the problems that we face in the legislature,
12 the seriousness is only made a little larger by the
13 fact that the answers are not easy, and the answers
14 a lot of time take additional money. And there are
15 a lot of demands on those additional dollars, and
16 that's one of the problems I'll try to outline that
17 we have had, I think, in trying to address this problem
18 in a specific and hopefully positive way.

19 I might just mention that two members
20 of the House Education Committee are Hispanic. They
21 obviously are always aware of the dropout problem,
22 and are continually bringing it up. But I think that
23 the Committee as a whole -- it has been my impression
24 that the Committee as a whole is very concerned about
25 the dropout problem, not only among Hispanics, but

1 in total. And that something must be done about it,
2 and we must continue to make progress.

3 I think you were given some statistics
4 this morning by the Department of Education that indicates
5 that progress definitely has been made. That the
6 percentage of dropouts of all categories has dropped
7 in this state fairly significantly since I believe
8 it was 1975. That's not to gloss over any of the
9 problems that still exist and to say that we don't
10 realize that there needs to be additional things done.

11 Last year in the session, there were
12 a couple of bills introduced concerning dropouts,
13 and they mostly were looking for additional study
14 work to be done; particularly, study work. One of
15 the bills called for a study to see if the problem
16 is not more severe in grades kindergarten through
17 8th than where it's currently being studied for the
18 most part, which is 9th through 12th. Statistics
19 are very available on the dropout problem in 9th through
20 12th, but what -- where is the problem in the kindergarten
21 through 8th grade? Because we not only have the beginning,
22 the genesis of a lot of the problems that occur in
23 the high school age group, but also we have a lot
24 of real actual dropouts of that age group.

25 Rather than go into another study, the

1 feeling of the committee and the feeling of the legislature
2 was that we have studied this problem, along with
3 a lot of other educational reform problems almost
4 to death, that we ought to try to do some real positive
5 action-type things and some experimental type things
6 to see what would work to solve the problem. It was
7 that rationale that brought together the 2 plus 2
8 plan that I think again was referred to by the Department
9 of Education this morning where two million dollars
10 in this fiscal year and two million dollars in the
11 next fiscal year was basically taken away from the
12 school districts and put into a number of projects
13 of which the Hispanic dropout or the total dropout
14 problem received -- I forget the percentage, but something
15 like 20 percent of that, or four hundred thousand
16 to four hundred and fifty thousand dollars to try
17 to come up with some real pilot projects that will
18 show us works and what doesn't work, rather than to
19 just study what the problem is, but to try to really
20 get at the problem and succeed in some areas. And
21 once we find what makes a program succeed in a certain
22 area, than more dollars can be spent in a rationale
23 way to expand those programs into other areas.

24 That program is underway. I feel that
25 it will give some good feedback. It may seem, and

1 it seems to many of us that it's a slow process in
2 trying to do it on an experimental basis rather than
3 really going in and attacking the problem. But I
4 think we've taken that outlook on all educational
5 reform. It's become a very popular topic since 1982,
6 certainly in saying that we're not in this state equipped
7 financially to go in and just try to do something
8 and hope that it works with a lot of dollars. And
9 so we have done it, I think, in a systematic way to
10 try to do some things that we can see some positive
11 results, and then be able to generate the enthusiasm
12 for the expenditure of dollars to really make those
13 positive programs.

14 Two other programs that -- two other
15 needs of dollars certainly that I think directly relate
16 to this is the early intervention program. There
17 was a bill for early intervention. It is one that
18 I strongly support. I think that it is -- and I am
19 certainly not one for Federal programs, but it's the
20 one Federal program that really I think was most effective
21 when those dollars were coming down to school districts
22 for early intervention. Particularly for handicaps
23 and minorities. And getting these students before
24 they reach the kindergarten age and bringing them
25 up to kindergarten age abilities, particularly in

1 this case in the use of the English language I think
2 was and is essential.

3 What has happened is with the Federal
4 dollars being taken away from this early intervention
5 program, the school districts have not been able to
6 afford the program themselves. They are looking to
7 the state for that, and I think it is a state
8 responsibility, and we are attempting again this session
9 to try to get some money for this early intervention
10 program.

11 Last year's attempt kind of got taken
12 up in the fact that the money was going to come from
13 full day kindergarten programs, and certain schools
14 in the state have been allowed to fund with state
15 dollars since 1977. New schools cannot get this funding,
16 but the schools that decided to do it in 1977 are
17 getting the funding. I don't think that's a very
18 fair way to do it. I tried to eliminate that program
19 and take the money into the early intervention program
20 for minorities and handicapped, but was not successful
21 in doing that.

22 But we were able to have a sunset to
23 the full day kindergarten program in new schools beginning
24 in 1989 which will free up something like four million
25 dollars, which would go a long way towards trying

1 to fund an early intervention program. But hopefully
2 we can do something before 1989 on that.

3 The second thing I think is a major concern
4 to me is that I think inequities in the school finance
5 system in the state of Colorado have crept in. I
6 think that there were good intentions when the school
7 finance program was first devised. We are again going
8 to take a look at that this year. I'm not optimistic
9 that we're going to make many changes, and the main
10 reason is that any change you make is going to have
11 to mean more money because you're not going to cut
12 back just politically. Inexpedient to cut back districts
13 to give into other poorer districts. What you're
14 going to have to do is come up with new money to bring
15 the poorer districts up to the other districts. And
16 that's what we have to do. I think that it's essential
17 that we do do it.

18 I think that the dropout problem, it's
19 very easy to focus on the metropolitan area and say,
20 "Here's the dropout problem", because it's there in
21 numbers. But I think we have the same Hispanic problems
22 throughout the state. We have a number of very, very
23 poor districts that are not able to fund just their
24 normal educational program adequately because they
25 have such a small tax base to work from, and the state

1 is not able to give them a compensating amount of
2 dollars to be able to have an adequate program, to
3 pay teachers adequately and to have a good program.

4 So those are the places I think that
5 we are at the present being held back by the lack
6 of state dollars. If this year does find that we
7 are able to raise revenues in any way by some tax
8 increases in an election year, I question whether
9 that will happen. If that would happen, certainly
10 I think education stands as one of the two things,
11 education and the infra-structure of the state; highways,
12 water, and state buildings as the things that are
13 going to receive those extra dollars. So I would
14 fight for every dollar we could for something like
15 this program.

16 I just might point out that the dollars
17 -- and when we even talk about education, the priorities
18 are so great. And we can look at this problem and
19 say that it is an essential problem, which it is.
20 But you can look at the gifted and talented, and we
21 can look at other segments of society that also are
22 not getting funded adequately. You know, it's an
23 across-the-board thing. We don't have the dollars
24 to go to the individual groups that need the help.

25 If I might just take one second for some

1 more personal views maybe on the problem, and -- although
2 I think they in many ways reflect the views of the
3 House Education Committee. It seems to me that the
4 problem is rooted more in the past. And it's an escape
5 from that past that must be done almost on an individual
6 basis. It's the need, I think, for both the early
7 intervention, the continual counseling that's necessary
8 both with families and with high risk students. I
9 don't see changing a curriculum, I don't really --
10 I'm not really enthusiastic about alternative schools
11 that give an easier way to get a diploma as an answer
12 to what we're trying to do.

13 I think too often we say to minorities,
14 "You are a minorities, and we're going to just give
15 you a little less, and you'll get by, and you're going
16 to continue to be a minority." I'm talking about
17 a minority, not racially, but you're going to be a
18 minority because you won't be able to go out and compete
19 in the world today. And I think that that's being
20 unfair.

21 And I think that if students are challenged
22 and are given the tools to meet that challenge and
23 the motivation, both on a home, community and school
24 level to meet that challenge that they will rise to
25 that challenge. But if we continue to say that we're

1 going to lower standards because it's too tough, I
2 think we're making a mistake because we're not going
3 to come out with anyone who is trying to do anything.
4 We need to show an avenue of escape for people that
5 feel that they are in a socio-economic climate that
6 their parents had that they have not been able to
7 get out of. We need to give them the motivation.

8 I see early intervention and continual
9 K through 12 intervention by counseling those high
10 risk students to keep them in the classroom, to give
11 them motivation, to work with industry in the particular
12 area to make sure that they're not out robbing the
13 low -- the cheap labor supply by hiring necessarily
14 students that then go out of the school system because
15 they can make a quick buck today, but they're not
16 going to make many bucks anywhere down the line.
17 I think that we need the cooperation of industry to
18 try to make a total change in the community around
19 these schools.

20 And that's not easy, and it just sounds -- it's
21 all pie in the sky. But if it's got to be done on
22 a small individual basis, each school district must
23 certainly attack this, but the state has to help with
24 dollars wherever necessary for these kinds of programs.

25 That's basically all I have, and I'll

1 be glad to answer any questions.

2 MR. CISNEROS: Jim, we've heard a lot
3 about the 2 plus 2 dropout program today. And I'd
4 like to know what the -- please forgive me for reading
5 this, but what is the 2 plus 2 dropout committee planning
6 to do with Colorado school districts in terms of reducing
7 the high Hispanic dropout rate?

8 Secondly, how much money is available
9 statewide to attack the Hispanic dropout rate?

10 And thirdly, should parent participation
11 be mandated, or should it strictly be a voluntary
12 action at the local district level? So that's three
13 questions.

14 REPRESENTATIVE SCHERER: Okay, first
15 of all, the -- once we pass the legislation, until
16 we get reports back, we don't know exactly what's
17 happening. So I'm speaking somewhat out of ignorance,
18 because 2 plus 2 is coming to report to us next Wednesday
19 at our House Education meeting. So it's only what
20 I've been -- by being in contact with the Department
21 of Education, I can tell you that I think I understand
22 what is happening.

23 It wasn't enough money to really give
24 every district or any district a large amount of dollars.
25 Out of the total four million dollars that we're talking

1 about for programs, there were things like teacher
2 evaluations, testing, gifted and talented. All of
3 these programs got a certain percentage.

4 And my recollection, and I don't have
5 the bill before me, and I apologize that I didn't
6 look it up sooner, is that the dropout program received
7 20 percent of that four million dollars, which is
8 four hundred thousand dollars, and another percentage,
9 and I don't remember the number, went to the Second
10 Chance Program, which was the second part of that
11 2 plus 2 bill as it passed. The Second Chance Program
12 said that if someone has already dropped out of school
13 and would like to go back, the district would like
14 to get them back, but they know that if they mainstream
15 them into the same situation that they were in, their
16 chances of actually getting a degree, getting a diploma
17 and succeeding are minimal. That they could go to
18 an alternate school in another district. And the
19 funding that would go through their home district
20 would go to the other district to help them.

21 And there are some real positive things
22 being done with that, I think. For example, there's
23 a BOCS in the southern part of the state. And the
24 BOCS is a cooperative between a number of school districts,
25 a Board of Cooperative Services, that is setting up

1 an alternative school between poorer school districts
2 to try to get those students who are either potential
3 dropouts or have already dropped out of the system
4 who now have decided after a year or two, "Hey, I
5 really need more training if I'm going to get anywhere",
6 and are willing to come back. That that funding would
7 go through those local districts and go to this special
8 alternative school to try to see if they couldn't
9 work with these students.

10 So there is only about four or five pilot
11 projects, because that's all of the money that was
12 there, you know. And it's not going to solve any
13 problems. I don't think it -- you know, we never
14 expected it was going to solve the problems. But
15 what we hoped to have is that in the beginning of
16 the 1987 session, the next session, that there will
17 be a report back saying here were the five projects,
18 and here is what worked in the inner city, and here
19 is what worked in the rural area. And now if we can
20 fund this alternative school in Antonito or wherever
21 they're located, I'm not sure where it is, but here
22 are the kind of results that we can expect.

23 And I think that once we get those very
24 specific examples of what can be done and what is
25 successful, that the money will be there, that the

1 political pressure will be on the right side rather
2 than continually saying well, you know, if you go
3 with a big program and say we need two or three million,
4 five million dollars to try and fight the problem,
5 people want to know how you're going to fight the
6 problem. And we haven't had the answers. And I don't
7 think there are any real answers, you know, anywhere
8 in this country in education to say how do you really
9 fight the problem successfully. We're going to try
10 to find out what has worked in Colorado and try to
11 expand on that.

12 As far as the family, I would -- you
13 know, it's hard to make anything mandatory. But there
14 again, I think there needs to be -- I would prefer
15 to see a great deal of close relationship between
16 the school district and the parents of children.
17 And I think that should be true in any one of our
18 districts and any one of our students, whether Hispanic
19 or non-Hispanic, to try to make involved parents more.
20 And it's a shame, I think, that our general population
21 is very critical of public education, and yet so few
22 people as either parents or taxpayers take much of
23 an interest and are willing to give even a half an
24 hour a week or a month of their time to try to find
25 out how their own child is doing and become involved

1 in that relationship. And you know, I think that's
2 another question.

3 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much,
4 Representative Scherer.

5 REPRESENTATIVE SCHERER: Sure.

6 MS. KURTZ: We appreciate your taking
7 the time to do this.

8 Is Dr. Aguayo here?

9 MS. BRADFORD: I'm not Dr. Aguayo. But
10 it was my understanding that I was to speak before
11 him. I'm Naomi Bradford. I'm a member of the Denver
12 Board of Education.

13 MS. KURTZ: I was told that he was speaking
14 in place of you. That's the reason I didn't call
15 you.

16 MS. BRADFORD: Oh, okay. I think that
17 might have been misinterpreted, because there are
18 three of us speaking in this one time slot so that
19 there can be hopefully a well-rounded presentation
20 from the Denver Board of Education and the administration
21 of the Denver Public Schools. So with your permission,
22 Madame Chairman, I would like to proceed.

23 MS. KURTZ: Please do.

24 MS. BRADFORD: As I said, I have -- I
25 am now a member of the Board of Education, and I have

1 been for some ten and a half years. And I want you
2 to know that this Board of Education is very, very
3 concerned about the dropout problem, not just for
4 Hispanic students, but for all of our students.

5 We have over the years put forth a number
6 of efforts to address this problem from the standpoint
7 of hopefully increasing achievement, addressing cultural
8 needs, addressing language needs, and addressing what
9 we believe is a very critical need of providing skills
10 to young people so that when they graduate from our
11 school system that they at least have the options
12 of going on to higher education or having a saleable
13 skill that allows them to go out and earn a living
14 for themselves.

15 I'm not going to go into detail on these
16 particular programs, because that's the piece that
17 Dr. Aguayo has. And in addition to the remarks that
18 Dr. Aguayo will make, he will also be presenting written
19 material on these programs because the time is limited,
20 and we certainly couldn't cover them all here.

21 Additionally sharing my time slot is
22 also Paul Sandoval, who is another member of the Board
23 of Education who is very, very concerned about this
24 particular issue.

25 I said I wasn't going to go into detail

1 over the programs that we have, because somebody else
2 is going to do that. But I am going to mention one
3 very comprehensive effort that has been in planning
4 in the Denver Public Schools for two years, and now
5 this year began implementation. And that's a program
6 commonly referred to as Promotional Standards. That's
7 an effort that we believe is going to not only improve
8 instruction, but is going to improve learning
9 comprehensively in the Denver Public Schools. And
10 it is a program whose format is such that each of
11 the learning objectives in four subject areas have
12 been identified semester by semester. Teachers are
13 expected to teach to those objectives. Students are
14 evaluated periodically to see if learning has taken
15 place; if learning has not taken place, re-teaching
16 is expected to take place. A remediation process.
17 It's a far more concerted effort than we've ever put
18 forth before to identify a lack of learning before
19 it equals failure.

20 We know that that is not the only answer,
21 and as I said, we have a number of other programs
22 to address this issue. But I'm not going to stand
23 before you today and tell you that the Denver Public
24 Schools has solved the problem of dropouts. You can
25 look at our statistics, again which Dr. Aguayo will

1 be providing you, I believe. And those statistics
2 clearly indicate that we have not solved that problem.

3 But we do not believe that this problem
4 is going to be solved by only one entity of the community.
5 And we sincerely hope that in the efforts that we're
6 going to be engaging ourselves in in the Denver Public
7 Schools in the upcoming months that we can serve as
8 a catalyst for the entire community to address this
9 problem. Because we believe the answer in order to
10 be total has to be a community effort. There is not
11 one of us with that kind of corner on wisdom that
12 would allow us singularly to come up with an answer.

13 As you've heard a moment ago, our funds
14 are limited, also. And that presents a formidable
15 challenge for us, because you can't simply do everything
16 that you would like to do. Because there is a limitation
17 to the dollars that will fund those programs.

18 The Denver Board of Education this year
19 as the school year started adopted a major goal that
20 said we were going to undertake a comprehensive review
21 of the system and come up again with a comprehensive
22 plan that we hope will re-examine this issue of dropouts
23 and set some directions for us for over the next five
24 to ten years that we hope will pay off in ways that
25 we have not seen in the past so far.

1 I have to say something else, and that
2 is that there is more to Hispanic students than dropouts.
3 There are a lot of Hispanic students that are successful.
4 And I think that once they move beyond that level
5 of being at risk and become successful, we tend not
6 to focus on them. But in the Denver Public Schools,
7 we believe our job is more than to focus on the kids
8 that are at risk at dropping out, but to focus on
9 raising those students to their highest potential.

10 And I believe again Dr. Aguayo will mention
11 a couple of very important programs that we have that
12 take Hispanic students, minority students generally,
13 and move them to a very high potential that has had
14 some really tremendous results.

15 So I want you to know that we have been
16 having some results. We have been having some successes.
17 And those kinds of things need to be talked about,
18 too. Because to simply talk about Hispanic students
19 in the terms of dropouts is to do them a disservice.
20 To do those families and those kids a disservice that
21 have been successful. And those programs that have
22 been successful. So I think there's another side
23 of this coin that we dare not ignore.

24 I want to thank you for having this kind
25 of hearing, because it certainly does focus the minds

1 of the community in an area that we all have to focus
2 upon. And I think that your efforts that you have
3 put forth in bringing everybody together on this issue
4 is going to enhance our ability as a school system
5 in Denver to pull together that community effort that
6 I alluded to.

7 I'm going to stop now so that Mr. Sandoval
8 can have a few words. But I will be right here, and
9 in your question and answer period I'll be happy to
10 respond to anything that you would like me to respond
11 to.

12 MS. KURTZ: Thank you. I'm going to
13 ask the panel to please hold their questions until
14 the full presentation has been made.

15 Mr. Sandoval?

16 MR. SANDOVAL: Thank you very much.
17 Thank you for your time.

18 My name is Paul Sandoval, and I'm a member
19 of the Denver Public Schools Board of Education.
20 I would like to give you just a brief background of
21 myself. I'm a former college counselor, and I ran
22 an alternative Junior High School for Hispanic dropouts
23 for about four years. And I have been involved with
24 educational issues, particularly Hispanic educational
25 issues, for the last 18 years. So I speak of one

1 of having had experience, both on running a school
2 and also counseling kids.

3 I'm a former State Senator who was on
4 the Education Committee for six years, so I speak
5 on a state level; maybe not eloquently, but I do know
6 that issue somewhat.

7 The specific issue I think we have to
8 talk about is to address the magnitude of the problem.
9 For years, we all have dealt with the official statistics,
10 and the state statistics for Hispanic dropouts is
11 about 14.7 percent, they say. To me, that's a lie.
12 My contention is, and we have proof, we have figures.
13 We can't pull them out of computers like others can,
14 but our figures show that we're 50 to 60 percent of
15 the dropout problem. And that, ladies and gentlemen,
16 is something that we have to do something very quickly
17 about.

18 First of all, we've got to get the correct
19 figures. In fact, if we can't get them from the State
20 Department, I hope Jim Scherer and others would pass
21 a law that in fact the State Department of Education
22 be penalized by taking away some of their funds if
23 they don't give us the correct figures. That's one
24 way to do it.

25 (Audience applause)

1 MR. SANDOVAL: It is my belief, also,
2 that in the process of reviewing the count that in
3 fact we look at it by segment areas; by elementary
4 areas, by secondary areas, and by middle school areas.
5 Because a lot of that count, it will show that 7th,
6 8th, and 9th graders are not counted to a certain
7 extent when you have the -- before the middle schools.
8 And what you're having is a tremendous amount of dropout
9 problems with the 7th and 8th graders. And I know
10 that for a fact, because I have worked with those
11 children. We worked with 60 a year, and when we did
12 that, when we did it in our own unique way, we were
13 having 80 percent success rate with those children.
14 And something was right, because what we did was we
15 did one on one counseling, we did home visits, we
16 worked with the Courts, we worked with the police.
17 That is not being done to the extent it was in the
18 1970's.

