

In The Matter Of:
The State of Delaware
Department of Education

In Re: Pencader Business and Finance Charter High School
Vol. I
February 11, 2013

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THE STATE OF DELAWARE
 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
 and
 BOARD OF EDUCATION

In re:)
)
 Pencader Business and) Volume I
 Finance Charter High School)
)

TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC HEARING

John W. Collette Education Center
 35 Commerce Street
 Dover, Delaware 19901
 Monday, February 11, 2013
 6:30 p.m.

HEARD BEFORE: JOHN CARWELL, JR. - Hearing Officer

APPEARANCES:

JOHN HINDMAN, Esq. - Counsel to the Hearing
 Officer
 DONNA JOHNSON - State Board Executive Director

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1 MR. CARWELL: Good evening,
2 everyone, and welcome. I declare this public
3 hearing to be open. My name is John Carwell,
4 Jr. I am the Director for the Charter School
5 Office for the Department of Education, and I
6 have been appointed to conduct this public
7 hearing.

8 The charter of Pencader Business
9 and Finance Charter School was placed on formal
10 review by the Department of Education with the
11 assent of the State Board of Education, and as
12 is required by law, the matter was referred to
13 the Charter School Accountability Committee for
14 review, and a final report has been issued
15 object this matter.

16 This joint public hearing is being
17 held by the Department of Education and the
18 State Board of Education to assist in the
19 decision of whether the criteria set forth for
20 remedial action under the Delaware Code has been
21 satisfied.

22 This hearing provides the school an
23 opportunity to respond to the final report of
24 the Charter School Accountability Committee,



1 which recommended that the school's charter be
2 revoked, and also to receive public comment.

3 For the record, notice of the time,
4 date, and place of today's public hearing was
5 published in The News Journal and the Delaware
6 State News on Friday, January 11th, 2013.

7 In addition, notice was posted at
8 the Charter School Accountability Committee's
9 place of business, on its official website, and
10 on the State public meeting calendar on the
11 State's official website, on Friday, January
12 11th, 2013.

13 Further, Pencader Business and
14 Finance Public Charter School was personally
15 notified of the time, date, and place of today's
16 public hearing, and that it was changed from 5
17 p.m. to 7 p.m. to today's time of 6:30 to 8:30
18 p.m., at the request of the school. The time
19 for today's -- I'm sorry. It was also posted
20 February 6th, 2013, at the Charter School
21 Accountability Committee's place of business and
22 on the Department's official website and on the
23 State public meeting calendar on the State's
24 official website.



1 The Department has also scheduled a
2 second hearing to be held at 6:30 to 9 p.m. on
3 Wednesday, February the 13th, 2013, in rooms
4 A116 and A114 at the Delaware Technical and
5 Community College's Stanton campus. The hearing
6 was posted February 6, 2013, at the Charter
7 School Accountability Committee's place of
8 business, on the Department of Education's
9 official website, and on the State public
10 meeting calendar on the State's official website
11 on February 6, 2013.

12 And Department and State Board
13 issued a joint press release about the second
14 hearing. The press release also included the
15 changed start time for tonight's meeting.

16 A court reporter is present so that
17 a record of this hearing can be made. It will
18 be necessary for each speaker to clearly
19 identify his or herself before beginning to
20 speak, so that the court reporter will be able
21 to note who you are.

22 The record of this hearing will be
23 provided to the Secretary of Education and
24 members of the State Board of Education,



1 together with any written or electronic comments
2 received at the second public hearing, which is
3 scheduled on Wednesday, February 13th, 2013.

4 We will proceed in the following
5 manner: First we will hear from any
6 representatives of the charter school who wish
7 to comment on the committee's final report.
8 Then we will take comments from anyone else who
9 desires to speak. There are sign-up sheets in
10 the back of the room. If you desire to speak
11 and have not signed up so far, please do so. I
12 will now pause for a moment to permit anyone who
13 has not signed up to -- to sign up to speak.

14 So, I heard recently from the
15 school, or just before the meeting began, that
16 the board and the representatives of the school
17 are willing to yield to the parents to go first?
18 Okay. All right.

19 So I will go with the first name on
20 the individual sheet, which is -- and forgive me
21 if I mispronounce the name -- Hollie Santoleri.

22 MS. SANTOLERI: Hollie Santoleri.

23 ANDREW SANTOLERI: My name is
24 Andrew Santoleri, S-a-n-t-o-l-e-r-i. I'm



1 reading something on behalf of my daughter
2 Hollie. Her name is spelled H-o-l-l-i-e. Just
3 begin?

4 MR. CARWELL: Yes.

5 ANDREW SANTOLERI: My daughter
6 wrote this letter to express how she feels about
7 the closing, and then what Pencader means to
8 her. To whom it may concern, my name is Hollie
9 Santoleri, and I am a junior at Pencader Charter
10 High School. I transferred to Pencader in my
11 junior year from Christiana High School. While
12 at Christiana, I felt like every day I had to
13 defend myself. Every day was a struggle for me.
14 I wasn't a bad kid, but I also wasn't a straight
15 A student, so it seemed to -- so I seemed to get
16 lost in everything.

17 The way things were -- the way
18 things were ran there, there was not okay --
19 excuse me -- it was not okay. People would
20 smoke in the bathrooms, and teachers would smell
21 it and know about it, but didn't feel like
22 having the confrontation, so nothing was said.

23 Students walked down the halls with
24 phones up to their ears, because the staff just



1 didn't care. So many times I'd have to stand up
2 for and defend kids with mental disorders who
3 couldn't defend themselves. They were bullied
4 and mistreated.

5 There was a normal standard people
6 were expected to meet in order to have any type
7 of importance in the eyes of any of the
8 students, and if you were far from normal, you
9 were treated like an animal. No one cared about
10 you.

11 When I was dating the star of the
12 basketball team, everyone liked me. I had so
13 many friends. We broke up in February of 2012,
14 and the rest of my year was terrible. I ended
15 up having to call the cops on him and two girls
16 because they came to my job to jump me.

17 I was afraid to start a new school,
18 because the only experience I had with a high
19 school was not a good one. But when I came to
20 Pencader, the first day I felt so welcomed. I
21 didn't feel like people were judging me as soon
22 as I walked into a room. They all talked to me,
23 and I've made so many friends there. The
24 teachers care about us, and are willing to help



1 us pass any way they can. They want to see
2 their students succeed, and have gone above and
3 beyond to make sure that that happens.

4 I always felt like I was standing
5 alone and defending the kids at Christiana, but
6 here I don't feel that way. Everyone treats
7 them like they're just like us. They make them
8 feel a sense of normalcy.

9 I feel like a family at Pencader,
10 and I don't know -- and I know that I am held
11 accountable for everything I do. Nothing gets
12 past them, and that's the type of environment
13 that I need, where I don't just get forgotten
14 about, and I stay on track and out of trouble.

15 If they close down, I won't have
16 anywhere to go. I'll be home schooled, and I
17 will graduate from my living room rather than a
18 huge room, and being able to walk across the
19 stage like I very well deserve to.

20 I am hoping that you will take this
21 letter into strong consideration regarding
22 Pencader's future. You will not only be taking
23 away a productive learning environment, but a
24 place where a lot of people come and feel safe.



1 Sincerely, Hollie Santoleri.

2 MR. CARWELL: Thank you.

3 ANDREW SANTOLERI: Thank you.

4 MR. CARWELL: And just to make sure
5 that we have enough time for every speaker, if
6 you could please hold your applause. And also,
7 you'll notice that Ms. Johnson is holding up
8 placards to give you a sense of how much time
9 you have available. We're just trying to limit
10 time to about three minutes per speaker
11 individual, and about five minutes for each
12 group. That's the school representatives, so
13 that we have enough time for everyone that wants
14 to speak to speak.

15 Okay. Next on the list we have
16 Toni Santoleri.

17 MS. SANTOLERI: Santoleri.

18 MR. CARWELL: Thank you.

19 MS. SANTOLERI: Hi, I'm Toni,
20 T-o-n-i, last name is Santoleri,
21 S-a-n-t-o-l-e-r-i. Okay. I first came to
22 Pencader Charter a year and a half ago in search
23 of a better high school for my daughter. My
24 daughter was a sophomore at Christiana High



1 School, and I had to find another school.

2 My first experience with the
3 Christiana School District was in 2003. My
4 husband retired from the military and we moved
5 here from Louisiana. The schools in Louisiana
6 were very different. They still practice
7 corporal punishment. However, if a parent
8 disagreed with paddling, you signed a contract
9 agreeing to come to the school and discipline
10 your own child.