19 A lot of people say it's because of money.
20 A lot of people say it's because of the bureaucratic
21 system. And that may be. But ladies and gentlemen,
22 we can work together on this. We can work with the
23 city, the state, and the local officials to open up
24 social services problems, to open up the records,
25 which in fact we have to work with. We've got to

1 know which children are having problems with drug
2 or family problems. We've got to know from the police
3 which children are having problems with truancies
4 or with drugs. And more importantly, we have to know
5 from the schools -- we have to know which schools
6 -- which children are attending.

7 For the most part, last year -- I know
8 this, because I asked for figures. I couldn't get
9 figures as to how many kids were not in school. We
10 are now starting to do that because we have put money
11 into a computer system, finally. And we're doing
12 that, and hopefully we're going to get better statistics.

13 We have got to make, in my position,
14 I think, kids responsible. But we also have to make
15 adults responsible for teaching those children the
16 correct manner of functioning within the school system,
17 making sure that when they get to school that they
18 learn. We cannot, in my opinion, lower the expectation
19 of the student. Because when you lower that expectation,
20 that's exactly what you're going to do to them. They
21 won't learn unless you say that this is what you demand
22 of those children. And it's been done all over this
23 country, and I think we have to continue to do this.

24 The statistics, getting back to that
25 very briefly, I think have to be done in such a fashion

1 that when those statistics are coming out that the
2 parents are being informed of which child or which
3 of their children in fact are doing well in school,
4 and which are not. We have that system to a certain
5 degree in the Denver Public Schools, but we've got
6 to have consistent and constant effort by counseling
7 by the counselors, and also by the principals.

8 I don't want to get into a lot of the
9 situations as to what has caused the problems. I
10 think we all know that. There are a lot of sociological
11 problems involved.

12 One solution, or many solutions are if
13 teachers aren't working with those students, replace
14 the teachers. You've got to do that. But you have
15 to do that in a conjunctive manner by doing it vis
16 a vis the agreements that we work out with Denver
17 Classroom Teacher's Association, the Colorado Education
18 Association, et cetera. But do it in a fashion where
19 we can do it where it's all feeling good. But if
20 you have a bad teacher, you replace that teacher.

21 You also have to look at the principals.
22 You should give -- we should give more power to those
23 principals in order for them to work with those teachers
24 and to work with the parents and the students involved.
25 If we don't do that, it's not going to get done.

1 And one last final thing on 2 plus 2;
2 they stole money. They didn't give -- they didn't
3 take it from us. They stole our money, to be very
4 honest with you. They took three hundred and some
5 thousand dollars from Denver, and in effect they took
6 ten counselors away who could have been working with
7 the dropout problem of this city. Thank you.

8 MS. KURTZ: Thank you, Mr. Sandoval.

9 DR. AGUAYO: Madame Chairman, ladies
10 and gentlemen, you have a problem. And I have a problem.
11 We all have that problem. And if we don't face that
12 problem head on in a cooperative fashion, you and
13 I and our children after us will be facing social
14 dynamite. Probably as early as tomorrow, and certainly
15 by the year 2000 and beyond.

16 And I know that time is short. But what
17 I'd like to share with you, at least one practitioner's
18 point of view from what I think is a very pro-active
19 district, and it's interesting to note that we are
20 the only school district that I see on the speaker's
21 list. And maybe you should get a similar kind of
22 perspective from other school districts.

23 The Denver Public Schools, as Ms. Bradford
24 and Mr. Sandoval have mentioned, have been involved
25 over many years in a number of needs assessments that

1 have resulted in broad problematic efforts. As I
2 talk about these problematic efforts, I would want
3 you to keep in mind the idea of addition and subtraction.
4 What we've been involved in traditionally is addition.
5 Add more, add more, add more rather than to think
6 smarter and harder, and to use the system more
7 efficiently.

8 You will get a handout on many of the
9 programs that we have initiated over the years, and
10 you need to understand that we are presently involved
11 in a systematic analysis of all of those programs
12 to see what direct impact they have on all kids, and
13 especially the at risk student. Some of those programs
14 relate to our

15 Metropolitan Youth Education Center that serves hundreds
16 of students and costs millions of dollars. Others
17 relate to the other end of the continuum that Ms. Bradford
18 talked about, the programs for the gifted minority
19 youngster and other youngsters. The Minority Engineering
20 Science Association Program is an example; it serves
21 over 1,000 students and has shown some significant
22 growth and impact.

23 There are many efforts that you will
24 find in the written material that we have handed out
25 to you. There are also other specific day to day

1 efforts that are conducted in the many schools that
2 we have in the Denver Public Schools.

3 But my point this afternoon is to tell
4 you that what we need to do is to focus on the system
5 as the client rather than the student as the client.
6 And if you don't totally understand that, and sometimes
7 I've had difficulty communicating that concept, is
8 it's easier for us and more important to focus on
9 a teacher as an example that has impact on 150 students
10 a day and to try to change. I can't change that teacher's
11 attitude, but certainly work on the behavior. To
12 change that behavior so that those students can have
13 equal access to the many opportunities offered in
14 that classroom and other classrooms in that school
15 rather than to focus on the small number of students
16 that he or she may not have had an opportunity or
17 the relationship or call it whatever you will to provide
18 that student with that access. And subsequently,
19 the student exits that classroom or that school and
20 goes to one of our alternative education programs.

21 So we have embarked upon in the Denver
22 Public Schools is that system analysis, that change
23 process that will begin to change our systems from
24 either healthy systems to healthier systems, or partially
25 healthy systems to healthier systems. And it is a

1 process that is a complicated, difficult process,
2 and you get involved in a lot of political stress
3 at all levels.

4 To give you some specific examples, at
5 the senior high level in the Denver Public Schools,
6 we have implemented under the guidance of the Board
7 of Education and the superintendent a supervising
8 chairperson concept, as we call it. It is someone
9 who knows exactly what is going on in the areas of
10 English, math, science and social studies on a day
11 to day basis, and works with the teachers so that
12 they become more efficient, effective educators who
13 will positively impact our kids tomorrow, and hopefully
14 beyond.

15 We are also working with our principals.
16 Because as Dr. Larson mentioned, the principal is
17 a key in this process. And when I was a principal
18 of a high school, we believed in certain things.
19 And when I say "we", although you can't see him and
20 I'm no longer at that school, there are hundreds of
21 children and parents and community people standing
22 behind such a process. We believed in visibility
23 and accessibility and changing the mores of the school
24 from rigidity and inflexibility to a place where people
25 enjoyed being and working with each other, and in

1 doing that had some significant impact.

2 So now assigned as assistant superintendent,
3 I thought, "That's a good way to go", from my experience
4 both at the elementary and the high school level.
5 And maybe because of my title or others, most of the
6 principals sort of saluted and walked down the hall,
7 and they got halfway down the hall and they said,
8 "Now what do I do?"

9 And so we're beginning to teach the principals
10 how to be those visible and accessible kinds of principals,
11 because that is the kind of model that I believe brings
12 about change, positive change in a school, and again
13 is something consistent with where the system is the
14 client, not the student.

15 The last thing I would say, and I know
16 time is of the essence, is that we do not have the
17 total answer to the problem. And again, it is our
18 problem. And so subsequently, and especially recently,
19 we have been working diligently with a representative
20 group, a number of people from the University of Northern
21 Colorado, Hispanics of Colorado, and more recently
22 with a city contingent, some CBO's or community based
23 organizations. We hope to work with some parent groups
24 and begin to establish a planning process, and if
25 what we're doing, and what we've been doing for many

1 years, is not a good process, we want some feedback.
2 We're positive enough to ask people to come in and
3 take a look at us and tell us where we're doing a
4 good job, where we need to improve.

5 But moreover, what we want to do is get
6 involved in some strategic planning that will change
7 this monolith of our society from going straight towards
8 the iceberg and veering around that iceberg and get
9 to a goal that we think will be beneficial for each
10 kid, and especially for our society.

11 Thank you very much for your time.

12 MS. KURTZ: Thank you, Dr. Aguayo.

13 I'd like to ask the -- I assume that
14 we can contact any one of the three of you at the
15 School Administration building, correct?

16 Okay, questions?

17 MR. CISNEROS: Yes. Dr. Aguayo, we've
18 had a couple of speakers this morning advocate publicly
19 educational vouchers as a choice for Hispanic parents.
20 What do you think about that concept?

21 DR. AGUAYO: Well, Gil, you and I have
22 known each other for quite awhile. And I think what
23 we need to do is systematically work to change the
24 established systems rather than that addition process
25 that I talked about. And I'm not saying that new

1 systems and that people should not have a freedom
2 of choice, but I would hope that they would hold us
3 accountable for what we're doing. And if we are not
4 doing the job, then I would probably support such
5 an idea.

6 MS. BERKOWITZ: There's been a lot of
7 testimony this morning relating to the need for teachers,
8 counselors, for other school staff to become more
9 sensitive and to develop greater respect for cultural
10 diversity and background of kids. I know you've got
11 a lot of programs out there, and I'm familiar with
12 some of them. But is this -- do you also concur with
13 this, and how are you addressing that?

14 DR. AGUAYO: I concur with that, and
15 it's that attitude and behavior that I talked about
16 just briefly. And although I probably could not change
17 your attitude or anyone else's, I can certainly change
18 your behavior if you worked in one of our schools.

19 And what we're doing is holding you
20 accountable for what we think are some expectations
21 that are necessary for our students. To give you
22 an example of counselors, we have initiated an effective
23 counseling program where we have redefined the
24 responsibilities of the counselor to where they are
25 not no longer doing something mythical with mythical

1 students in a mythical room, but are out where the
2 rubber meets the road and responsive to kids and taking
3 risks on behalf of kids and working with teachers
4 who have that difficulty.

5 So there are a number of those organizational
6 change and development kinds of strategy that we have
7 implemented in the last two years. And especially
8 under the direction of this Board of Education and
9 our superintendents.

10 MR. SLAYBAUGH: I've heard the dropout
11 rate varied everywhere from 11.8 to 60 percent. Who
12 is responsible for determining the dropout rate in
13 the state of Colorado, and how do they go about doing
14 that if you've got that much of a variance?

15 DR. AGUAYO: I would start out by responding
16 to your question as I did earlier; I think you're
17 responsible for that, and I'm responsible for that,
18 and all of us are responsible for that. And maybe
19 to dovetail onto the statement that Mr. Sandoval mentioned,
20 that we need to do a more objective needs assessment,
21 if you will, and clearly identify the magnitude of
22 the problem and face it head-on.

23 MR. SLAYBAUGH: Are we trying to hide
24 the problem?

25 DR. AGUAYO: When you say "we", I can't

1 speak for --

2 MR. SLAYBAUGH: Well, you said I'm partially
3 responsible for it. I said are we trying to hide
4 the problem; that way, I don't pin it on anybody but
5 me.

6 DR. AGUAYO: To some degree, yes, I think
7 so.

8 MR. SLAYBAUGH: All right.

9 MS. KURTZ: Ms. Bradford, did you want
10 to make a comment?

11 MS. BRADFORD: You must have been reading
12 my mind. I just wanted to re-emphasize the point,
13 Madame Chairman, that Mr. Sandoval mentioned concerning
14 the method that is employed to gather the statistics
15 on dropouts. There is not now in place one design
16 that everyone follows. And I don't know that anyone
17 anywhere claims to have the whole answer to how to
18 put that design together. And I feel that probably
19 the single most fundamental thing that needs to be
20 done as we all face this problem is to finally come
21 up with the definition with an evaluation instrument
22 of some sort that allows us to come to conclusions
23 that can be used, and we're not comparing apples and
24 oranges.

25 And so I think that's a critical thing

1
2 that you can help us with, that the state legislature
3 can help us with, that the Department of Education
4 can help us with.

5 MR. CISNEROS: How do we help you with
6 that, though?

7 MS. BRADFORD: Well, I believe that just
8 surfacing the issue, that that's -- one of the most
9 fundamental issues in this problem is to try to come
10 up with one measuring instrument, one means of finding
11 those statistics, one way of tracking.

12 Right now, there's probably as many different
13 approaches to that as there are school districts.
14 And yes, that does allow some people to hide the problem.
15 And then when other districts come out and lay it
16 right out and the public does everything they can
17 to find everyone that's a dropout, then that district
18 looks like it has a bigger problem. If we really
19 want to know what the problem is, then we have to
20 have a measurement that does that, that has some validity.
21 And I think that's what you need, we all need first
22 and foremost is valid statistics. And we don't have
23 it now.

24 MS. KURTZ: Okay, last question. Any
25 last questions?

1 (Pause)

2 MS. KURTZ: I'd like to thank Ms. Bradford
3 and the gentlemen from the school district for their
4 presentation.

5 We will now take a ten minute break.

6 (Short recess off the record)

7 MS. KURTZ: Can we please get started
8 again?

9 (Pause.)

10 MS. KURTZ: Are you Mr. Herrera?

11 MR. HERRERA: I'm Mr. Herrera, yes.

12 MS. KURTZ: Would you please state your
13 name, your address, and a phone number where we can
14 reach you if we want to get more information following
15 your presentation.

16 MR. HERRERA: All right. My name is
17 Joe Herrera, I live at 3538 Mine Street, Denver, 80211,
18 and my phone number is 433-1546.

19 MS. KURTZ: Thank you.

20 MR. HERRERA: I am speaking as a parent
21 involved with the North High School, and I'm also
22 involved with the United Parents for Progressive
23 Education. It's a new organization that we formed
24 because we're concerned with the high number of kids
25 that are pushed out of the school system in Denver.

1 I think that basically what we want to
2 say is that there's no question that there's discrimination
3 in the school system, and we hope that the Commission
4 agrees with us and does an investigation of the Denver
5 Public School System. I think that the consequences
6 speak for themselves with the number of Hispanic students
7 that we're losing.

8 In the last two years at North High School,
9 we started with a graduating class of 675; we've graduated
10 200. We're saying what happened to the other 400
11 and some students that never completed the educational
12 system in this school system?

13 There has been a lot of comments said
14 about the culture and the lack of cultural awareness
15 in the schools. We agree with that. There's no history
16 on the Mexican American contribution to this country.
17 As a prime example, they mention the media. I want
18 to elaborate on that a little bit. The other night
19 on national television, there was a presentation and
20 induction of Mr. Bob Hope into the Hall of Fame in
21 the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts. And they
22 had the military there because of his contributions
23 to the military during the World War II. Yet I saw
24 no Hispanic recognition in that program, and yet the
25 Hispanic, Mexican American of this country won more

1 Congressional Medals of Honor than any other ethnic
2 group. And we were excluded in that particular program.
3 I have some concerns about that.

4 We -- at North High School, I'm on the
5 Improvement Counsel Accountability Counsel that was
6 established by the school board to get input from
7 the parents. And let me tell you folks, they want
8 the parent's participation, and I question that.
9 I question their sincerity on that. Parents that
10 are involved with the school system, their students
11 are harassed in the school because of the involvement
12 of the parents. So as a consequence, the parents
13 are reluctant to participate. If I participate in
14 the School Accountability Counsel, the teachers find
15 out. And so what happens? My children are victims
16 of discrimination because of my involvement with the
17 school system. This is a fact.

18 I think that what we need to do in this
19 school system is start weeding out the teachers that
20 are insensitive and that are not teaching our kids.
21 I think that one of the problems is there is no
22 continuation of curriculum from the middle school
23 to the high school. I think that -- I had experiences
24 with one of my students who was taking French. And
25 when she got to the high school -- she was an A and

1 B student at the middle school. When she got to high
2 school, the first year of French there the teachers
3 told her they did not teach it properly at the middle
4 school; therefore, you're failing this class.

5 I immediately called the principal, and
6 I said, "I want to meet with that teacher. I want
7 to find out what is going on in this school system."

8 In discussing with that teacher, she
9 said that they had not trained her properly at the
10 middle school. That is not my fault.

11 I said, "You are the teachers. We rely
12 -- we turn our children over to you to teach our kids.
13 Now if you're not teaching them properly at the middle
14 school, and then you -- when they come to high school
15 they fail, then I think you're not teaching them.
16 It's not that our students can't learn. You're not
17 teaching our kids."

18 And that's a problem in this school system,
19 that they're not teaching our kids. I think that
20 they're discriminating very selectively. And the
21 way they do that, if they want to give a child a less
22 grade than they deserve, they say that they were absent.
23 Who challenges that? Once they close that door and
24 they walk in that classroom, they are at the mercy
25 of those teachers.

1 I think the school board took some big
2 steps when they set up the supervisor chairperson.
3 I would like to know when they're going to start evaluating
4 that program, because I think it's time for those
5 supervisor chairpersons to start coming out with some
6 statistics on some of these teachers that are not
7 really teaching our kids.

8 And we created another democracy there,
9 and I agree with it. But I think we have to evaluate
10 the effectiveness of that program. But we can't go
11 for five years and have our kids continue to be pushed
12 out of the school system and say, "Well, we set up
13 the supervisory chairperson to evaluate and see if
14 the teachers have the competency to teach the kids,
15 and that they're teaching them fairly and objectively."

16 And that's what we want. We want our
17 kids to be taught and to be graded fairly on the grades
18 that they earned. Not based on being downgraded based
19 on the fact of their ethnic or minority background.

20 I'd like to make some recommendations
21 for the solutions to the problem. And I think the
22 number one solution would be to reduce the class size.
23 There's no way that you can teach students when you
24 have 38 students in a class. That's way too large.

25 I talked to and discussed this with some

1 of the school board members. They say it's too costly.
2 Well, education is a costly commodity. But it's more
3 costly if the kids don't get an education. I think
4 we have to weigh where the dollars should be spent.
5 Should we spend them on children that are discriminated
6 against who can't get employment because of discrimination,
7 who can't get an education because of discrimination?
8 So we just continue to go with the status quo, and
9 maybe ten or five will get through the school. But
10 what happens to the other 35? And those are the students
11 that we're concerned with.

12 We need to build on the career plan for
13 these students. From the time that they start into
14 the school, we should have a career plan for these
15 students. The Federal Government mandates this, but
16 I don't think any school district in this country
17 is doing this. They do it for the handicapped students,
18 but they don't do it for the normal, average student.

19 Poor counseling; one of the major problems
20 we're confronting in our school district is there
21 is no counseling at all going on. These kids are
22 scheduled into classes by computers with no discussing
23 with the counselors, and because we don't have adequate
24 counseling in the schools. And all we're asking for
25 is fairness in the grading process.

1 Special services, tutorial programs,
2 to be implemented, to ensure that these children continue
3 and complete their education. And I think one of
4 the other things that they should do is ensure that
5 the teachers that are teaching the subject are proficient
6 in the subject that they're teaching. And not put
7 into a class based because there was tenure and they
8 had to reduce some of the teachers, so they put an
9 English teacher into a math class only based on tenure,
10 not because they know the subject matter. And I think
11 that's what is happening in our schools.

12 I'm also going to share my time with
13 two individuals, and I'm going to call on Roni Gonzalez,
14 a student to address this Commission. Roni?

15 MS. GONZALEZ: Hi. I just wanted to
16 talk about a few things about the schools. The first
17 thing is that there is a lot of discrimination where
18 the teacher will give the White people more attention
19 to them, and they won't give enough attention to the
20 Mexican students.

21 And there's another thing; when they're
22 so crowded in the schools and they tell you -- when
23 you need some help, they'll tell, "Wait your turn.
24 You've got to wait until I finish over here."

25 And then there's a lot of students, and

1 then there's not that many counselors. They'll have
2 so many counselors to so many students that you've
3 got to wait your turn to talk to the counselors.

4 And there's another thing; when you get
5 in a grading thing and they don't want -- when your
6 time is to come to get grading, sometimes they'll
7 give you a grade when you're not supposed to get that
8 grade. Sometimes they'll keep you in lower classes
9 when you should be in the higher classes learning
10 that level, and they'll keep you at the same pace
11 because they want you to.