11 Leaving an environment like that
12 and walking into Glasgow High School was a huge
13 culture shock. My oldest two children, then a
14 freshman and a sophomore, spent less than two
15 weeks in Glasgow before I pulled them. They
16 came home daily smelling of smoke and talking
17 about fights that occurred.

18 I switched them to Christiana High
19 School, which was not ideal, but definitely an
20 improvement. They both graduated from
21 Christiana, one in 2006, the other in 2007, with
22 honors.

23 When my next daughter reached high
24 school age they begged me to send her to their



1 alma mater. I was shocked at how much the
2 school had changed. Students walk through the
3 hallways with cell phone in hand.

4 There were many issues involving my
5 daughter that I was never made aware of, and
6 finally, due to bullying and poor administrative
7 decisions, I chose to pull her, even if it meant
8 home schooling.

9 My brother-in-law told me about
10 Pencader Charter, and I came to see if this
11 could be an option. From the minute I walked
12 into the building I was impressed.

13 I discussed with the administration
14 the issues I had with my daughter at Christiana.
15 My daughter is a good kid, but like many teens,
16 is not always focused. In the public school
17 system, children who create problems are given a
18 great deal of attention, as well as children who
19 are self-motivated and able to work on their
20 own. However, when you have a child like my
21 daughter, who needs extra instruction but is not
22 a problem, they seem to get lost in the system.

23 At Pencader, she felt comfortable,
24 and it is apparent I felt confident that she



1 would be safe, and the staff would keep me
2 abreast of missed assignments or other issues
3 that would affect her grades.

4 Don't get me wrong, I am very angry
5 at the previous administration at Pencader.
6 These people listened to our stories about the
7 public school system, reassured of us of a
8 better program, and then did everything they
9 could to attempt to destroy this through their
10 actions.

11 They victimized our children by
12 lying and being deceitful. However, now I feel
13 the Board of Education is trying to victimize
14 our children again by taking away their school.

15 I am aware of the fact that
16 Pencader has been through similar situations in
17 the past and has been given opportunities to fix
18 the problem, while being placed on probation on
19 several occasions. Now here we are again back
20 in a similar situation, asking for consideration
21 and mercy from the Board.

22 I'm not exactly sure what the
23 answers are. However, I do know that closing
24 down a school like Pencader is not the answer.



1 Rather than close down a school with so much
2 potential, help us fight for it. Become
3 involved in ensuring that Pencader board and
4 administration are doing what they should for
5 the school. Stop allowing and encouraging the
6 media to tear us apart at every chance, and get
7 our kids -- make our kids first and foremost.

8 If Pencader closes, I will not put
9 my child back in public school. Since we've
10 missed any opportunity to choice, then she will
11 be home schooled for her senior year, which is
12 sad.

13 Pencader is not without problems,
14 as I am sure many of you saw in the media last
15 week. This place is more than just brick and
16 mortar building. It's a family. Children who
17 struggle in public schools with cliques and
18 bullies found a safe haven there. There's no
19 way -- wait. They were in no way at fault for
20 any of the incidents that have occurred, past or
21 present, yet it is the children that will
22 continue to suffer.

23 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Hollie
24 Santoleri.



1 MS. SANTOLERI: No. Hollie already
2 went.

3 MR. CARWELL: Okay. That was read.
4 Okay. Thank you.

5 MATT SANTOLERI: Hi. My name is at
6 in Santoleri, M-a-t-t S-a-n-t-o-l-e-r-i. I'm a
7 father. My daughter Mercy Santoleri is a senior
8 at Pencader Charter this year. She came to
9 Pencader last year as a junior. We transferred,
10 she came to live with me full time after going
11 to Bowmanor in Maryland for her ninth and tenth
12 grade year.

13 We went and checked out William
14 Penn first. It was about three times the size
15 of her old school. She was terrified to go
16 there. Unfortunately, my son was a graduate of
17 Christiana High School class of 2008. When he
18 first got there as a freshman, you know, it had
19 their fair share of problems, like any high
20 school does. I got a real good dose of it.

21 His sophomore year, because of the
22 cutbacks for State funding and whatnot, they
23 lost a slew of teachers. Their class sizes
24 doubled, and they didn't have teachers for his



1 class, so he got forced into a student aid
2 class, rather than being in a class where he was
3 actually learning something, unfortunately,
4 which he was going to receive a full credit for.