12 And there's another reason why there's
13 a lot of dropout rates is because they keep suspending
14 kids and keep doing it. And then when there's so
15 much suspension that they just don't want to come
16 back to school anymore, they should just try to keep
17 them in school and try to help the problem besides
18 suspending them all of the time.

19 And like I've got two brothers, and they're
20 going to school. And one of them goes to Horace Mann.
21 The teacher did not contact my mother until he had
22 about 12 absences. And then when they finally contacted
23 her, she was very mad. And the same thing goes with
24 him; there's a lot of teachers that just say, "Well,
25 you go to the office. Go sit in a room. Just stay

1 there", when they should be in the classroom talking
2 to them instead of keeping them in a room sitting
3 there writing like 100 things about "I won't do it
4 again". They shouldn't do that.

5 And there's a lot of kids that tell me
6 that, "Why should we go to school if the teachers
7 don't care about us? All they say is, you know, they
8 want us to come to school, and they don't expect nothing
9 out of us, anyways."

10 And a lot of kids I see -- and I live
11 by a school, there's a lot of kids that just go out
12 to the parks and ditch, and the teachers don't even
13 say nothing. They see them go, they don't even report
14 it at all.

15 And I don't know. Now, let's see, I
16 went to three different high schools. Let's see,
17 I dropped out in the 9th grade, and I went to North.
18 Then I dropped out of there, and they said, "Try another
19 school." So I went to Mapleton, and they said, "Try
20 another one." And so I went to Central High School
21 all the way in Pueblo. And then after that, I didn't
22 know what to do, so finally they sent me a tutor.
23 And I had got a tutor. And I had straight A's. And
24 I could see the difference. When you have somebody
25 paying attention to you, you get good grades and they're

1 not discriminating against you. But then when you
2 have a full classroom with one teacher and they tell
3 you, "Just wait, just wait your turn, you'll have
4 your turn later", or they throw a book at you and
5 a piece of paper and tell you to write and they don't
6 explain it, well, I think the students shouldn't have
7 to push a pencil all of the time, either. I think
8 the teachers should have time to talk a lot and get
9 things out instead of always making you push a pencil.
10 And I think it's boring. A lot of students think
11 it's boring, too.

12 But now you're going to have a dropout
13 rate until you can fix it, you know. There shouldn't
14 be teachers in there -- if they can't teach the students,
15 they should go back to school. And they've got to
16 go back to school and learn respect.

17 (Audience applause)

18 And I don't know, I go to school now
19 and I love it. And I'm graduating, hopefully. And
20 I can see the difference. I'm standing here, and
21 there should be more youth in here than just me, because
22 there's a lot of older adults in here who shouldn't
23 really -- you can hear from them, too, but you've
24 got to hear it from the youth. You've got to change,
25 you've got to see the changes. Not give them everything

1 they want, you know, but you've got to give them some
2 changes.

3 That's all I've got to say.

4 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much.

5 MR. HERRERA: Ms. Salazar?

6 MS. SALAZAR: My name is Mary Lou Salazar.
7 I work at North High School as the Youth Activity
8 Specialist. And basically I've been hired to keep
9 kids from dropping out of school. One person, okay?
10 A big job I have. And it's not just my job.

11 The teachers tell me it's the parents.
12 The parents tell me it's the teachers. The administrators
13 say they don't know what we can do. The board members
14 say something else. The legislature say something
15 else. And I agree with the man who spoke earlier
16 this afternoon who said, "Look at our history and
17 you'll find out the reasons why."

18 Twenty five years ago, I was at meetings
19 addressing the same problem. I sat in buildings talking.
20 I've said it over and over and over again. I could
21 take a tape recorder and I've been saying the same
22 thing for 25 years. What is the problem? I don't
23 want to sit here and talk about what's the problem,
24 because obviously that has come out today.

25 What are some of the solutions? First

1 of all, I'd like to point out that at North High School,
2 we have 5 percent American Indians. We have 1.8 percent
3 Black. We have 6.2 percent Asian. We have 64.8 percent
4 -- and I don't like the word Hispanics. We have Latins,
5 Mexicans, Indians, Puerto Ricans, call us whatever
6 you want to call us. We're of brown skin.

7 We have 26.7 percent other. Let's compare
8 that with the court order that says that we need to
9 have the minimum minorities, 11.7 percent, the maximum,
10 23.2 percent. No more than that.

11 At North High School, myself and the
12 vice-principal sat down for a few minutes before this
13 morning and talked about how many Chicano teachers
14 we have to how many students to how many Anglo teachers.
15 We have 8 Chicano teachers at North High School with
16 the Chicano population being 64.8 percent. There
17 is maybe one or two percent more, but their names
18 are Chicano, but they are not Chicanos or Chicanas.
19 What I mean by that, they may have been married to
20 a minority.

21 Okay, for one moment I'd like you to
22 empathize and put yourself in a school setting where
23 there are 64.8 percent White, and you have 8.8 percent
24 Anglo teachers. The rest are Chicanos and Blacks.
25 What you're going to learn is going to be entirely

1 different.

2 What was my problem in school? The same
3 problem that the kids have today. I was taught at
4 home cooperation, love, culture, togetherness, justice,
5 peace, friendship. Today we had an assembly at North
6 High School honoring Martin Luther King. What did
7 he teach us? Lessons that we haven't learned very
8 well, in my opinion.

9 Peace and brotherhood is never going
10 to come to our world unless people quit talking about
11 the problems and start addressing them with seriousness.
12 And that means each and every one of us look at our
13 attitudes.

14 Look at the discriminative attitudes.
15 There was a teacher here from Lincoln here awhile
16 ago who said that he has traveled around the globe.
17 I've heard many teachers talk like this. Our kids
18 travel around North Denver. If they're lucky, they
19 travel around the city. We do not travel. We know
20 nothing of that world due to poverty, and I'm a victim
21 of poverty. Nine children in my family. I'm the
22 first one to graduate. More than my grades was my
23 determination when a teacher told me I would not amount
24 to nothing. I'm a graduate of the Denver Public Schools,
25 1959.

1 Now when kids come to me with tremendous
2 psychological problems, alcoholism in the family,
3 heartbreak, we just lost a 17 year old child to cancer,
4 these kids can't function well in the school. And
5 the teachers and the administrators and the public
6 wants to know why. Because if you were in Mexico
7 trying to learn Spanish and learn a new culture and
8 a new world, you wouldn't do very well. And our kids
9 don't do very well.

10 But that is not because they can't.
11 It's because there are attitudes a lot of times that
12 tell them they can't. And I think attitudes have
13 to change. Teachers have to show more caring. Parents
14 have to show more caring. They want parents in the
15 school. Our parents weren't educated. They feel
16 intimidated to walk into a school building. They're
17 coming now that I'm there, but I'm only one person.
18 So I go to their homes for conferences. We talk about
19 drugs, alcohol, pregnancies, and all of the other
20 things that keep people out of school.

21 I would like to make two possible suggestions;
22 I have a letter, it's not with me but I'll be glad
23 to mail it to you, that 78 percent of minorities who
24 take the CAT, which is the Colorado Achievement Test,
25 do not pass it. They have four chances to take it,

1 and four times they do not pass it.

2 My suggestion is that the procedures
3 for evaluation to recruit minority teachers into the
4 schools so we can turn that thing around has to change.
5 And they have to change the procedures to evaluate.

6 I have taught in the college. I have
7 taught in the high school. But I see a lot of problems.
8 I'd like to thank you for your time.

9 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much.

10 MR. ATLER: I have a question for the
11 student, if she is still here. My question is what
12 school are you going to now, and what made the difference?

13 MS. GONZALEZ: Well, right now I'm going
14 to the Escuela Tlatelolco. And the difference is
15 they give you more -- let's see, they give you --
16 they show you that you can be something in life.
17 They don't put you down, they spend time with you
18 all of the time. And they talk a lot about your history.
19 They tell you a lot, and we study different histories.
20 And we go on a lot of excursions. And like we go
21 to meetings like this to learn, too.

22 And the thing about it is we've got Chicano
23 teachers in there, and we've got counselors to talk
24 to. And see, when we relate to the same people, it's
25 easier. It's different when you've got somebody different

1 from you. They don't go back to your times and know
2 what it's like. They don't live in the same place
3 that you do, they don't know the history of what you
4 are.

5 But, I don't know, I like my school because
6 they give you attention, everything. They make you
7 feel you're wanted. They don't leave you behind and
8 say, "Well, I'll get to you later." They tell you
9 -- they explain your homework right there. If you
10 don't get it, they'll wait for you after school and
11 they'll explain for you.

12 In other schools, they'll tell you, "Just
13 come by in the office." And then when you go, sometimes
14 they say, "Well, maybe come back later. I'm busy
15 right now."

16 Well, the school -- I think there should
17 be more schools. And right now, there's about --
18 I don't know, almost 30 students in the schools.
19 And we go to school, and they make you go to school.
20 They'll call you and they'll tell you if you don't
21 go to school, you'd better have a good reason why
22 you didn't go to school.

23 And I don't know, it seems easier to
24 learn with them. When you go to a public school,
25 sometimes they throw you a test and they say, "Well,

1 we went over this through the year", you know, and
2 you've got to take that test. And then when you get
3 the test, you don't know what it is. Well, what are
4 you supposed to do then?

5 But when you're in our school, you feel
6 like you could get that test and you know it and you're
7 going to do it. Because you went over it, you've
8 got your feedback with it, and the teachers explain
9 to you.

10 They don't tell you -- we don't get suspended
11 in our school. You're going to come back to school
12 the next day and learn that you're not supposed to
13 do that. But our school doesn't tell you, "You're
14 suspended for three or four days." They want you
15 there in school real bad. They don't want -- our
16 school is not the kind where you're going to be a
17 dropout or a pushout. No one is going to be dropped
18 out of the school. They're staying there.

19 MR. ATLER: How many students are there
20 in your school?

21 MS. GONZALEZ: It's about 30.

22 MR. ATLER: Thank you.

23 MS. KURTZ: Any other questions from
24 the panel members?

25 MR. TREPANIER: Yes. Mr. Herrera, what

1 are the types of discrimination that you referred
2 to that the students have to --

3 MR. HERRERA: The type of discrimination
4 is the downgrading of the student's grades in the
5 school, in the classroom. I think Roni kind of touched
6 on that. I think that our students -- our kids know
7 that they should have received a B, all right? So
8 the teachers give them a D or an F. And what happens
9 is that they know that they can get away with it,
10 because 90 percent of the parents aren't going to
11 challenge those grades, or the students.

12 And so as a result of that, their scores
13 are lower, they don't qualify for higher education,
14 college education, and they do it discriminatorily.
15 And it's only our students.

16 When you have a class of 32 students
17 and only 2 pass, I say the teacher is failing, not
18 the students. And that is what is going on in the
19 school system. You can check some of these schools
20 in the high schools, and these teachers that have
21 30, 25, 30 students, and only 2 of their students
22 are passing their subject matter, they're not teaching
23 them. And I think it's very obvious, because those
24 students are minority.

25 If you turn it around, I think you'd

1 find the opposite. You'd probably have 28 of the
2 students passing and 2 failing. And I think that
3 a lot of the teachers do grade on the bell curve where
4 you -- so many have to fail. I think the bell curve
5 is very discriminatory, and I think that the teachers
6 who are using it today are using it to the detriment
7 of our students. I think it puts all of our kids
8 in a failing category if they choose to use the bell
9 curve. And that's the way the bell curve system is
10 set up. Evidently, it was set up for our students
11 so that we wouldn't pass. Because we're the only
12 ones that aren't failing.

13 (Audience applause)

14 MR. CISNEROS: My question, Mr. Herrera,
15 you mentioned at the beginning of your -- you mentioned
16 in your introductory remarks that you were on a parent
17 committee, but you felt like the administrators didn't
18 pay attention to you. Well, it seems to me that you're
19 extremely articulate and you get your point across;
20 why didn't you make them listen to you?

21 MR. HERRERA: Well, I'm still on the
22 committee. I haven't given up. I'm going to turn
23 it around. But I think my point here is that -- I
24 think the superintendent made a point of it, too.
25 You have administrators in the school, the principals

1 of the school. They're put in there to run the school,
2 and there's no way a principal with 2,000 students
3 could find out if every one of those students is given
4 an adequate education. This is the method for the
5 supervisory chairperson, which I think is a good
6 procedure. I just want to see what they're doing.
7 And I want to see if those supervisory chairpersons
8 are carrying out their responsibilities as the school
9 board wants them to. And I think we have to evaluate
10 them. I'm all for that at this point in time, but
11 I want to see what the evaluation is going to show,
12 if anything is accomplished.

13 I think if we stop just 1 percent of
14 our students from dropping out this year with that
15 procedure, we've accomplished something. But if our
16 increase of dropouts increases, then we don't need
17 the supervisory chairperson, because they haven't
18 done their job. Because the ultimate goal is there
19 are some teachers that have to be taken out of the
20 school system.

21 And one of the problems with the tenure
22 law is that you have to wait three years before you
23 take any action. Well, my concern is if a teacher
24 is not teaching, they're teaching 100 kids during
25 the day, those 100 students aren't learning a damn

1 thing because they're waiting for the -- the school
2 administration is waiting for the three years to get
3 rid of that teacher. Because it's still -- during
4 that process, the students are in that classroom and
5 they're not learning anything. There's probably all
6 of our students that are being put with those teachers.
7 They put them in -- they don't put them in the fast
8 track like Roni says. They stereotype them as
9 non-achievers, and it's very frustrating.

10 When you work, and you know you deserve
11 a B and you get a D, and your parent shows concern
12 for getting a D but they don't challenge the fact
13 or sit down and listen to you, "Hey, I should have
14 got a B." We have to challenge those teachers, and
15 that's what hasn't been done. And I think we'll be
16 doing it more.

17 MR. TREPANIER: One more question; Mr.
18 Herrera, do you feel or do you have evidence that
19 your children are being harassed or discriminated
20 because you're on the parent committee?

21 MR. HERRERA: Very definitely. Very
22 definitely. Not only myself, but other parents have
23 brought this to the attention of the administrators.
24 And we're trying to deal with that.

25 But there's no question in my mind that

1 the more involved you get as a parent in the schools,
2 the more harassment your children are going to receive.
3 Especially if you're vocal.

4 MS. KURTZ: We have one last question,
5 and then we'll have to move on.

6 MR. HERRERA: Sure.

7 MR. ELLIS: The materials we have in
8 front of us prepared by the Denver School Board suggest
9 that the current year dropout percentages for Hispanics
10 are 13 percent, for Anglos are 10 percent, for American
11 Indians are 9 percent, and for Blacks, 15 percent
12 at North High School.

13 My question to you is because of those
14 high Anglo figures, are the problems that we're hearing
15 regarding teacher sensitivity towards poor performing
16 students basically the same for Anglos, or is there
17 a special bad situation for the minority groups there
18 in terms of the teacher's attitudes?

19 MR. HERRERA: I think that the School
20 Accreditation Committee two years ago went in, and
21 they evaluate the schools every four years. And at
22 that time, the Accreditation Committee that was at
23 North High School told the administrator at that time,
24 "You have an excellent bunch of students at this school.
25 You have some problems with your teachers, and you

1 should deal with those problems and get rid of those
2 teachers that are not providing the education to the
3 students that you're supposed to be in the school
4 system."

5 That was three years ago. Nothing has
6 ever taken place, you know. The Accreditation --
7 they come in and they spend a full week talking to
8 each of the teachers in the classes, and the division
9 managers. And that's -- so it affects all of the
10 students, but more so the Hispanic students because
11 we're the larger numbers in the school.

12 MS. KURTZ: I'm going to have to end
13 this testimony right now.

14 Mr. Herrera, we certainly appreciate
15 your coming and bringing with you Ms. Gonzalez and
16 Ms. Salazar. I think it was very helpful in our
17 deliberations to hear what these folks have to say.
18 And we appreciate it.

19 MR. HERRERA: Thank you very much.

20 MS. KURTZ: Armando C. de Baca?

21 MR. DE BACA: Madame Chairman, my name
22 is Armando de Baca. I've been invited, I presume,
23 because I'm the State Director, which is otherwise
24 known as the Chairman of the League of United Latin
25 American Citizens.

1 The league is probably invited to address
2 the board because of its history. The league was
3 organized in Corpus Christi Texas in 1929, longer
4 ago than both Maxine and I have been alive.

5 In Colorado, the first council was organized
6 in 1937. Today we have approximately 15 councils
7 encompassing about 500 members. Throughout the United
8 States, we have councils in all 46 -- in 46 of the
9 50 states, with approximately 110,000 members.

10 The preamble to the organizational document
11 of the league indicates its concern and desire to
12 educate the children of the membership, and has continued
13 for these last 55 years. The league sponsors at the
14 present time educational programs such as the Educational
15 Service Centers in 18 major cities in the United States
16 where there is a high concentration of Latinos or
17 Mexican Americans, as you choose to call them.

18 We provide -- we have centers providing
19 counseling service and assistance in the form of
20 scholarships and such other things assisting the students
21 to obtain and finish a college education. In addition
22 to that, the Educational Centers sponsor and provide
23 somewhere around 500 scholarships per year totalling
24 in excess of five hundred thousand dollars. That
25 is matched ordinarily by the efforts of local councils.

1 In Colorado, for example, we did a very successful
2 year for this academic year, and we've given out
3 approximately twenty five thousand dollars matching
4 the monies that we were getting in the national funds.

5 I would invite this group to seriously
6 reconsider, and in fact I must recommend that this
7 group take an entire day to listen to Dr. Lucero,
8 Dr. Frank Lucero who addressed the group this morning
9 from the University of Northern Colorado. I believe
10 that his plan, when completed, and it's not quite
11 done at this time, is going to -- and will give the
12 state of Colorado, all of the local school districts,
13 all school buildings, all schools the proper program
14 with which to address and eventually eliminate the
15 dropout problem. And I again seriously invite your
16 attention to Dr. Lucero's program, because it's a
17 program that we've been working on for a number of
18 years; myself, as well as I would hazard 50 or 60
19 educators and lay people from across the state of
20 Colorado.

21 This program, as you may recall, addresses
22 the policy making body, addresses the school board,
23 addresses the administration, addresses the buildings,
24 addresses the teachers, addresses curriculum content,
25 addresses parent involvement. The genius of that

1 program is that it's made up in modules which can
2 be separated to utilize any one of the several modules
3 independent of the others. But all of them attack
4 the total educational program for any given student
5 in any given setting. And we would therefore recommend
6 that you look at this very, very carefully.

7 We recommend this because the very beginning,
8 the very beginning of the study to establish the need
9 for this kind of a program arose from the case of
10 Sabratieres v. the Board of Education, which is a
11 district court -- Federal District Court case arising
12 out of the Western District of Texas from Del Rio.
13 Pre-dated Brown v. the Board of Education by some
14 25 years. And from that concept wherein the Del Rio
15 School Board was attempting to segregate the schools,
16 Sabratieres and other plaintiffs -- party plaintiffs
17 were able to carve out a system of education within
18 that school district that exists to this very day.
19 And it addresses those things that I just mentioned
20 that Dr. Lucero's plan addresses.

21 If this group is to be of value to the
22 students in Colorado or in the five county area, or
23 in Denver alone, careful analysis must be given of
24 a plan similar to that. It can be rejected in part
25 or in total; however, it must be examined rather carefully

1 because it deals with the very rut of the dropout
2 problem.

3 In order to determine whether the dropout
4 problem has its basis in discrimination, the group
5 may look at some of the things being done in the Denver
6 Public Schools. The Denver Public Schools has an
7 alphabet system to determine bilingual, monolingual,
8 bicultural children on a scale of A through E. They
9 use a test developed in Texas to determine the bilingual
10 ability of Mexican students, or Mexican American students
11 wherein the primary language in the home was Spanish.
12 And so they use this as a yardstick along the way.
13 It is primarily a listening test, a listening device.
14 And we would hope that everyone in this room understands
15 that the process for the learning of a language only
16 begins with hearing or listening. You may have a
17 listening acuity that's very high, but the next step
18 is of course speaking. The following step is reading,
19 and the following step is writing.

20 Well, if all of the children in the Denver
21 Public Schools are being tested on a listening, then
22 the measurement is invalid. It's not predictable,
23 and it's not consistent. And those are the guidelines
24 for a reliable measurement. So we consequently do
25 not have that.

1 One asks the question how does that come
2 about? And it comes about, and why is it unfair?
3 It comes about undoubtedly from laziness, maybe from
4 inability. But what it fails to do most dramatically
5 is that it fails to look at the Latino or the Hispanic
6 community as that community actually is.

7 One thing that the Denver Public Schools
8 cannot give you is the statistics on the Latino or
9 the Hispanic or the Mexican American. True, accurate,
10 valuable statistics. How many of these students are
11 of parents in which English is the predominant language
12 at home? How many are children of parents whose third
13 and fourth generation, or fifth and sixth generation
14 were United States citizens? How many of them are
15 from parents that are from Latin America as opposed
16 to Mexico, Central America as opposed to South America?
17 Because what they bring to the school system is different
18 from those environments.

19 The Central American comes here from
20 a different environment. Number one, he's much more
21 recent than the others. Number two, he comes probably
22 in fear of and running from, or his parents did, a
23 political situation that was intolerable for him.
24 Probably from an economic situation that was more
25 abject in poverty than anything we've known in the

1 United States.

2 If he comes from South America, from
3 the city south of Columbia, you have a completely
4 different environment, a completely different orientation.
5 A more futuristic type of orientation, a better economic
6 system, a much more acute political awareness by the
7 parents. If he comes from our neighbors immediately
8 south of the border, probably the desire is more material
9 because of the existence of poverty there.

10 None of what I've mentioned to you is
11 measured by the Denver Public Schools. The information
12 is available. Probably everyone that has testified
13 today has gone either because they've asked for it
14 or under the Freedom of Information Act and obtained
15 certain statistics. They're available. The system
16 of information gathering at the Denver Public Schools
17 is available to learn all of those things.

18 The fact that nothing is being done about
19 it on its face without more is discriminatory. The
20 fact that nothing is being done about it and the statistics
21 remain the same year after year after year shows an
22 abandon of the rights and the privileges of those
23 students that this school system ought to be educating.

24 The Latino, the Hispanic community has
25 the ability, the intellectual ability, the desire,

1 and the knowledge to solve the problem. This same
2 community has a proposed solution. It would be derelict
3 on the part of the duty of this entire board. It
4 is derelict on the part of the duty of the Board of
5 Education, of every Board of Education within the
6 five county area, and in fact, within the state of
7 Colorado to ignore the very community that can provide
8 the solutions. Because it is the very effective
9 community.

10 And my recommendation again is that that
11 program be taken, be analyzed, and that this group
12 do everything in its power under Title 42 to implement
13 that type of a program. My recommendation is that
14 the program be implemented; if it does not work, then
15 let's change it. But at the present time, I think
16 the crying statement by everyone who has testified
17 today is that nothing is being done. We're doing
18 a lot of studying, we have a lot of statistics, but
19 nothing significant to affect every phase of education,
20 starting with the policy makers and the legislature,
21 is being done today. And my recommendation is that
22 that message as given by the several people who testified
23 today be heeded by this group.

24 If there are any questions, I will be
25 glad to answer same. I want to thank you for your

1 time.

2 MS. KURTZ: Just for the record, Title
3 42 of what?

4 MR. DE BACA: The U.S. Code. The Title
5 that you're here under.

6 MS. KURTZ: Any questions?

7 (Pause)

8 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much.

9 Dr. Audrey Alvarado?

10 DR. ALVARADO: I know you've had a long
11 day. Madame Chair, committee members, staff, honored
12 guests, my name is Dr. Audrey R. Alvarado, and I am
13 the Executive Director of the Latin American Research
14 and Service Agency, LARASA. I would like to thank
15 you for this opportunity to speak to you this afternoon
16 regarding this very critical issue that faces our
17 community. LARASA is a bipartisan and non-profit
18 research agency committed to improving the social
19 and economic condition of Hispanics in the Denver
20 metro area. LARASA acknowledges that educational
21 attainment is one of the most, if not the most, important
22 factors related to social and economic conditions.

23 The purpose of my presentation today
24 is to demonstrate that the magnitude of the Hispanic
25 dropout problem in the Denver metro area is a result

1 of the inequities in access and resources for Hispanic
2 children, constituting a denial of the basic civil
3 rights of Hispanic children living in the Denver metro
4 area. I will demonstrate this linkage by providing
5 data that documents the problem across racial groups
6 and present our views as to the reasons for the problem.

7 The existing national data reveals that
8 Hispanics do not benefit from or participate in the
9 nation's educational system to the same degree as
10 other population groups. From kindergarten through
11 college, proportionately fewer Hispanics than either
12 Blacks or Whites are enrolled in school. National
13 data indicate that one-third of all Hispanics aged
14 18 to 21 have dropped out of high school; emerging
15 local data suggest that the proportion in some urban
16 areas may be more than twice that high. Of Hispanics
17 25 and over, only 45.3 percent are high school graduates;
18 just 7.9 percent have completed college.

19 In Colorado, the data is very similar
20 to the national data. Of Hispanics 25 years and over,
21 only 48 percent were high school graduates and just
22 6.9 percent completed college. One interesting finding
23 we were able to discern from the state data was that
24 there is a high correlation between counties with
25 a large percentage of Hispanics and the percentage

1 of Hispanic adults that have not completed high school.
2 This is summarized in Attachment A of your handout.

3 I will spend most of my time on the data
4 we have analyzed from the 1980 Census for the Denver
5 metro area. This data is summarized in Attachment
6 B. We have analyzed raw data tapes and created a
7 subsample of Hispanics and non-Hispanics. For the
8 25 years and older group, we found that 47.8 percent
9 of Hispanics did not finish high school in contrast
10 to 15.8 percent of non-Hispanics. This means that
11 Hispanic adults were three times less likely than
12 their non-Hispanic counterparts to complete high school.

13 In addition, 26.4 percent, or one out
14 of every four Hispanic adults did not attend high
15 school, in contrast to 6.8 percent of non-Hispanics.
16 Using 1980 Census data and DPS enrollment figures
17 for 1981, we calculated that 24 percent of the school
18 age population were not reported in the Census to
19 be enrolled. This finding confirms national data
20 for Hispanic school enrollment.

21 In terms of college completion rates,
22 we found that 9.1 percent of Hispanic adults completed
23 college in contrast to 29.6 percent of non-Hispanic
24 adults. This means that Hispanics were once again
25 three times less likely than their non-Hispanic

1 counterparts to complete college.

2 LARASA has created a subsample of 16
3 to 24 year olds from the 1980 Census data in order
4 to get a sense of what is currently happening in our
5 school system. By comparing Hispanic and non-Hispanic
6 youth between the selected age groups by dropout status,
7 we have learned the following:

8 Hispanic youth were three times less
9 likely than non-Hispanic youth to complete high school.

10 The reported DPS dropout rate for Hispanics
11 in 1980 was 16.1 percent, which is two times lower
12 than the figure we found in our sample.

13 One out of every three Hispanic 16-24
14 year olds did not complete high school in contrast
15 to one out of every 10 non-Hispanics.

16 Hispanic youth represented three out
17 of every four dropouts in our total sample when the
18 minority student enrollment in DPS in 1980 was 52
19 percent.

20 Hispanic youth were close to 6 times less likely
21 to complete college than non-Hispanic youth.

22 Hispanic youth were close to three times
23 less likely to continue their education beyond high
24 school than non-Hispanics.

25 What are the implications from all of

1 this data? The pattern is the same for our older
2 Hispanic group as it is for our younger group. Hispanics
3 have consistently had higher dropout rates, lower
4 college attendance and completion rates. Something
5 must be done to stop this pattern from repeating itself.

6 Our data revealed that close to 50 percent
7 of Hispanic parents of children in our school system
8 have not completed high school. Their experiences
9 have been limited in relation to dealing with school
10 systems. They may even have had negative personal
11 experiences of their own in dealing with school personnel
12 in regards to their own children. Hispanics continue
13 to drop out at an astounding rate. If we take the
14 non-Hispanic dropout rate as a point of comparison
15 to the Hispanic rate, there is a large discrepancy
16 between the two rates.

17 We propose that the differential dropout
18 rate is partly due to discrimination in the form of
19 educational policies and practices that have not and
20 do not address the needs of Hispanic youth.

21 The data implies that there is little
22 acceptance and commitment to the challenge to teach
23 our students. It is because of this lack of commitment
24 and belief in our students that we find discrimination
25 that our young people face daily in the form of negative

1 stereotypes that teachers have towards them as a group,
2 lack of positive role models at all levels in the
3 system, overcrowding in high minority enrolled schools,
4 inadequate financial resources, and vocational tracking
5 versus college tracking.

6 There is no excuse for a system to continually
7 ignore the needs of a large and growing number of
8 their student body by insisting on maintaining an
9 antiquated educational philosophy. Education as it
10 exists today is in the same form, method and approach
11 of yesterday. I believe the resistance to address
12 the diverse needs and learning styles of Hispanic
13 youth is based on the recognition that the change
14 must be dramatic, all encompassing, and pervasive
15 throughout the system. Those in key decision-making
16 positions do not want to "rock the boat", but rock
17 the boat we must if this issue is to be resolved.

18 We have the information, through past
19 experience and research, that is necessary to create
20 a positive and encouraging learning environment.
21 What is missing is the commitment to start the process.
22 The question I raise to the members of the Colorado
23 Advisory Committee is if the students were non-Hispanic,
24 would we have taken this long to solve the problem?
25 I seriously doubt it.

1 Although my comments have been centered
2 around the school system itself, the approach to solving
3 this problem must include all facets of the community.
4 I am here today because the educational system in
5 Denver does not recognize the problem as a denial
6 of civil rights. Discrimination is pervasive throughout
7 our society and Denver is not immune to it. But one
8 sign of discrimination may be the complete denial
9 that discrimination exists.

10 My recommendation to the Committee is
11 to become involved in studying the issue in the Denver
12 metro area examining where discriminatory practices
13 exist. The data presented here raises questions as
14 to the reasons for the larger dropout rates for Hispanics.
15 The unexplained reason is proposed to be discrimination
16 across the system. Truly an activity under the
17 jurisdiction of this committee for future study.
18 DPS cannot study itself, nor does the Hispanic community
19 have the resources necessary to study DPS.

20 It appears that Colorado's Hispanics
21 require the involvement of the Federal Government
22 in assuring that their children are given the rights
23 established by law in education. We are discouraged
24 by the lack of sensitivity and commitment to fully
25 examine the causes of the problem. This lack of commitment

1 has resulted in half-hearted attempts with less than
2 adequate financial commitments to deal with the issue.

3 One good example in the state of Colorado
4 is the Second Chance Project. A project that is fraught
5 with problems, and we predict is destined to failure.
6 A copy of our analysis is presented for your review.

7 We are aware of the recently released
8 24th report by the Committee on Government Operations
9 chaired by Congressman Weiss in their investigation
10 of civil rights enforcement by the Office for Civil
11 Rights at the Department of Education. The report
12 states that twenty million dollars that were appropriated
13 by Congress for civil rights enforcement between fiscal
14 years 1980 and 1985 was returned to the Treasury or
15 spent on activities unrelated to the Office of Civil
16 Rights operation. Given the seriousness of the dropout
17 problem in Denver and other urban cities, it is truly
18 ironic that allocations around civil rights issues
19 were returned.

20 In closing, I would like to say that
21 although educational opportunities have been increasing
22 and attention has been directed towards recognizing
23 the problem, the current educational status of Hispanics
24 raises questions about equity in the system in terms
25 of policy and policy implementation. Indeed, the

1 economic future of Colorado depends on educating all
2 Americans for more active and equal participation
3 in the economy. More individuals are beginning to
4 pay attention to the statistics; even Governor Lamm
5 identified education as the key issue facing our state
6 in his State of the State address last night.

7 But recognizing a problem that has been
8 with us for many years is not enough. We need your
9 help to turn the tide and ensure brighter prospects
10 for our youth. Thank you for your time.

11 MS. KURTZ: Thank you, Dr. Alvarado.

12 Before taking any questions, would you
13 please state for the record an address and telephone
14 number where we can reach you for followup?

15 DR. ALVARADO: Okay, you do have a card.
16 My card is in that thing.

17 MS. KURTZ: Oh, thank you very much.

18 Questions?

19 (Pause)

20 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much, Dr. Alvarado.

21 DR. ALVARADO: Thank you.

22 MS. KURTZ: Our last scheduled speaker
23 for the day is Rich Castro.

24 MR. CASTRO: Thank you, Madame Chairman.

25 My name is Richard Castro, and I'm the

1 Executive Director of the Agency for Human Rights
2 and Community Relations for the City and County of
3 Denver. I'm speaking to you today as a member of
4 the Skyline GI Forum, a veteran Hispanic organization,
5 and on behalf of Dr. John Soto, who is the state chairman
6 of the American GI Forum in the state of Colorado.
7 Dr. Soto could not be at this presentation today;
8 he is in Canon City on another matter and asked that
9 I come and speak on behalf of the committee to take
10 a look at this issue on behalf of the GI Forum.

11 I have some prepared testimony that I'd
12 like to leave with the Chairwoman following my presentation
13 if I might, Madame Chairman?

14 MS. KURTZ: Thank you.

15 MR. CASTRO: The American GI Forum welcomes
16 the opportunity to address the Advisory Committee
17 Commission on Civil Rights regarding the issue of
18 increased high school dropout rates among Hispanic
19 youth. Given the brevity of time permitted, we welcome
20 the opportunity to share additional ideas at future
21 meetings.

22 The Colorado American GI Forum represents
23 Hispanic veterans and their families in cities throughout
24 Colorado and the nation. We believe the dropout problem
25 is one that affects all of these communities, and

1 we welcome the opportunity to be part of a problem-solving
2 process which addresses this issue.

3 Historically, the American GI Forum has
4 placed a high value on the education of Hispanics.
5 We have demonstrated this commitment by sponsoring
6 scholarship programs at the local level. We have
7 provided opportunities to young people to develop
8 leadership skills as a means of facing the challenges
9 of society.

10 The American GI Forum, like other Hispanic
11 organizations, has been in the forefront regarding
12 Hispanic educational issues nationally, statewide,
13 and at the local level. We believe the dropout question
14 to be a critical issue to this society based on the
15 fact that the Hispanic population is growing, and
16 it is a young population. Unless we begin to address
17 this issue immediately, the negative ramifications
18 will continue to increase.

19 In reviewing the agenda for this hearing,
20 it is clear to me the need to hear from more parents,
21 youth advocacy groups, teachers who are concerned
22 about dropout rates, and from dropouts themselves.
23 Only then can we fully assess the gravity of this
24 issue. Therefore, I would like to recommend to the
25 committee that this Commission reconvene at its earliest

1 date possible to hear from and listen to the aforementioned
2 groups.

3 There are three areas that I would like
4 to address and which are having an increasing impact
5 on our society. The first area would be historically
6 from an armed services perspective. The armed services
7 have served as a means by which Hispanics have escaped
8 poverty and have achieved some degree of personal
9 success. Many a serviceman or woman has returned
10 to attend college via the GI Bill and purchase their
11 home with the Veteran's benefits. And I know that
12 many in this room probably have -- can share that
13 same experience. I know within my own household,
14 my father was a direct beneficiary of the GI Bill.

15 The armed services have provided technical
16 training to lead productive livelihoods upon discharge.
17 However, this option is changing with the emphasis
18 towards recruiting high school graduates. Even the
19 service which has provided opportunities to Hispanics
20 and other young people is being closed as an option.
21 Further, a poor education affects the testing scores
22 which decide which career opportunities Hispanic youth
23 can pursue in the armed services. Consequently, if
24 a Hispanic youth chooses the service as a career,
25 the need to have a high school diploma, a good education

1 that will help them succeed is necessary in the armed
2 services.

3 We're concerned about the psychological
4 implications faced by high school dropouts as a secondary
5 issue. We consider these young people to be youth
6 at risk. This population is often characterized
7 statistically as having increased drug use, alcoholism,
8 youth suicide, unwanted pregnancies, social humiliation,
9 anti-social behavior, parental discord, and family
10 disruptions. They cannot compete in today's competitive
11 high tech labor market, and their inability to reach
12 full potential decreases their chances of making
13 contributions to a society as a whole.

14 The third area, and one that I would
15 just like to list as a problematic area, but also
16 to offer some suggestions, is that some of the lingering
17 questions and possible solutions to the problems of
18 Hispanic dropouts are as follows: first of all, how
19 can we begin to grapple with the whole issue of racism
20 in the schools and the non-supportive attitudes of
21 teachers and administrators who work or don't work
22 with Hispanic youth and their parents?

23 Secondly, how do we make teacher training
24 more relevant to teachers who eventually work with
25 Hispanic youth and their parents? I attended a workshop

1 yesterday with the Fairmont Lab School that sits adjacent
2 to the Metro State campus, and this particular point
3 was raised is that many of our teachers have come
4 out of a different era, out of the 40's and 50's,
5 and were trained at a different point in time. And
6 perhaps we're not trained to deal with the cultural
7 pluralism that we find in our society today. And
8 so I think this is a very direct issue, one that we
9 should really begin to grapple with, and that's one
10 of teacher training and how we address the whole issue
11 of pluralism in that training.

12 It's time to stop blaming the victim
13 in our perspective, that the parents and the children
14 are often blamed or the finger is pointed at them,
15 and begin to have schools share and accept their
16 responsibility for parents and dropout youth being
17 turned off with the schools. A possible solution
18 in this area, and I know that there is a lot of finger
19 pointing going on, and I'm not here to do that today.
20 But I think that a possible solution in that area
21 is to take a look at the whole concept of parental
22 community advocates who will work with parents, youth,
23 schools and teachers to make the educational experience
24 more productive and meaningful to all parties involved.

25 We need to examine the relevance of curriculum

1 of the public schools to determine whether or not
2 it is preparing young people for the society of today
3 and tomorrow. A relatively small proportion of our
4 young people go on to higher education, so it's even
5 more necessary that we begin to develop curriculums
6 that prepare the vast majority to the challenges that
7 face them as they leave high school on a non-higher
8 education career choice.

9 We need to examine the problems and the
10 implications raised by the fact that many Hispanic
11 youth come from one parent and family-headed households
12 who themselves were high school dropouts. Teachers
13 have not recognized that Hispanics have a distinct
14 culture, and many of them choose to maintain their
15 cultural identity. This may create cultural barriers,
16 but it behooves the public schools to devise means
17 by which they can capitalize on the richness of cultural
18 diversity in the public school system.

19 Young Hispanic youth have got to feel
20 that it's okay to be Hispanic. And rather than look
21 at the Hispanic youth in a negative context, I think
22 it's time that we begin to look at it in the positive
23 context in terms of the cultural pluralism that they
24 bring to that classroom, and how can we capitalize
25 on that cultural pluralism.

1 There continues to be a need to examine
2 the question of testing of Hispanic children in the
3 public schools. We cannot afford to stigmatize young
4 people for failing to measure up against standards
5 that are not culturally relevant. The issue is raised
6 repeatedly in the context of special education.

7 Public schools need to examine the question
8 of teacher tenure, teacher competency, and the problems
9 associated with that. I recognize that having come
10 from a legislative background that the whole issue
11 of teacher tenure is a political timebomb, if you
12 will, in terms of addressing it. But I think the
13 time for avoiding it is long past due, and I think
14 we must begin to grapple with that issue.

15 There's a need to examine multi-cultural
16 alternative schools and models, why they succeed and
17 what traditional systems can learn from their experience.
18 Escuelo Tlatelolco in our own community and others
19 I think are an example of this alternative approach,
20 and what can they offer us in terms of what we can
21 gains in terms of their models.

22 The Denver schools need to develop a
23 uniform attendance policy so that teachers, parents,
24 and students understand the clear attendance policy.
25 There is no question that the issue of attendance

1 and dropouts is related. And I think this is a very
2 critical one, too, is that our policy tends to be
3 fragmented in terms of attendance. We talk about
4 mandatory attendance, and yet we understaff social
5 workers. We do not have enough people out checking
6 on non-attenders. And as a result, in many instances
7 young people can miss for months on end before they're
8 even caught up with. And I think that we have to
9 grapple with that issue in terms of a clear attendance
10 policy.

11 There's a need for individual school
12 boards to determine the process of identifying dropouts
13 and a process of follow-up when students leave to
14 other schools, to other districts, or obtain the GED.
15 If such a process does not exist, it must; otherwise,
16 we are talking about a very serious issue with incomplete
17 assessment of the problem. And what I mean by that
18 is when you take a look at the rolls and who is missing
19 on those rolls and you analyze what has transpired
20 in terms of where they say they are, there's not a
21 whole lot of follow-up there. And I would submit
22 that the dropout problem is probably even more severe
23 than what the statistics would indicate because of
24 our inadequacy in terms of statistical sophistication
25 in this area in this regard.

1 There's a continued need for cultural
2 sensitivity training of teachers who have limited
3 experiences working with Hispanic youth and other
4 minority youth. There's also a need for those for
5 which cultural biases is a problem. The Denver Public
6 Schools and other public schools of Colorado, both
7 school boards and administrators need to be held
8 accountable in sharing the responsibility in order
9 to assess all of these above-mentioned problems.

10 There also is a need to develop an independent
11 objective monitoring system to see that some of the
12 ideas expressed are implemented and evaluated for
13 their effectiveness. And what I mean in that regard,
14 the National Council of Christians and Jews has established
15 a Hispanic issues task force, of which I'm a member.
16 And we had the occasion to meet with the Denver School
17 Board. And I'm not here to cast dispersion on them.
18 They have a very difficult job, obviously.

19 But in our discussion with them, one
20 of the things that came up in one of the meetings
21 is that there are a lot of people trying to do a lot
22 of things in this regard, but there doesn't tend to
23 be a whole lot of coordination. And I think that
24 someone has to be accountable centrally to coordinate
25 all of these efforts so that we avoid duplication

1 and maximize our resources.

2 Finally, we recommend the establishment
3 of pilot programs in public schools to demonstrate
4 what can be done to curbe the problem of high school
5 dropouts. And as I mentioned, the Greeley Lab School
6 is one that I hope that many of you will take a look
7 at, as well as some of those in the audience in terms
8 of a model that we might replicate, not only in the
9 Denver area, but throughout the State of Colorado.

10 I suppose that the response from the
11 public schools will be that we already are doing many
12 of the suggested options. And my response is that
13 we need to do even a better job; otherwise, why have
14 the dropout rates increased? It is our belief that
15 if we are going to solve the problems of Hispanic
16 high school dropouts, it will require youth, parents,
17 the community and the schools to work together and
18 develop lines of communication. It's going to require
19 examining values, attitudes, and principles which
20 may be sacred cows, but yet contribute to the problem
21 of Hispanic high school dropouts.

22 The American GI Forum is prepared to
23 assist this body and any other organization or public
24 school in eradicating this problem from the Hispanic
25 community. We look forward to future meetings which

1 address this problem of Hispanic dropouts. Thank
2 you very much, Madame Chairman and members of the
3 committee.

4 MS. KURTZ: Thank you, Mr. Castro.

5 Any questions from the committee?

6 (Pause.)

7 MS. KURTZ: Thank you, Rich. We appreciate
8 it.

9 What I'm going to do now, I'm going to
10 take about a five minute break. And when we reconvene
11 at about five minutes after 4:00, I'm going to call
12 on the youth who have signed up separately from the
13 adults so that they'll have a chance to make their
14 presentation. And then we will continue until the
15 list is exhausted or 6:00 o'clock has arrived, whichever
16 occurs first. So we will now take about a five minute
17 break.

18 (Short break off the record)

19 MS. KURTZ: Can we get started now, ladies
20 and gentlemen? We have quite a long list of people
21 who have signed up who want to speak. And accordingly,
22 I'm going to have to limit the amount of time that
23 any one speaker can have in order to get through the
24 entire list. And I'll ask you please to limit your
25 remarks to about five minutes, if you will.

1 Now if you have a lot more that you want
2 to say, as I indicated earlier, we are going to hold
3 another forum here in the Denver area because of a
4 considerable interest in this subject. So if you
5 feel that this is not an adequate amount of time for
6 you, if you'll just contact Mr. Weber over here in
7 the corner and tell him that you'd like to be scheduled
8 for the next forum meeting which will probably be
9 -- well, it can't be before the 15th of February,
10 but it will be sometime between February 15 and April
11 1. If you don't think that five minutes is going
12 to be enough time, would you please just put your
13 name on the list with Mr. Weber and he'll try to schedule
14 you in for the next forum that we hold in this area.

15 Now the first speaker that -- I'm not
16 quite sure I can read his handwriting. It looks like
17 Joe Maez.

18 (Pause)

19 MS. KURTZ: Okay, I'll go down this list,
20 and if any of you are here and want to -- and can
21 talk now, we'll just move this along a little faster.

22 Is Martin Maez here?

23 (Pause)

24 MS. KURTZ: Manuel Vasquez?

25 MR. VASQUEZ: I'd like -- Madame Chair,

1 I'd like to ask for an extension of five extra minutes
2 because of the fact that some of the people who were
3 going to be here aren't here now.

4 MS. KURTZ: All right.

5 MR. VASQUEZ: My name is Manuel Vasquez,
6 and I work with Servicios De La Raza. I'm the Director
7 of Mental Health Services there.

8 Servicios De La Raza plays an important
9 role in the Colorado mental health system as a model
10 for providing mental health services to Spanish speaking
11 persons who are not being served by traditional centers
12 because of cultural and socio-economic barriers.
13 Servicios De La Raza started providing services in
14 1972 as one of six specialty funded programs in the
15 region.

16 In 1975, it was cited as a successful
17 community based treatment center by the President's
18 Commission on Mental Health. Provisions and services
19 to children and youth play a vital outreach effort
20 in areas of prevention and treatment. In fiscal year,
21 1984-85, 115 Chicano children and youth were served
22 in our mental health clinic for problems related to
23 depression, suicidal behavior, and identity crisis.
24 Of these, 73 percent had problems related to poor
25 academic performance, and were either failing or being

1 gradually pushed out or dropped out of school.

2 The agency's mental health clinic feels
3 that the dropout rate among Chicano students should
4 be considered as a major social crisis which may lead
5 to a substantial mental health risk. In the social
6 sciences, studies that specifically address the
7 psychological impact of discrimination in learning
8 institutions are minimal. We have yet to answer questions
9 such as: how do the dropouts see and feel positively
10 or negatively about themselves? What is their real
11 level of self-concept? Is there a direct correlation
12 between low self esteem produced in the public education
13 system in reference to poverty, crime, drug and alcohol
14 addiction, and possibly youth suicide? What are the
15 subtle discrimination attitudes or discriminatory
16 attitudes and actions among teachers, and how does
17 the educational process enhance personal development
18 in areas of self-worth, race relations, and cultural
19 pluralism?

20 Besides the family, the institution that
21 has the most direct influence on a Chicano student's
22 mental health is the public school system. In many
23 cases, the public school system is the child's first
24 contact with the norms and values of the dominant
25 society. It should not be surprising that the public

1 school is the socialization arena for assimilation
2 to White, middle class values and beliefs.

3 According to the RAN Education Policy
4 Study in 1974, the public schools should fulfill far
5 basic functions for the child; socialization, discipline,
6 identify future roles, child sitting, and knowledge
7 and skills training. However, Dupree in 1976 stated
8 that the educational system should have three broad
9 goals: one, to cause the recipient of education to
10 feel good about themselves. Two, to teach the young
11 people to love, to learn, and to know, identify, and
12 appreciate the importance of their own worth and that
13 of other people, and to produce functional individuals
14 who can navigate and negotiate those varying environments
15 they enter. According to Dupree, if the educational
16 system does not meet these goals, it has produced
17 a disfunctional individual.

18 In reference to the Chicano child and
19 youth, the educational system has failed to produce
20 significantly the above attributes articulated by
21 Depree. The interests of education often lies in
22 changing the consciousness or mental images of Chicano
23 children rather than the situation that oppresses
24 them. To achieve this end, the Chicano student is
25 treated as a marginal individual, one who deviates

1 from the general configuration of a good, organized
2 and just society.

3 Chicano children and youth are often
4 regarded as a pathology of a healthy society. Therefore,
5 the role perceived by many educators is to adjust
6 the Chicano student to the patterns of society by
7 changing their behavior from pathological to normal
8 functioning. This national and lenial approach has
9 produced a psychologically hostile and unsupported
10 environment for Chicano students. Typically, problems
11 between Chicano students and teachers are attitudinal
12 and stem primarily from the lack of ethnic sensitivity
13 and cultural pluralism in the educational system.

14 As noted by a 1974 published report by
15 the United States Commission on Civil Rights towards
16 a quality of education of Mexican Americans, many
17 Chicano students are taught primarily by Anglos who
18 have almost no understanding of Chicano Mexican American
19 culture. Since these teachers are not multi-cultural,
20 the curriculum of the schools omits and only minimally
21 acknowledges Mexican American culture. This omission
22 makes it difficult for students to develop favorable
23 perceptions about cultural identity and heritage.
24 This lack of knowledge and sensitivity of the Chicano
25 student's values and cultural orientation creates

1 tension between teachers and students and impedes
2 the success of the Chicano students.

3 It also reinforces the teacher's belief
4 that Chicano students are less capable. Consequently,
5 the Chicano student's self-concept may become distorted,
6 seeing himself as intellectually inferior, less capable,
7 and an academic failure. As a result, the Chicano
8 student may stop attending school to preserve his
9 own or her own self-concept, or because of lower
10 self-concept.

11 Unfortunately, problems of low self-concept
12 are not automatically resolved by avoiding or running
13 away from the problem. In other words, dropping out
14 of school is not the answer. The personal familial
15 socio-economic effects are too costly. Personally,
16 the Chicano student may see himself as hopeless, helpless,
17 and powerless, later to engage in drug and alcohol
18 abuse or gang violence as a way of compensating for
19 his felt personal inadequacies.

20 Because of limited social mobility and
21 restrictive employment opportunities, the dropout
22 may assume a life career of crime. Conflicts with
23 parents may increase, primarily because of their parental
24 ambitions that their children complete their education.
25 And because we increase familial problems, unexpected

1 runaways, teenage pregnancy, adolescent abuse and
2 youth suicide may become common, familial themes.

3 Between 1971 and 1974, the U.S. Commission
4 on Civil Rights studied in depth the problems of Mexican
5 American youth in the public school system. So what
6 we're doing here today isn't anything new. This commission
7 published five reports to address and correct these
8 problems. However, until now the Chicano community
9 has waited for action.

10 My question to this commission is how
11 long do we have to wait until your own basis for change
12 are implemented? Historically, noble and just societies
13 have been judged by how they treated their fellow
14 human beings. What will the societies of tomorrow
15 say about our decisions today? We challenge this
16 commission to do something to reverse the trends of
17 racism in our public schools, and advocate a more
18 humanistic model to all children.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much.

21 Is Roberto Luera here?

22 (Pause)

23 MS. KURTZ: Joe Navarro? I'm just running
24 down these until we find somebody who is here.

25 Somebody who is going to speak for the

1 United Parents for Progressive Education Organization?
2 Is that you? All right, would you please state your
3 name?

4 MR. NAVARRO: My name is Joe Navarro,
5 and I'm a member of the United Parents for Progressive
6 Education. And basically we have a number of people
7 who would have liked to have been able to attend today,
8 but most parents, especially of Chicano children,
9 are working people who have a very difficult time
10 being able to get out of work. They punch in a time
11 clock.

12 And many of us are very concerned about
13 the fact that in general the way the issues of education
14 are treated are treated in the hours in which people
15 can't participate. So you know, the question comes
16 up in people's minds is if there is a real sincere
17 effort to really find out what's wrong, or to find
18 out what is on people's minds, then why aren't they
19 allowed to participate in the process? Even though
20 there is no specific decision made to say, "You can't
21 come", the fact -- you know, just the fact that you're
22 having the meetings during these hours makes it very
23 difficult.

24 MS. KURTZ: I'll just comment that the
25 next meeting is going to be on a Saturday.

1 MR. NAVARRO: All right. I think that
2 the reason that the United Parents for Progressive
3 Education came together is that a lot of parents,
4 including myself, I have two daughters in the public
5 school system, feel very concerned about the way that
6 the Denver educational system is going. We've heard
7 about the high dropout rate, which is what you're
8 investigating right now. But the fact that it concerns
9 primarily Chicano youth is very alarming to us. And
10 many of us feel that by the time the youth get into
11 the high school age, they've already gone through
12 an educational system where they feel that they can't
13 complete school.

14 I think -- I live in northwest Denver,
15 and one of the problems that you've been aware of
16 is the overcrowding situation. Now the overcrowding
17 situation is something where the Denver Public Schools
18 have basically decided that they can close down two
19 schools because they estimated a certain growth in
20 northwest Denver. But they were wrong. And now we
21 have a situation where there's too many children per
22 class to be able to learn.

23 And the thing is, the way they handled
24 this is that they talk about rated capacity and program
25 capacity. But what is unclear to us is how many students

1 can you put into a classroom where they can effectively
2 learn? And that seems to be, you know, a major problem.
3 It just doesn't make sense. There were 96,000 students
4 here in 1964; 72 percent of those were Anglo. Now
5 there's only 55,000 students in the Denver Public
6 Schools, and only 36 percent of those are Anglo.
7 Now we're having all of these problems. We're having
8 overcrowding. We have almost half the amount of students,
9 and we have overcrowded schools. And that's a big
10 problem that we feel concerned about.

11 We feel that the relations between the
12 parents and the school system, we feel that a lot
13 of the administration on the large level and on the
14 school level have a tendency to deflect the criticism
15 and not take the criticism that we have seriously.
16 We feel that it's important to build a partnership
17 between the parents, the schools, and the administration.
18 And we think that more steps have to be taken in that
19 case.

20 The other thing that I wanted to bring
21 to your attention is -- well, you've probably heard
22 different stories today, but my daughter is a student
23 at Gilpin Elementary School. There was a situation
24 there where a young Chicano, a third grader was thrown
25 down a flight of stairs by an Anglo teacher. It took

1 three days to get her out of the school. Three days!

2 Now, you know, I guess the way most of
3 us feel is that if the child had been White, she would
4 have been removed from that school immediately. There
5 was a question of whether there was child abuse involved
6 there. Why did it take three days to remove this
7 teacher from the school? And then she was suspended
8 with pay. We find that unacceptable.

9 Right now I -- in terms of my employment,
10 I'm an employee of the Denver Catholic Community Services.
11 And I come into contact with many parishioners around
12 neighborhood issues because I'm a community organizer.
13 One of the issues that has come to my attention a
14 lot is the question of the dropout rate at North High
15 School. In interviewing some of the parents, I just
16 talked to one this week, as a matter of fact, who
17 mentioned to me that she had a son who was having
18 a hard time learning in his class. He requested specific
19 attention from the teacher, and the teacher said that,
20 "I don't have time", basically. "I don't have time.
21 I don't have time."

22 So when the youth pursued it, the teacher
23 made the remark, "Well, why don't you just go home
24 and commit suicide?" Now I don't know if she was
25 joking or what, but I don't think that that's funny.

1 And I don't think -- how is that going to build the
2 esteem? You know, the self-esteem of a youth in that
3 type of a situation.

4 I think that the main concern that comes
5 out of all of this is that coming from the Federal
6 Government and the way the U.S. Civil Rights Commission
7 -- I don't understand what your priorities are. But
8 it seems to me that the priorities are that the only
9 people being abused in this society is the White male,
10 and that it's time to roll back all of the gains that
11 were made in the Civil Rights movement.

12 And I think that if you really look at
13 where we are, that the majority of Chicano and Black
14 people are still on the lower class status in society.
15 You know, we're the dishwashers, we're the janitors,
16 we're the factory workers. And the opportunities
17 for us to get into higher education is getting slimmer
18 and slimmer.

19 You know, my neighbor told me his son
20 graduated from North High. And he was saying, you
21 know, he graduated from North High, and then he had
22 to go to college. And even though he had a high school
23 diploma, he still wasn't prepared to go to college.

24 So the concern out of all of this is
25 are we going to be given a fair opportunity to go

1 for higher education and become something more, have
2 the opportunity to become something more than just
3 janitors and busboys and dishwashers? Thank you.

4 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much.

5 Is Magdalena Gallegos-Perez here?

6 MS. GALLEGOS-PEREZ: My name is Magdalena
7 Gallegos-Perez. And I'm sorry, but I think the North
8 Denver Public School System is a big joke. I have
9 four children. My two oldest children were raised
10 in Adams County. Both of them graduated.

11 We moved -- I moved back to Denver when
12 my youngest children were five -- let's see, six and
13 ten. My daughter is 21 years old, and she did not
14 graduate from North High. I guess you can consider
15 her a dropout.

16 My son is 16 years old. And for the
17 past nine years, I have been getting up and talking
18 at meetings like this, and hearings, and School Boards,
19 and attending meetings, and going to the schools,
20 and working with organizations of parents. And nothing
21 has been accomplished. I'm still talking about the
22 same things, and I am very frustrated.

23 My son -- four years ago at Horace Mann
24 Junior High, they passed him to North High illegally.
25 I say illegally because he did not pass. But they

1 passed him anyway.

2 I went to the School Board, to a School
3 Board meeting, and I had a prepared statement, and
4 I have documentation on this. And I told them that
5 my son was being passed to North High, and he did
6 not pass.

7 Well, the School Board applauded me and
8 said, "You gave a very good presentation. You're
9 a very intelligent woman, but the school knows what
10 it is doing. And let your son go to North High, and
11 he's going to be fine."

12 Well, he wasn't fine. He went to North
13 High, and they put him in this work school program,
14 which he went to school in the morning, and he worked
15 at one of the hamburger places in the afternoon.

16 Okay, in the morning one time when I
17 went, they were making fish hooks. And I talked to
18 the counselors, and I said, "I want my son to take
19 academic classes."

20 And they said, "Well, he's not
21 really --" they didn't say he wasn't really that smart.
22 He just -- they said, "Well, he's not ready for it",
23 blah, blah, blah.

24 And I had a discussion with one of the
25 counselors who was pushing my son plus a lot of his

1 other friends who were Chicanos into vocational training,
2 into vocational.

3 I said, "I want my son to go to college."

4 Well, they as much as told me, "Your
5 son is not college material."

6 Okay, for the past three years, my son
7 -- okay, he did pretty good in that work study class,
8 work program class. Then the next semester, the teacher
9 said, "He's doing so well, we're going to put him
10 into an advanced class."

11 So they put him into this advanced academic
12 class, and my son didn't do very good. He wasn't
13 ready for it. He wasn't prepared for it. And so
14 he started, you know, being sick and not wanting to
15 go to school because he couldn't keep up with what
16 was going on.

17 Okay, eventually he was transferred over
18 to Metro Youth. Metro Youth to catch up with his
19 credits so he could go back to North. Okay, last
20 September of 1985, I went to the school, to North
21 High, and I talked -- I got a meeting and talked to
22 the vice principal, and he was very nice. And I told
23 him, "I want my son back here at North. I want to
24 get his test records. I want to --", because I had
25 some plans. Okay, and somebody had said this is what

1 you need to do. You have to get his test scores,
2 and you have to make a plan.

3 Okay, he said, "Fine. We'll get a counselor
4 to call you, we'll set up a meeting." Two weeks passed,
5 and I didn't hear anything. I called back, and he
6 said, "Well, we're still waiting for your test scores.
7 We'll call you."

8 I called back again. "We haven't got
9 the test results yet." Anyway, I got tired. I got
10 frustrated.

11 Okay, I joined the Progressive Parents,
12 and I went and I talked like this. I'm full of
13 frustration.

14 Okay, what happened is finally I found
15 a school. It's Servicios De La Raza, Escuela Tlatololco.
16 And I asked, "Can my son get enrolled here? I want
17 him to get an education. My son wants an education."

18 I got him enrolled there in about November.
19 He loves it! He is doing well. He's going to school.
20 He was here this morning with a group of kids. And
21 he told me, "Mom, this school is different." He said,
22 "This is the way all schools should be."

23 And you know one thing, he'll do some
24 homework and he'll take it and he'll come back and
25 he'll say, "Mom, do you know what? They told me I

1 was smart." And I say, "I know you're smart."

2 Okay, I'm saying that there must be something
3 wrong. Another thing is I don't know what I'm going
4 to do. I'm pretty sure that the Escuela Tlatololco
5 is accredited, and I'm sure that he can get his diploma
6 from there. But if this isn't possible, I will not
7 trust to send him back to North High School. I have
8 anxiety about that. I mean I just don't trust it.
9 I mean it's like a nightmare. I will not! I don't
10 think that he will ever get an education at North
11 High.

12 And I'm not saying that it's the teachers.
13 There are some beautiful people that are at North
14 High; Mary Lou Salazar is a beautiful person. There
15 are some great people there. But something is wrong;
16 something is not working.

17 And as for discrimination, and I think
18 discrimination -- no one is going to admit that there
19 is a discrimination problem. But the evidence is
20 evident. The Hispanic youth is not being educated
21 at a higher percent than any other group in Denver.
22 That is your evidence!

23 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much.

24 Mark Saiz?

25 MR. SAIZ: Yes, my name is Mark Saiz.

1 Madame Chairman y todos -- that means and you all,
2 the same thing in both languages, okay? My comments
3 will be short, and whether they're sweet or not will
4 depend on your frame of reference.

5 I want to share with you a little bit
6 of my history and keep this really short. I was born
7 in Denver, Colorado, have lived here all of my life,
8 and I want to thank the public school system for what
9 they did for me. I attended the public school system,
10 and 33 years ago, because of the same things that
11 are going on now, I left high school. I left at the
12 beginning of my junior year. But I want to thank
13 them, because they saved a couple of years of my life.

14 I left, just said I was leaving, and
15 no one turned to me. And it was sad. It was sad
16 because I loved learning. I loved learning.

17 In my three short years in high school,
18 I had a 3.95 average on a 4.0. I said I was leaving,
19 and not one person -- no counselor, principal, or
20 teacher said, "Why?" I joined the Navy, and my education
21 began. That's why I want to thank the public school
22 system, for the types of things that they're still
23 doing today and allowing me to begin my education.

24 Many of us have sat here this morning,
25 which makes it six and a half hours or so, that we

1 have sat here and listened to statisticians, politicians,
2 and I guess because of the simple cookbook answer
3 that some people had to this problem, you can call
4 them dieticians. So we had statisticians, politicians,
5 and dieticians.

6 And I've learned another thing today,
7 and that is that history repeats itself. During the
8 breaks, many of us fejitos were talking about how
9 30, 25, 20 years ago we were doing the same thing.
10 We were appearing before a group of people empowered
11 to do something about a problem.

12 Well, by your own admission, Madame Chairman,
13 you said that you didn't have -- this committee didn't
14 have the talent, the resources to reach out and hear
15 those people that need to be heard. My ponsa -- my
16 stomach hurts listening to Magdalena, because I could
17 feel the frustration. And that frustration exists
18 in the minds and in the ponsas of many, many Chicano
19 parents.

20 And I hope and I applaud you for the
21 newly established five hearings that you're going
22 to conduct. But I pray, I hope, I implore you to
23 dismiss with due cause the statisticians and the
24 politicians and listen to these people who have something
25 to tell you, and who are not afraid to skirt the issue

1 and use the word discrimination. It's there. Listen
2 to them. Dismiss the statisticians and politicians
3 and even some of the dieticians. But listen instead
4 to people like Magdalena, the young student from Escuela
5 Tlatololco. They know what it feels like. Don't
6 listen only mentally. Listen visually. Let it seep
7 down into your gut so then maybe you'll do something
8 about it. Thank you.

9 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much.

10 Is Mr. Apodaco here?

11 MR. APODACO: Yes, Walter. One thing
12 I learned in school, I guess, the product of the Denver
13 Public Schools was in a speech class. I don't like
14 this setup at all. I hate my back to be against all
15 of the people watching me. And of course I want to
16 address this body here. I'm sorry that my kids didn't
17 make it.

18 I have three children in the Denver --
19 four children in the Denver Public Schools. And those
20 four children are bussed in the Denver Public Schools.

21 MS. KURTZ: Excuse me, Mr. Apodaco.
22 I'm going to have to ask you, even though --

23 MR. APODACO: Oh, okay. Right.

24 MS. KURTZ: We're trying to record this
25 so that we can quote you correctly in our presentation,

1 so if you wouldn't mind, please do speak --

2 MR. APODACO: No planned speech, okay?

3 Well anyway, brought up through the Denver
4 Public Schools. I have four children in the Denver
5 Public Schools, and they're bussed from one end of
6 the city to the other. I happen to be a resident
7 of Montbello, which a lot of you don't know or you're
8 not aware of because it's sort of an isolated community,
9 unlike north Denver or west Denver or east Denver.
10 Or south Denver.

11 I have a problem that -- with my children,
12 okay? I have tried to give them a good upbringing.
13 They eat well, they dress well. They have a nice
14 home to go to. They have money in their pockets.

15 I used to be a professional, but no longer
16 am I a professional. I'm more like a laborer, okay?
17 And I do have a lot of experience in that area simply
18 because of some reasons or other I was taken out of
19 my job. Simply because of some of the same reasons
20 that I see kids dropping out of school, particularly
21 Chicanos.

22 Okay, I'm going to address the problem
23 that exists in my community. I have been a community
24 organizer, I have been a church organizer, and in
25 other various activities in the community.

1 Now I'm not going to point particularly
2 at the Black community. I think I point more at our
3 society. Our school system. My kids have all grown
4 up in Montbello, which at that time was a fully integrated
5 neighborhood; Blacks, Chicanos, Whites, Asians, and
6 whatever. Some Indians. Okay, we haven't touched
7 much on Indians here. They're a big part of this
8 whole thing.

9 My kids have grown up with Blacks, Whites,
10 and I wanted them to do that. In fact, I had a chance
11 to move at one time and I didn't because I want my
12 kids to grow up in an environment where there was
13 mixed people.

14 Now after almost 14 years, I am seeing
15 problems. I am seeing problems in the public schools.
16 I live three blocks from Amesse Elementary School.
17 Three of my kids could be attending that school, but
18 they don't. They are bussed. They are bussed to
19 two other different public schools. Okay, that's
20 one of the problems. And I realize why Judge Mesh
21 decided there was going to be bussing, because he
22 wanted to have full integration.

23 Well, now they see some problems in our
24 community where there is a higher number of Black
25 students, something like 60 percent Black students

1 in Montbello High and in some of the other public
2 schools there. Okay? Now I don't see it as a problem
3 that the Blacks created so much as what the system
4 created.

5 Some of the things I found out -- I did
6 some self studies myself. I talked to a lot of kids
7 that have dropped out, little children, you know,
8 9th graders. These kids have dropped out in the 9th
9 grade. Some girls, they're pregnant. Okay, there's
10 a reason for that, okay.

11 I asked some of the students, "Why did
12 you drop out? What are your reasons for dropping
13 out of Montbello High? What are your reasons for
14 not wanting to attend this school, or any other school
15 in Montbello?"

16 Now many of the children in Montbello
17 are bussed to Hamilton, Hill, and Place Junior Highs.
18 These are all in predominantly White areas. Hamilton
19 especially is in southeast Denver. Now my kids have
20 come across a lot of problems. I could pinpoint some
21 problems, and I think they are discriminatory problems.

22 Now they are faced -- my boy who is 14,
23 Walter, started to attend Montbello High School.
24 My son is good looking. He's very athletically inclined.
25 In fact, in the 6th grade he was one of the first

1 place champions in computer programming in the Denver
2 Public Schools. But in two years of middle school,
3 did he see one computer programming class? And he
4 had many excuses why he couldn't.

5 When they did put him in one, he had
6 to assist the teacher. He was told that he had to
7 kind of assist her because she wasn't really up to
8 computer programming type programs, okay? So Walter
9 assisted her. He got very frustrated, and he just
10 didn't want any part of it.

11 Well, like I said, I started Walter at
12 Montbello High School. I moved him over two months
13 ago to South Denver High to live with my mother.
14 That hurt me very much. It hurt me because we've
15 never let go of our children, me and my wife. My
16 wife is a homemaker. We chose that when we got married,
17 that she would take care of those children and see
18 that when they came home from school, there wouldn't
19 be a key there, but she would be there. That's what
20 my wife chose to do.

21 But what happens here is I had to transfer
22 Walter simply because at Montbello High School, there
23 is a high number, and there is one group there that
24 is dominating. And you will find that in southeast
25 Denver; if the Anglos are the high percentage, they

1 will dominate the school. In east Denver, possibly
2 the Blacks will dominate. In north Denver, possibly
3 the Chicanos might dominate.

4 But anyway, what I'm trying to say is
5 there is a problem somewhat with the bussing of kids.
6 My kids have a lot of potential. In no way are they
7 dummies. They want to learn. They want to move.

8 Now when you do something about this,
9 if you ever do, you have to do it with the total system.
10 My boy cannot compete in athletics because they don't
11 recognize him as an athletic type student. Because
12 he's a Chicano. Wait a minute! Hey, there's Chicanos
13 with a lot of ability. He has the academic ability,
14 but they are holding him down. He's not. He wants
15 to learn. And all of them want to learn.

16 I didn't say half of what I want to,
17 but I'll get off because there's a lot of other people
18 to say things. I wish I had the time.

19 MS. KURTZ: I wish you did, too. Thank
20 you very much.

21 Since it's now 4:50, which was the time
22 we were going to start this process, I'm going to
23 go back to the beginning of the list again. And I
24 think it's Joe Maez. Is he here?

25 (Pause)

1 MS. KURTZ: How about Martin Maez? Is
2 he here?

3 (Pause)

4 MS. KURTZ: Roberto Juero?

5 MR. LUERO: Yes. My name is Roberto
6 Juera. I am the administrator of Escuela Tlatololco,
7 and I also work with Servicios De La Raza, 458-5851
8 or 477-8112.

9 I was present here for the morning sessions
10 and part of the afternoon. And a lot of the issues
11 that have been brought up are issues that we have
12 been working with in the past. And I don't want to
13 take a lot of time in repointing out those issues,
14 but what my concern was is that it's fine what we're
15 doing right now, bringing up problems that we are
16 aware of. My concern is that I would once again restate
17 and reiterate the importance of a follow-up meeting
18 that was brought up this morning in which we could
19 have the committee again come to the community itself
20 on a Saturday to be able to have more input from parents
21 that were unable to show up today, or students that
22 are in school at this time; even though they have
23 not dropped out yet, they are potential dropouts.
24 And those are the ones that we also need to work with
25 real closely, because there is a lot of youth in those

1 schools that are potential dropouts. And they relate
2 to me a lot of concerns.

3 And being that our school is an alternative
4 school, we have a lot of calls from the parents and
5 the students asking us for assistance either in taking
6 them out of school and putting them into our school.
7 Unfortunately, we do not have the capacity, the size
8 to be able to hold a lot of those students. I wish
9 we had the money and the building to be able to run
10 a whole school, to be able to put a thousand Chicano
11 students in there. Unfortunately, we don't have the
12 money.

13 So what we try to do is we try to be
14 youth advocates within the school to try and keep
15 them in those schools. And that's one thing that
16 I think we need to work closely with. The schools
17 for some reason are -- I don't know if they're intimidated
18 by our presence, but they refuse to accept our help.
19 Because we could do a lot. We could do it. We could
20 offer counseling to them. We could even -- we have
21 an offer to them to be able to do a tutoring nights
22 for the youth that are having problems in school to
23 be able to ensure that they stay in school.

24 But for some reason, they feel threatened
25 with our presence. And they shouldn't be. They should

1 be able to work hand in hand with community organizations.
2 Because our concerns are the same, the future of the
3 youth. We need to get them graduated.

4 Right now we're having problems in --
5 when I work with the employment, is that the youth
6 are not job-ready because they are not educationally
7 ready. So we need to be able to say, "We can work
8 a partnership within those schools that we live in."

9 And also, one point that I want to bring
10 up that hasn't been mentioned yet, maybe it was when
11 I was gone, is the importance of having teachers from
12 that community teach in those schools instead of having
13 what I call the absentee terrorists that comes out
14 from suburbia, or sluburbia, as I like to call it.
15 They have no idea as to what is taking place in that
16 community. They don't understand the problems that
17 the youth are facing within that community.

18 So I would like to see eventually we
19 can have teachers from that community teach in those
20 schools. Because I even have heard teachers that
21 do not like to teach outside of the communities.
22 So they really are teaching with a bad attitude.
23 And that of course would come out in their teaching
24 and their methodologies.

25 So I would just like to again extend

1 to the committee that we do have a follow-up, that
2 we in fact set up -- in the near future that we set
3 up a follow-up meeting in one of the high schools
4 in the community or in a community organization that
5 we can invite more parents and more youth to be able
6 to have input in decisions that are affecting them.
7 It's their future that we're talking about, and they
8 need to have -- feel comfortable that they have a
9 say.

10 And some always ask -- well, parents
11 are always involved and they should be involved and
12 they're invited to schools. But I don't think that's
13 really stressed a lot. I would think that sometimes
14 they would not want parents because some parents are
15 very upset, and they sometimes go there and they're
16 angry. And in a way it's good because that's when
17 they should be listened to. That they're angry, and
18 there's a reason for them being angry.

19 So I'm hoping that the community does
20 in fact -- because I know that you say that you would
21 like to go to the community, and I'm hoping that you
22 do.

23 MS. KURTZ: I can assure you, sir, that
24 we will. I will say this; under Federal requirements,
25 there has to be a minimum of 30 days notice in the

1 Federal newspaper about this. So it cannot be before
2 about the middle of February. I hope that you will
3 be in touch with Mr. Weber and negotiate a place and
4 a date that seems appropriate for these circumstances,
5 and you'll have our full cooperation in this. We
6 certainly appreciate your presentation, sir.

7 MR. JUERA: Thank you.

8 MS. KURTZ: Dr. Jose Cintron?

9 DR. CINTRON: Is the gentleman who said
10 something about the diet still here? Dietician?
11 Okay.

12 Anyway, my name is Dr. Jose Cintron.
13 I'm presently employed at CU Boulder in the Bueno
14 Center, which is a multi-cultural training center
15 and service center. And I'm here today to share with
16 you some research that does not deal with statistics.
17 And specifically touches on some of the things that
18 many of the people here are suggesting today.

19 Apparently a lot of the research that
20 goes on in institutions of higher learning certainly
21 do manipulate and jumble the numbers. This isn't
22 my work. I know the two people who were involved
23 in it. The lady who initiated the work did it in
24 a community that she referred to as "La Victoria",
25 which is a community here in the metro area, an urban

1 industrialized community of about 17,000 residents.

2 And what's different in this kind of
3 research from what I think you've been hearing for
4 most of the day is that this type of research
5 ethnographically done and with an anthropological
6 base goes and attacks the issue from a whole different
7 perspective, a wholistic perspective.

8 Looking at the dropout problem vis a
9 vis the students themselves, and I know you're going
10 to get that perspective in about another hour, that
11 should be pretty interesting, also attacking it from
12 the parent's perspective, from the administrative
13 perspective and from a school perspective. The research
14 was done in the time span of about six or seven months;
15 the research analysis is continuing, that the person
16 who did this is no longer at CU, but is continuing
17 to do that work at the University of California at
18 Santa Barbara. The hope is that I can continue this
19 kind of research, not necessarily in the community
20 as this one was specifically grounded, but more so
21 in the school system. So presently we have a proposal
22 in DPS, we hope we get permission to go in and look
23 at it from a different perspective.

24 But anyway, I'll quickly share with you
25 the methodology and give you some quick findings and

1 conclusions. What these folks did is they specifically
2 talked to 12 Chicano families in this particular city.
3 Several individual community members; they were interviewed
4 at length for about two to three hours for about three
5 or four meetings. They went to the work places, they
6 went to their homes, they went to the schools. They
7 solicited the information from them. They went looking
8 for them.

9 The interview sessions were all conducted,
10 audio taped, all the Chicano family interviews were
11 long time residents of either Colorado or La Victoria,
12 and in some instances, the people spanned several
13 generations of residence in this state.

14 Quickly, the number one thing that these
15 folks found out from this type of research was that
16 a mentorship was the number one thing that the students,
17 the dropouts themselves, I think they interviewed
18 something like 12 dropouts, suggested that they needed
19 some sort of mentorship. The mentorship wasn't
20 specifically having to come from the schools or from
21 the family, but somewhere; either community, either
22 peer group, or the school or the parents.

23 The role of the mentor as defined by
24 the individuals is as follows; the individual mentor
25 could interpret the school system for the student

1 and also for the parents. That seems to be a problem
2 sometimes, just interpreting what exactly a school
3 system is.

4 Number two is that the individual mentor,
5 the adult mentor could consistently encourage the
6 student and believe in the student's real abilities.
7 That has been alluded to throughout the day. A belief
8 in the student.

9 Number three, the mentor could actively
10 involve himself or herself in advocating for the student
11 in school. And as you've witnessed here again today,
12 a lot of parents are doing that. But often times,
13 parents don't have the time and/or the necessary skills
14 to approach the schools. So by mentorship, keep in
15 mind that this doesn't necessarily refer to parents.

16 The role of the mentor provides the student
17 with the means of interpreting the educational system
18 in a way that shows faith in the ability of the student.
19 As a consequence, the de-mystification of the schooling
20 process assisted the students in braving challenges
21 they faced with their teachers, the curriculum, and
22 academic social pressures.

23 One of the most critical outcomes of
24 the mentor's role is providing the student with a
25 model of self-determination. And I guess

1 self-determination is an encompassing term that implies
2 self-esteem, a willingness to learn, just basically
3 learning how to learn and enjoying that.

4 To understand the dropout phenomena,
5 we must look wholistically at the social and historical
6 context of the family members and interaction with
7 the school as well as at the socio-economic and personal
8 factors which create certain constraints during the
9 process of home socialization.

10 What these academics are calling for
11 is for a complete resocialization of what schooling
12 is for these folks. A lot of the kids, a lot of the
13 parents, communities just don't know what it is to
14 go to school. They are not familiar with the process,
15 and they aren't always aware of the outcomes. The
16 whole system has to be resocialized from the top down
17 and from the bottom up.

18 They recommend some future research;
19 this type of research should deal with quasi-experimental
20 interventions directed at maximizing the effectiveness
21 of the resocialization process in specific academic
22 domains. Further analysis should focus on the nature
23 of such a process, the differential responsive students
24 vis a vis their experience and background, and the
25 role that the family plays as a unit in the lasting

1 impact of such resocialization process.

2 In essence, what the kids were telling
3 these people and what the parents were telling these
4 people, as you are I'm sure aware of now, the system
5 has failed specifically the Hispanic, Latino, Chicano
6 community. And everyone has to be resocialized.

7 Thank you for your attention.

8 MS. KURTZ: Dr. Cintron, would it be
9 possible for you to share with the --

10 DR. CINTRON: I'll leave a copy --

11 MS. KURTZ: -- leave any written material?

12 DR. CINTRON: I will, with Dr. Weber.

13 MS. KURTZ: With Dr. Weber, please.

14 DR. CINTRON: Thank you.

15 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much.

16 Dr. Arthur Campa?

17 DR. CAMPA: Hi. My name is Arthur Campa.
18 I'm a Program Director at the University of Colorado
19 in the Bueno Center for multicultural education in
20 the School of Ed. in Boulder.

21 I direct a program called the High School
22 Equivocancy Program. This is an alternative school
23 for high school dropouts who are of a farmworker
24 background. The population that I work with are mainly
25 the Chicano Hispanic community and the other farmworker

1 dropouts in the rural area. So our focus is in the
2 areas of Alamosa at Adam State College. We work in
3 La Junta in Otero Junior College, LaMar Community
4 College, and Ames Community College, South Campus
5 in Fort Lupton.

6 What we do is we have training centers
7 there where we recruit these high school dropouts
8 and we put them through a rather intensive program
9 geared for the GED curriculum, survival skills in
10 society. It's a pre-collegiate program. It is also
11 one of vocational orientation, work skills, and then
12 placement once upon graduation. Our program has been
13 in operation since 1981. The high school equivalency
14 program, better known as HEP, has graduated over 580
15 students to date.

16 Now one thing that has come up rather
17 clearly in this program is that students tell us reasons
18 why they drop out of school. As well, they also give
19 us feedback is that why that they once -- once they
20 have dropped out of the formal school system, why
21 they are rekindled and learning in our program.

22 The things that the students have cited
23 that they like about the program is number one, our
24 role models. Our entire staff is Hispanic Chicano.
25 They are professionals from the local communities.

1 These are people who have a vested interest in the
2 people that they're dealing with. Frequently, they
3 know the families of the children -- the children
4 of the families that have dropped out, and so they
5 have a commitment. As well, they have the empathy
6 and the experience to deal with dropouts.

7 Secondly, we have an individualized
8 educational plan. That is, when we deal with the
9 dropout, we approach that student, and we know from
10 preassessment where he or her will stand, and from
11 there we can tailor our educational process to that
12 student.

13 We have a maximum of 15 students per
14 class, open exit, and as well we provide other services.
15 Counseling is provided on an individual and group
16 basis. We have a number of students who have personal
17 problems who are dealing on survival from day to day
18 because of low income. The farm worker population
19 I think in comparison to the urban population is on
20 a much lower income level. They have perhaps lower
21 expectations and less experience.

22 As well, we provide a number of other
23 things to boost self-concept. In addition to providing
24 the personal counseling and other activities, we provide
25 field trips. A lot of these students haven't left

1 50 miles diameter from their birthplace. We open
2 the expectations, taking them to other community colleges,
3 to cultural centers, to job -- well, like factories,
4 and other areas to stimulate them and to show them
5 that this is where this educational process can take
6 you. It can provide you with jobs with this higher
7 education.

8 And as a consequence, about 18 percent
9 of our students end up in college. What typically
10 happens at these colleges that I cited is that our
11 staff acts as a coping mechanism. Those colleges
12 have no real Chicano Hispano role models to provide
13 them, or the proper counseling. Therefore, our staff
14 takes an added burden of helping these kids adjust.
15 I should say kids. Adults adjust to college. And
16 they provide incentive. It's an added burden, but
17 it's well worth it.

18 Also, we provide other services such
19 as the follow-up activities. We try to follow them
20 up to see what has happened to them. Have they remained
21 in college? Were there jobs?

22 As well, we have initiated a number of
23 work skills courses in cooperation with local business
24 leaders, the community college, and our staff to create
25 a course that will help those who are looking for

1 jobs on a short term basis and provide them with
2 employment.

3 An important thing that I talked about
4 was survival skills. We find a lot of our students
5 in our program that can range in age from 18 up to
6 65, that they don't have the knowledge of how to survive
7 in middle class Anglo society; therefore, this course
8 we found has been very useful in providing adjustment
9 to the typical farmworker high school dropout, and
10 how to adjust.

11 Just very shortly on statistics, we have
12 found in our dropouts in the school districts that
13 we work with of which we have good rapport, many dropouts
14 are listed as having transferred to another district.
15 Others are said to have moved, and other cited reasons.
16 And one school district has requested upon a memo
17 for us to provide them with our list of graduates
18 so they don't -- and they're not listed as dropouts.

19 So what we see is that there is a masking
20 and there is a hiding of statistics, and we can document
21 this. So I think that this should be called to the
22 attention that statistics are -- on the percentage
23 of dropouts are masked and they're hidden. And in
24 fact, many superintendents have chosen not to talk
25 about it.

1 MS. KURTZ: I think we're at time now.

2 DR. CAMPA: Okay.

3 MS. KURTZ: Dr. Campa, if you have written
4 material that you have with you, or that you'd like
5 to submit within the next ten days, we would certainly
6 welcome having it.

7 DR. CAMPA: Okay.

8 MS. KURTZ: I'm sorry that we are so
9 limited on time, but we have a number of people that
10 want to speak.

11 DR. CAMPA: Good. Thank you very much.

12 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much for coming.

13 Martha Espinoza?

14 MS. ESPINOZA: You'll have to forgive
15 me. My notes are a little scrambled. I've had to
16 do this on my lunch break, and this is the first time
17 I've ever done any kind -- anything like this.

18 My name is Martha Espinoza, and I'm a
19 parent, and I have some -- a lot of questions about
20 the education that my son is receiving. I'm wondering
21 if the school system is augmenting my values, and
22 if it's enhancing my belief in the value of a good
23 education. I'd rather that this belief not be destroyed
24 by the subliminal message that is being sent out to
25 him.

1 I'm also a member of the United Parents
2 for Progressive Education. We applaud the commission
3 for taking time to look into the horrendous dropout
4 rate among the Hispanics. We hope that you don't
5 walk away with a preconceived idea that there are
6 no problems here, because we feel that there are,
7 and we feel that we need more than two hours to convince
8 you.

9 We're not really sure that you want to
10 hear what we have to say. The reason we came to this
11 conclusion is because of the time allotted for parents
12 and students to speak. The time during the day for
13 us was also questionable; at the end of the day when
14 people want to go home. We feel that the weekend
15 rather than a weekday would have been better for working
16 parents to voice their concerns. I understand this
17 has been amended, and I applaud that.

18 More to the point, when we first came
19 to Denver, a teacher asked me if we lived in the projects.
20 This is low income housing. This isn't the 50's or
21 the 60's when bigotry was so blatant. For the most
22 part, this kind of prejudice has been put behind us.
23 But the subtle forms of prejudice are still there,
24 and very much practiced. This is where my son is
25 going to have his stumbling block. This is where

1 he's going to have to deal with those things, and
2 so am I.

3 I never understood where he lived had
4 anything to do with the education that he was going
5 to receive that year. Unless that statement was meant
6 to intimidate me. This is the kind of attitude that
7 was prevalent from day one.

8 There is a problem, and it needs to be
9 looked at in depth. And some action has to be taken
10 soon. We can look and look at the reasons, but action
11 needs to be taken very soon.

12 You stated some statistics earlier on
13 North, yet these statistics only dealt with the high
14 school. To my knowledge, these don't even cover --
15 even start to cover the dropout problem in the middle
16 schools and in the elementary schools.

17 I questioned a 7th grade student about
18 why he was having troubles in math, and he told me
19 that he had math after lunch. He left school at lunch
20 time.

21 Another student never came to school.
22 And he was famous from grade school for not -- for
23 being a non-attender. Where does a 12 year old go
24 in a neighborhood to where he is bussed? The school
25 didn't know. Or maybe it didn't care.

1 Earlier somebody mentioned getting involved
2 with the school system; for the most part, I found
3 these groups were only a method of pacifying me.
4 A pat on the back, and saying, "There, there, Mrs.
5 Espinoza. It will be taken care of." Don't patronize
6 me.

7 A friend of mine says, "Destroy the boy
8 and you never have to deal with the man." I say destroy
9 the boy and you'll deal with him on a different level.
10 As a dropout, as a criminal, as a person with a low
11 potential for making a living.

12 When my son was a little boy, he came
13 to me and he threw down his toys and he said, "Mom,
14 I want to be a solider." And I cried.

15 Then a few years ago, he came to me and
16 he was really happy, and he was up. And he came to
17 me and he said, "I want to go to college. We've got
18 to start saving money." And I cried, because I wasn't
19 sure that he would have the foundation to go to college.

20 I don't want my son pushed out of school,
21 or passed over. I want him to have the best foundation
22 for him to reach his goals and his dreams. Everyday
23 I put my son on the bus, and intellectually I know
24 that I have -- that I can exert some control over
25 him, over his education. But in my heart, and every

1 day in my gut, I feel more and more I'm losing control
2 of him.

3 I can't say, "Stay after school, sweetie,
4 and get the help you need." I can't! He'd have to
5 take an RTD bus home, the rural bus transit here in
6 Denver, and he would have a two bus transfer. He'd
7 go downtown. He wouldn't be home until way late at
8 night if he stayed. I worry about him as it is.
9 I worry about him every day that he gets on the bus,
10 that there won't be some kind of an accident.

11 I want my son not to be bussed. I want
12 my son to have a good education. And that's all I
13 have to say.

14 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much, Mrs.
15 Espinoza.

16 Is Joe Navarro here?

17 MR. NAVARRO: He already spoke.

18 MS. KURTZ: Oh, okay. Jim Esquibel?

19 MR. ESQUIBEL: That's a hard act to follow.
20 My name is Jim Esquibel. I reside at 914 East 10th
21 Avenue. I work for the Denver Public Schools. For
22 the last 25 years, I have been -- I am a primary teacher.
23 I taught in the barrios for 12 years in Las Casitas
24 and then Lincoln projects. And the last three years
25 I spent in the suburbs, but still teaching Baker and

1 Fairmont children.

2 My entire 25 years have been spent with
3 the Chicano child. I am also past National Chairperson
4 for the Chicano Educators of the United States for
5 the NEA, and I have been concerned about the Denver
6 Public Schools' behavior for many years.

7 And finally I took one subject that I
8 felt had to be dealt with because I could not deal
9 with everything, and my charge was suspensions in
10 the elementary schools. That's all I've dealt with
11 for 11 years. I have now an 11 year study of suspensions
12 in the Denver Public Schools.

13 Now we can talk about dropouts, but that
14 affects middle school and senior high students. But
15 I'm talking about the primary child. What causes
16 him to start dropping out in the middle school? It's
17 because in the elementary school he is constantly
18 being suspended. And you cannot suspend a child for
19 35 to 40 days out of a school year and expect him
20 to catch up when he comes back. And it's repeated
21 year after year, and by the time that child reaches
22 7th grade, he is so far behind, he becomes frustrated.
23 And you see the roles of the discontinuers. And you
24 have page after page of "lack of interest". That's
25 what they put down.

1 That's a safe cop-out. But I think when
2 we talk about suspensions, the Denver Public Schools
3 has no -- when you talk about dropouts, they're not
4 responsible. I mean the parents. I mean he dropped
5 out, there's nothing we can do about it. If he doesn't
6 come back, we're not held accountable.

7 Denver Public Schools stood up here and
8 said, "Yes, we have a problem. We're trying to work
9 with it." But I believe that you parents should start
10 realizing what suspensions are doing to your children
11 and what leeways you have there.

12 I have served for ten years at a national
13 level for NEA at human relations and as the Chicano
14 Caucus Chairperson. And one of the issues that was
15 brought to us I think was a study in 1972-73 of the
16 Office of Civil Rights in Michigan where these minority
17 parents were seeing their kids being suspended in
18 great numbers. And parents standing up here saying,
19 "Nobody cares."

20 That's wrong. There is one time that
21 Denver Public Schools loves your kid.

22 MS. KURTZ: Excuse me, sir. I have to
23 ask you to speak into the mic.

24 MR. ESQUIBEL: There is one time that
25 the Denver Public Schools loves your children. It's

1 when they have to take the count for state aid. They
2 want your kid in school that day!

3 (Audience applauds)

4 MR. ESQUIBEL: They throw parties, they'll
5 do anything to get you in school. In the suburbs,
6 in the San Luis Valley, they'll go out to the potato
7 fields and bring them in by busloads for that one
8 day for the count. Because every one of those children
9 represents a certain amount of money.

10 Well, I would like to read to you from
11 the study that we saw there. "One measure of the
12 cost of using suspensions is the value of educational
13 service withheld from students. In the 51 Michigan
14 districts which participated in a 1972-73 OCR survey,
15 students' suspensions exceeded 98,000 school days,
16 or the equivalent of 545 student years."

17 Given an average per pupil expenditure
18 of over \$950.00 per student, the value should be withheld
19 would be half a million dollars for that state, because
20 a suspension is -- the school puts that child out.
21 And when I started studying suspensions, before
22 desegregation, they used to put out, and they still
23 do, it's public record, the number of suspensions
24 in the Denver Public Schools, first semester and second
25 semester.

1 And in '74 and '75 before desegregation,
2 they had a column that said how many out of school
3 days those suspensions accounted for. But then they
4 stopped. And to this day, they still do not have
5 it.

6 I went to the School Board in 1980 with
7 a suspension report, and I asked them why was it taken
8 out. The administration came back to the school board
9 in a written report saying, "We do not know why that
10 was taken out, but we will put it back." Because
11 when you start looking at the number of suspensions
12 of minority kids, 77 percent in high school, 75 percent
13 in elementary of minority kids, it's frightening.

14 But these people in Michigan took it
15 upon themselves that they were going to sue the school
16 district and say, "Well, if you had minority children
17 out of school, and it amounted to half a million dollars,
18 then you shouldn't get that amount of money because
19 you're not teaching those kids. You're putting them
20 out of school."

21 And I believe that when we talk about
22 dropouts, you cannot relate dropouts to elementary
23 schools. But it starts there. It starts when you
24 start suspending the child constantly, and he's home
25 every day. He's not learning.

1 Then Denver Public Schools decided that
2 they were going to help that problem with in-house
3 suspensions. That to me -- I'm just in the elementary
4 schools, but I keep up with what's happening. What
5 happens is that the junior highs and high schools
6 now have an in-house suspension program. They don't
7 suspend them to the house; they suspend them to a
8 room. But it does not have a qualified teacher in
9 there to teach them. It has an aid to police them
10 until -- and give them busy work.

11 And some of these -- and now when you
12 look at the dropout rates for out-of-school suspensions,
13 up until 1980 it was constant. Now with the in-house
14 suspension, it has almost doubled. It's just another
15 vehicle to put children out of school. And I believe
16 that suspensions have a great bearing on what is happening
17 here today.

18 And I will apologize, but I notice that
19 the first people that you had speaking here today
20 were the Colorado Department of Education. They left
21 as soon as their presentation was over. I wonder
22 if there's anybody here who is going to be able to
23 tell them what -- you're going to be more knowledgeable
24 than they are, and you're going to have to go to them
25 for information. And they're going to tell you that

1 everything is working out fine.

2 I think -- for 15 years, the Civil Rights
3 Legislation has not substantially improved the condition
4 of the Hispanic education. So even today as we sit
5 here all day long, Hispanics in this state find themselves
6 underserved by programs designed to redress the
7 inequities.

8 And they're also ill-served by the popular
9 notion expounded by others like the Colorado Department
10 of Education that inequities no longer exist, things
11 are getting better. Forget it! No system can tolerate
12 such waste. We're talking about human waste. And
13 it's evident by the failure here. The percentages.
14 We can't be just talking figures. We're talking numbers.
15 There is no -- if Joe Iococa went out and said, "In
16 that plant out there, 14 percent of the automobiles
17 are defective. They're coming off the production
18 line defective." He would say, "Stop! Correct that
19 inequity and clear it up." Here we have 14 percent
20 we're losing human, and we haven't done anything.

21 MS. KURTZ: Thank you. Let me ask you
22 this, sir; you indicate that you have a considerable
23 volume of information that you've collected over the
24 years. Would you be willing to share that with us
25 in the forum?

1 MR. ESQUIBEL: After I go to the School
2 Board and present it to them, because they haven't
3 seen it.

4 MS. KURTZ: Okay, would that perhaps
5 be in the next ten days or so?

6 MR. ESQUIBEL: Well, no, I don't think
7 so.

8 MS. KURTZ: Okay.

9 MR. ESQUIBEL: I don't know when that
10 will be.

11 MS. KURTZ: Then let me just simply say
12 when you are ready to release it to us, we would very
13 much appreciate receiving it, because I think what
14 you're saying is very important.

15 MR. ESQUIBEL: I will show you one drawing
16 that I'm still completing, and I think it's important
17 that these people out here see it.

18 There are three graphs here in a bar
19 graph for eleven years. The top one is the Blacks
20 in Denver Public Schools. The red one is the Hispanics,
21 and the one on the bottom is the Anglo population
22 in the Denver Public Schools.

23 In 1974, we were suspending 44 percent
24 of the Blacks, and 28 percent of the Anglo, and 28
25 percent of the Hispanics. That was before bussing

1 started. From 1974 to 1984, in 1984, Hispanos have
2 consistently increased to where they now exceed the
3 Blacks in suspensions. And the Blacks have declined
4 and the Anglos have gone clear down here.

5 I mean, we talk about statistics; you
6 can't sit here and listen to statistics. But to me,
7 this is ammunition that you use against the school
8 district. You cannot say that -- why in the ten years
9 have we now exceeded the Blacks in suspensions? Why
10 is that?

11 MS. KURTZ: I'm sorry, sir. We do have
12 a long list of people who also want to speak. We
13 would appreciate very much your sharing with us whatever
14 you --

15 MR. ESQUIBEL: I will share with you
16 whatever I can get together in ten days.

17 MS. KURTZ: I would appreciate that,
18 sir. I think that what you're saying is very important
19 and will be taken into account.

20 John Garcia?

21 MR. GARCIA: Madame Chairman, ladies
22 and gentlemen of the Commission, there is no doubt
23 in my mind of what I have heard here today, what I
24 have heard since 1965 and before that. The question
25 was raised as to where is the Colorado Department

1 of Education and other policy makers. And what we
2 have done tonight, except for the Commission, is to
3 be preaching to the faithful.

4 There is no doubt in my mind that the
5 school system in the state of Colorado, by and large,
6 has failed the largest ethnic minority. Not within
7 the last ten years, but going back to the 40's. I'm
8 a product of that system. I know it well. I know
9 its idiosyncracies, and I know its biases.

10 I heard so many things today about, "Someone
11 has got to help us!" I've heard that before. And
12 I would like to simply take a different tact and propose
13 to the Hispanic community that they need to internalize.
14 They need to find out that no one is going to help.

15 They have to do it themselves. There
16 is no way that the dominant community is going to
17 become sensitized by virtue of a couple of meetings
18 or a series of meetings. It hasn't happened, and
19 it will not happen.

20 What remains to be done, then, is to
21 take the collective energies and knowledge of the
22 Hispanic community and attack the problem. With allies,
23 of course, because we can't do it ourselves. As taxpayers
24 and citizens, we have the responsibility and the right
25 to petition those institutions that must respond.

1 Middle class America does it well. We've
2 had good models. We've learned. What is required
3 now is a collective will to simply do that. Because
4 we'll be here 20 years from now talking about the
5 same thing and listening to the same statistics, probably
6 worse. The same horror stories, the same pathetic
7 kinds of presentations that several ladies have made
8 this afternoon. We must do it ourselves. We need
9 to know that, and we need to implement it.

10 I am a strong believer, ladies and gentlemen,
11 having seen the failure of the public schools with
12 this minority group and others, of an alternative
13 school system. I'm a strong believer in the voucher
14 system, because middle class America uses it very
15 well. It, if it's affluent enough, doesn't have to
16 put up with the Mickey Mouse stuff that many of the
17 children in America, both White, Black, and Hispanics
18 have to put up with. They send their kids to private
19 school, parochial school, and they're nurtured there.

20 There is a vast difference between the
21 kind of commitment public institutions have versus
22 the public school system. The public school system
23 is an ossified institution. It's gelled. It's molded.
24 And I don't know that anything that we can provide
25 or any kind of pressure that we can exert is going

1 to change it.

2 I do not believe we can. I think all
3 of the activities that you see here today are band-aids.
4 The 2 plus 2 Committee that was talked about this
5 morning made a very, very cogent argument for the
6 fact -- two facts. We have to do something about
7 the high school dropout problem. There's no doubt
8 about that. But we need to be realistic about the
9 fact that we're not going to salvage too many of those
10 youngsters. It's too late. I hate to say that, but
11 it's too late.

12 The dropout problem in the state of Colorado
13 and elsewhere will not improve until we begin to look
14 at the pre-school intervention and the elementary
15 school emphasis for the education of these kids.

16 (Audience applause)

17 Thank you.

18 MS. KURTZ: Thank you, Mr. Garcia. Would
19 you please state for the record an address and telephone
20 number where we can reach you?

21 MR. GARCIA: Yes. John Garcia, P.O. Box
22 2163, Denver, 80201.

23 MS. KURTZ: Thank you.

24 MR. GARCIA: Thank you very much.

25 MS. KURTZ: I don't know if I can pronounce

1 this last name right. But anyhow, I'll try. Marylou
2 Berumen?

3 MS. BERUMEN: Good afternoon. I'm a
4 parent. My children go to the Denver Public Schools.
5 I have three. My oldest one is a discontinued student.
6 She has not really dropped out, but in the past year
7 she has attended school probably two months.

8 And then I have another daughter that's
9 15 -- I have a 14 year old daughter. She has a high
10 B average. I have a son that's 7 years old. He's
11 in the second grade.

12 The reason that I'm getting involved
13 and the reason that I came here is my oldest daughter
14 really doesn't know what she wants to do. She does
15 want to go back to school. When my husband called
16 the school to ask about getting her back into classes,
17 he was told that there was a possibility that she
18 may not be able to go back to school. I've been talking
19 to some people, and I realize the reasons for them
20 telling us that, but my husband didn't realize them,
21 and he was really panicked.

22 Our other daughter, the 14 year old who
23 has the B average, this is her second year in the
24 Denver Public Schools. And this year, she got three
25 F's. I don't think that's -- you know, it's really

1 alarming to us. She has a lot of goals. She wants
2 to be an artist, fine arts. And I feel like the schools
3 that she came from -- we came from Nebraska, and the
4 school -- the junior high school that she went to
5 was in the top ten of the United States. And they
6 had a big ceremony and awards, so I don't feel like
7 the schools that she has come from are lower than
8 the Denver Public Schools.

9 And I don't understand why she is --
10 all of a sudden her grades have dropped. She doesn't
11 have a bag attitude. She's not a student that doesn't
12 go to school. She goes to school every day. She
13 attends all of her classes.

14 One of the alarming things, though, that
15 did happen this year is she is coming home and voicing
16 the teacher's attitudes towards students. Some things
17 that she has seen, and these are things that I'd like
18 you to know, because I think they're -- it's what
19 you're here for, to find out if the students are in
20 fact being discriminated against.

21 The comments that she has brought home
22 are things like the teacher will approach a student
23 that hasn't been there for a day or two and ask them
24 to answer a question. When the student says, "I'm
25 sorry, I can't answer that because I wasn't here.

1 I don't know what the material is", she says, "You're
2 going to answer it. You're going to answer it, and
3 I'm going to keep asking you to answer until you answer
4 it."

5 And then when the student says, "I'm
6 not going to answer it because I don't know the material",
7 she says, "Okay, out! Out of the class."

8 That's one instance. Another one is
9 she voiced that the neighborhood that we live in --
10 I live at 2615 West Argyle Place. It's one block
11 from North High. It's like behind North High. She
12 said that our neighborhood and our community did not
13 value education, that we just want to live within
14 our seven block radius of the school and do not want
15 to go out into the real world.

16 And I don't feel that that's true. And
17 I think that comments like this are going to destroy
18 the goals of -- they could destroy the goals that
19 my daughter has. And I think that a lot of these
20 things are affecting the way she is doing in school.

21 We talk a lot about, you know, why she
22 is having the problems in school that she is having.
23 And we talked about what this teacher has said. I
24 suggested that she meet with the teacher and ask her
25 exactly what she does mean by these comments that

1 she makes. And they are all directed to Hispanic
2 youths that are in her class, not the Anglo students.
3 The Anglo students, she knows them by name. The Hispanic
4 students, she says, "Hey you! Over here, come sit
5 over here."

6 And when one young man that does not
7 like her asked her to address him by his name, she
8 said, "Well, maybe I don't want to remember your name."
9 He still goes to the class. He doesn't like her,
10 but he goes to the class because he wants to do something
11 with himself.

12 There are students, though, that she
13 has sent out of her class for not answering questions,
14 not being there the day before for being tardy, a
15 number of other reasons that my daughter has approached
16 because of the involvement that I have had. I tell
17 her that they can't do that to you. You know, go
18 back into the class. So she approaches the students
19 and says, "Go to the counselor. He'll get you back
20 in your class."

21 And they just say, "Who cares? She doesn't
22 care. She's going to throw me out again." So they
23 won't go back.

24 Other comments that have been made are
25 -- there's a P.E. teacher at the same school that

1 was talking to other teachers. And he said this in
2 a hearing -- so that students could hear him make
3 this comment, "Boy, I've really got a lot of wetbacks
4 in my class this year."

5 I think that that's really a degrading
6 comment to make within the hearing of other Chicano
7 Mexicano students. Because there are a lot of them
8 that go to school there. I think it really lowers
9 their self-esteem to be lumped together with such
10 disrespect. And I ask you to tell me that this is
11 not discriminatory.

12 And I realize that a lot of the teachers
13 in that school are very good teachers, that they all
14 aren't like these two that I've mentioned as examples.
15 But those teachers are the ones that tear down our
16 youth. And the ones that are there that don't tear
17 them down either close their eyes and ears to what
18 is happening and don't help build them back up, and
19 just totally don't do anything about it.

20 And that's all I have to say. Oh, I'd
21 also like to ask the parents from the United Parents
22 for Progressive Education to stand. We've all banded
23 together to come here and just let you know that we're
24 out there and we're going to try to do something.

25 MS. KURTZ: I hope that in the meeting

1 that we'll set up, probably sometime in the latter
2 half of February on Saturday that those of you who
3 have perhaps attended without speaking will share
4 with us the experiences that you have. Because this
5 is very important information for us, and I certainly
6 want to thank you for the presentation that you have
7 made here today.

8 MS. BERUMEN: Thank you. And I'd like
9 to say that we will have a lot of parents at that
10 meeting. That's one of the things that we are going
11 to try to do is be a supportive group for parents
12 to educate them in their rights within the schools,
13 because we realize that a lot of parents are intimidated
14 by the administration. Thank you.

15 MS. KURTZ: Thank you.

16 Patricio Cordova?

17 MR. CORDOVA: Thank you. I'm Patricio
18 Cordova. I'm the Executive Director of the Chicano
19 Humanities and Arts Counsel. We're a non-profit consortium
20 of artists from various disciplines. We've been in
21 existence since 1978, and we're a regional institution.
22 I'm also instructor of music at the University of
23 Colorado at Denver.

24 In -- I think one of the major problems
25 for Chicanos in education is the very poor curriculum

1 that exists in the schools. I was a member of the
2 Denver Public Schools Advisory Committee for Excellence
3 in Education which worked for a year and issued a
4 rather lengthy report, which we think was pretty much
5 just a whitewash of the whole issue.

6 During that whole time of that hearing,
7 that task force never addressed the minority dropout
8 issue or any of the problems pertaining to minorities,
9 even though I as a committee member repeatedly brought
10 up this issue in the various committees and the general
11 forums, et cetera. It was never dealt with.

12 The recommendations that we made from
13 our committee in the education component of the committee
14 recommended a requirement of one year of art and one
15 year -- or one year of music, either as a participant
16 or an auditor, meaning art appreciation or music
17 appreciation or something like that. However, in
18 the final report, that was somehow deleted, and the
19 emphasis again is on the sciences, math, social studies,
20 et cetera.

21 We think that this is a cultural bias
22 that Chicanos value music, arts, culture, our food
23 and our customs much more than the rest of society,
24 and we think this is a real valuable thing in terms
25 of role modeling and suppositive self-imaging, et

1 cetera. But this kind of value is not reflected in
2 the school systems, et cetera.

3 We have been attempting to get the schools
4 to use so-called "non-certified experts" in the schools
5 to enhance the role modeling, the role modeling
6 possibilities, and the self-imagining. Non-certified
7 experts being experts in the various cultural disciplines
8 who don't have the required certification to teach
9 in the schools.

10 If you look at the Latin American culture
11 or Chicano culture, whatever, people like Picasso,
12 Salvador Dali, Garcia Marquez, Garcia Lorca in literature,
13 et cetera, all down the line, we have some of the
14 outstanding artists and cultural performers in the
15 world, but they are not reflected, period, in the
16 schools. And we think that this can be a real key
17 ingredient in keeping kids in the schools and giving
18 them a positive self-identity and image.

19 In terms of the bilingual question, we
20 are continually in the position of almost having to
21 be ashamed of our language. And I think this is a
22 real travesty. If you look at the European philosophy,
23 you go to Europe, the kids that you meet on the streets,
24 on the trains, et cetera, speak four or five languages.
25 They view this as a very, very positive attribute,

1 and it is very positive. In terms of learning other
2 languages, et cetera, if you can learn a second language
3 through the use of cognates, through knowing structure,
4 et cetera, it enhances your own command of the English
5 language. It gives you a lot more opportunities in
6 the business world, et cetera.

7 But the only time it seems like the
8 administrators respond to this is when businessmen
9 say, "Yes, there is a lucrative economic market in
10 South America and Mexico with oil, et cetera, and
11 we need people to speak Spanish." So it's always
12 a question again of materialistic motivations.

13 In terms of the bilingual programs, we
14 think that it is really -- it appears to me to be
15 really an appeasement of initiatives that Hispanics
16 have brought to insist on this kind of thing rather
17 than taking initiative to develop model programs.

18 In addition to this, the general tenure
19 of the administrators and the teachers in the schools
20 I think is one of not caring at all, not taking any
21 initiative. If you go and talk to the administrators
22 or the teachers, they continually say, "Yes, we are
23 responsive to your concerns." Every time we raise
24 these concerns, they say, "Yes, we will respond to
25 your concerns", but they never take any initiative.

1 It's not our job to go over there and do their job.
2 It's their job to take the initiative in the first
3 place to correct this problem. It's a major problem
4 if you're going to have all of these kids dropping
5 out, and again having the social and criminal problems
6 later on.

7 In terms of my own experience, I don't
8 want to sound too egocentric about this, but I grew
9 up -- fortunately, my parents were educators and I
10 had very good skills in the three R's, et cetera.
11 But I grew up with a huge inferiority complex because
12 I never really did have the role modeling. I grew
13 up in a school in which I was one of the few Chicanos.
14 We were never told that Chicanos could accomplish
15 anything. I never felt like I could accomplish anything,
16 and I really didn't until I found some role models.

17 At the age of 22, I heard Andres Segovia
18 play the classical guitar, and it changed my life.
19 From that time onward, I think -- you know, I've received
20 a Master's degree in ethnomusicology from the University
21 of Michigan, I've done graduate studies in art and
22 architecture from the University of Texas, and I'm
23 active in the Denver community now. And I think that's
24 directly attributable to the fact that I was finally
25 able to gain a healthy positive self-image and to

1 realize that Hispanics can achieve.

2 We never hear about any of the Hispanic
3 achievers. If you look for instance at Latin American
4 literature, the Nobel Prizes and the Pulitzer Prizes
5 in the last 15 or 20 years, I think you'll recognize
6 that they've been dominated by Latin American writers,
7 yet this stuff is never allowed in the curriculums.

8 I reviewed one of the history texts that
9 is in use at North High School. I was really saddened
10 to find that that particular text was copyright 1954,
11 so it's sadly out of date. The other thing is it
12 subscribes to the Plymouth Rock Theory of history
13 in which the history in this country begins in 1607.
14 If you care to read the history books, Juan Delonante
15 passed through this territory prior to that time.
16 The Spaniards had printing presses in southern Colorado
17 and northern New Mexico before the pilgrims even landed.

18 If you look at the history books, in
19 about a 500 page text there were maybe three pages
20 which were patronizing and condescending and gave
21 a very negative image. And I think this is a travesty.

22 And I think the bottom line simply though
23 is that administrators don't care. During the course
24 of that study, I went to talk to the principal at
25 North High School which has I believe the highest

1 dropout rate. And we discussed all of the issues,
2 and I said, "What are you doing about it?"

3 He said, "Well, nothing. We can't do
4 anything about it."

5 I think if you have administrators in
6 there who have that attitude, you're never going to
7 get anything done. And until people start to care
8 and start to recognize the cultural values of Hispanics
9 and the value of cultural pluralism, I don't think
10 we're going to get anywhere with this problem.

11 MS. KURTZ: It's time.

12 MR. CORDOVA: Yes, okay, thank you.
13 The mailing address for the Chicano Humanities and
14 Arts Counsel is Post Office Box 2512, Denver, 80201,
15 and the phone number is 839-1234. Thank you.

16 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much.

17 Has Martin Maez come in?

18 (Pause)

19 MS. KURTZ: And what about Joe Maez?

20 (Pause)

21 MS. KURTZ: Well, those are the people
22 that had signed up. Had they been here, we would
23 have run this until about three minutes before 6:00
24 o'clock, which is our ending time. I'll ask is there
25 anyone here who wants to make a statement? Okay,

1 this lady, and then that lady. Would you please identify
2 yourself?

3 MS. AGUILAR NAVARRO: Buenas tardes.
4 Me llamo Lucía Aguilar Navarro. Vengo aquí esta tarde
5 porque yo tengo mucho interés en la educación de mis
6 hijos.

7 What I have just said is good afternoon.
8 My name is Lucia Aguilar Navarro. The reason I am
9 here is because I am very interested in my children's
10 education. And the reason I spoke in Spanish first
11 is to illustrate a point. That is the accessibility
12 to the Spanish speaking is nearly nil throughout the
13 Denver Public School system. People like myself and
14 the people I work with, La Lancia De La Raza, as well
15 as United Parents for Progressive Education, have
16 pushed the Denver Public School system to translate
17 meetings such as this into Spanish. And I strongly
18 urge that the meeting being held at the end of February
19 be translated into Spanish. And I offer my services
20 to translate. I am a court-certified translator,
21 so I am able to do that.

22 One point related to this is that a lot
23 of the Spanish speaking, besides other problems that
24 have been stated about the problems with the educational
25 system, is the parent's inability to communicate with

1 the schools, with the teachers, et cetera. And it
2 becomes even more frustrating than for those of us
3 who can communicate in English.

4 MS. KURTZ: We very much appreciate your
5 offer. Would you mind leaving your name and address
6 with Mr. Weber so that we can be sure that we don't
7 overlook getting in touch with you for that meeting.
8 Because I think your point is very well made, and
9 I appreciate your offer. Thank you.

10 There's a lady back here?

11 MS. MONTANO: Good afternoon. My name
12 is Theresa Montano. I'm also a member of La Lancia
13 De La Raza, and I'm a middle school teacher at Merrill
14 Middle Schools here at Denver Public Schools.

15 I believe that part of the problem of
16 -- I agree with what someone said earlier, that the
17 problems of the students actually manifest themselves
18 in elementary and in middle schools. It's my understanding
19 that the creation of middle schools in Denver Public
20 Schools was "to help the needs of special students."
21 But I also recognize that in my classes, of my 65
22 classes which are "high students", I have two minority
23 students in those classes. Of the 85 "modified" or
24 low students, I have five Anglo students in those
25 classes.

1 So I begin to question whether or not
2 this is just a nice way to trap my students into lower
3 classes where they become -- they are taught not the
4 same materials that the students in the high classes
5 are taught.

6 I also look around at the school that
7 I'm at, and my students come up to me, I suppose because
8 I'm Chicano and they can relate to me and tell me
9 stories. Horror stories, which I feel I cannot do
10 anything about in the schools about teacher's prejudice.

11 To give you an example, I had one student
12 yesterday, a 7th grader came in pretty shook up, nervous,
13 and he told me that he felt one of his teachers was
14 prejudiced. And I asked, "Well, why do you say that?"
15 He said, "Well, Ms. Montano, there are about five
16 of us in the class, three Black, two Chicano, and
17 the rest are White." He said, "They have electric
18 typewriters. He puts all of the kids who are Anglo
19 in the front with the electric typewriters. Myself,
20 Jay Reed, et cetera, et cetera, every single minority
21 student in that classroom is in the back with the
22 manual typewriters."

23 I look around at the Gifted and Talented
24 Program at that school, and very few of the students
25 in the Gifted and Talented Program are minority students.

1 No one is going to tell me that we don't have gifted
2 and talented students in the minority community.

3 I look at my students and I see a lot
4 of my students in the modified class who actually
5 belong in the -- I have a Master's in bilingual education,
6 who belong in ESL classrooms. And they do not even
7 have an ESL tutor to help them out in the class.

8 MS. KURTZ: Excuse me. What do you mean
9 by "ESL"?

10 MS. MONTANO: English as a second language,
11 or bilingual classrooms.

12 MS. KURTZ: Thank you.

13 MS. MONTANO: All of those students,
14 with the exception of one, are placed in the modified
15 or the low classes. And they have no tutor at all
16 whatsoever in that classroom, so it's kind of a sink
17 or swim.

18 They are the brunts of the jokes of the
19 teachers. They are students that are placed in the
20 hallways because teachers cannot control them because
21 they become bored in the classroom. I've taught now
22 for seven years; six years in Los Angeles. And I'm
23 not saying that Los Angeles is free from racism, because
24 it isn't. But I have taught six months in Denver,
25 and never have I felt that I wanted to quit teaching.

1 And I really feel to this point today -- I was telling
2 someone yesterday that I'm just fed up, and I don't
3 want to be in the classroom anymore because I feel
4 that there's nothing that I can do to help these students.

5 So I'm sure that if you look at people
6 in Denver Public Schools, they'd be the last to say
7 that we are trying to help the needs of our students.
8 But as a teacher and a parent, I am very concerned
9 that our students are not being met. And that under
10 the guise of trying to help special students and under
11 special programs, and under competency testing, they
12 are being tracked into lower classes. And in being
13 tracked into lower classes, they get bored. And by
14 the time that they are in the 8th grade, they start
15 missing. In the 7th grade, they start missing. I've
16 had one student who I have seen two days out of the
17 semester. And he hasn't come back. Now he for all
18 sakes and purposes is not a dropout. But I'll bet
19 he won't come back next year, and I'll bet he won't
20 be in there after that, either.

21 Thank you.

22 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much.

23 Yes, sir, you'll be the last speaker.
24 The gentleman in the light coat.

25 MR. FLORES: Ladies and gentlemen of

1 the Commission and panelists, I think that -- my name
2 is Benji Flores. I live at 784 South Conosa.

3 I think that all of the remarks that
4 have been made, and I have missed part of the proceedings
5 because of another appointment in Boulder. But I
6 think that one of the things that is very evident
7 here is that the people that are concerned -- as the
8 legislature said when they were passing the Education
9 Act in the legislature a few years back, the people
10 that have told you the truth are the people that you're
11 not listening to.

12 And I think that it's very incumbent
13 upon this Commission and the panelists that when you
14 have this meeting at the end of February or whenever
15 it is scheduled, that I think that it should be a
16 mandatory procedure on your part to have the full
17 commission there and the panelists that attended this
18 meeting so that they can hear firsthand and put those
19 people that are able to give you the facts and the
20 figures at the beginning of the meeting so that nobody
21 walks out of there so that nobody knows what they're
22 saying.

23 And somebody aptly put it, the people
24 that should be hearing you are the choir people.
25 And you don't have to go to a pulpit and preach and

1 everything else, because the people that come every
2 Sunday to the church, they hear that thing all of
3 the time. It's the people that you should be hearing
4 that don't come to that thing that you should be hearing.
5 So I commend you for that, and I hope it is a success.
6 Thank you.

7 MS. KURTZ: Thank you very much.

8 Ladies and gentlemen, this has been a
9 long, long day for you and for us. We certainly appreciate
10 your patience in sitting through these proceedings,
11 and for participating so very, very effectively.

12 I know that -- and I can understand that
13 you may have some doubts as to whether we were listening
14 to what you were telling us, and we're going to take
15 it seriously. And I'm not so naive as to think that
16 if I say we're going to do it that you will necessarily
17 believe me. In any situation like this, the proof
18 of what is going to happen is when it happens, not
19 when people say they've got good intentions.

20 But we very sincerely appreciate what
21 you have given to us. We are going to take this into
22 account. As you see, we've had a reporter here for
23 the entire day. We will get all of the things you
24 have told us transcribed so that we can study it.
25 We will prepare a report. We will be back in touch

1 with the -- we will be holding these other forums,
2 however, before we reach any conclusions on action.
3 We will report to the Civil Rights Commission and
4 we will be keeping in close touch with you so that
5 you can see how the proceedings are going along.

6 The pace may be a little slow, because
7 it's not under our control to decide when Washington
8 will decide something. But we're going to do our
9 very best to move this study along and to see that
10 we actually get some concrete results out of the
11 proceedings of today and the next five forums that
12 we're going to hold.

13 In the meantime, thank you ever so much
14 on behalf of the Advisory Committee to the U.S. Civil
15 Rights Commission for the time that you have taken
16 today and for the thoughts that you have given, and
17 for sharing your knowledge and your expertise with
18 us in this very important subject. Thank you, and
19 good night.

20 (Whereupon, proceedings in the above-entitled
21 matter were concluded at 6:00 p.m.)
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CERTIFICATE

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This is to certify that the attached proceedings before:
U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

In the matter of: Hispanic Student Dropout Forum

At Denver, Colorado, Date January 10, 1986

was held as herein appears, and that this is the original transcript thereof for the file of the Department.

Marian Radley
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