5 Which unfortunately, this credit
6 was well enough for him to graduate on and for
7 the school to eventually put him on the street,
8 but it wasn't enough to count towards his
9 academic eligibility for sports and whatnot,
10 which I thought was a travesty against a kid.

11 Here you are going to put a kid in
12 something where you're going to graduate him on,
13 but it doesn't count for him to play baseball.
14 Kind of a shock to the system for myself.

15 So, getting back to my daughter
16 now, there was no way I was going to put her
17 back into that same environment. I had heard of
18 Pencader Charter. I took her to Pencader
19 Charter to check the school out, and like my
20 sister-in-law said, we were received like a
21 family.

22 And yes, there was some issues with
23 the past administration and whatnot. But I will
24 say, you know, my daughter never -- she



1 struggled in math her whole life, from grade
2 school on through, even through her high school
3 years. And maybe Mr. Lewis wasn't the class
4 act, or maybe got involved in some things, but
5 he did take my daughter under his wing and tutor
6 her.

7 And shortly after being tutored by
8 this gentleman, my daughter was pulling A's in
9 the class, and is still continuously pulling A's
10 in her math classes because of the extra
11 attention that she was given at this school.

12 You know, I was fortunate to go to
13 a school where I graduated from in Pennsylvania,
14 Ridley High School, where I not only was able to
15 flourish academically, but I was also able to
16 flourish athletically.

17 The State is constantly cutting
18 back, cutting back, cutting back from education.
19 My younger two daughters right now are in Wilbur
20 and Gunning Bedford. Right now Colonial is
21 under referendum, because if we don't pass the
22 referendum they're going to cut back on
23 teachers. Their class size is going to go from
24 22 to 35 kids a class, okay?



1 Now, the State has no problem
2 putting money into an interstate that we're
3 going to make it easier to get in and out of the
4 Christiana Mall, but I guess our children's
5 education isn't quite as important as people
6 shopping and spending money.

7 The unfortunate fact of all this is
8 now I want a place for my younger two daughters
9 to go to. I am not comfortable with putting
10 them into schools where we have State Police
11 stationed in -- in the schools.

12 The last I checked, Pencader does
13 not have a State trooper position at the school,
14 or a police force that's stationed at the
15 school.

16 And moreover, if it wasn't for the
17 fact that the public education system up in this
18 part of -- the northern part of the state wasn't
19 a mess, there wouldn't be such a need for the
20 charter school system. And it gives an
21 available where our kids can go to school, be
22 safe, be -- feel like a family, where they're
23 not going to be under constant ridicule and
24 what-not from kids that are, quite frankly, just



1 out of control, and don't even want to be in
2 school.

3 Thank you very much. That's all I
4 have to say.

5 MR. CARWELL: Thank you.

6 MATT SANTOLERI: Yup.

7 MR. CARWELL: Next we have Cabrina
8 Wang.

9 MISS WANG: Hello, everybody. I'm
10 Cabrina Wang, exchange student at Pencader from
11 China. For a short time in America, I have
12 already fallen in love with Pencader, because it
13 has a lot of merits. First of all, the teachers
14 in Pencader are very friendly, responsible, and
15 patient. I think these are characteristics that
16 good teachers have. I took biology class with
17 Ms. Smith last semester, and because I am not a
18 native speaker, I have some problem
19 understanding for biology class, it has a lot of
20 proper -- proper nouns, so it is the hard class
21 for me.

22 I just thought I was -- I was going
23 to fail in this class, but Ms. Smith, the
24 biology teacher, she gave me every copy in the



1 class and helped me, and explained me the things
2 that I didn't understand.

3 There's still a lot of teachers
4 like Ms. Smith in this school. They help the
5 student be confident in their status. And
6 certainly, the discipline of school is pretty
7 good. There is no drinking, no eating, no
8 sleeping in the class, and we wear uniform to
9 school every day. We use agenda to indicate
10 where you are. We have huge bunch of after
11 school activities, a lot of good things that
12 provide a good environment for students to
13 study.

14 Third, the students have a lot --
15 have a good personality because of the good
16 school. Students are smart, hard working.

17 Today I stand here just because I
18 know Pencader is a very good school. Today I
19 stand here just because I know a lot of people
20 need this school. Today I stand here, just want
21 to save this school. Please don't shut down
22 Pencader. This is a very good school. Thank
23 you.

24 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. I just



1 want to make sure I'm saying this right. It
2 says Yaser Dia?

3 MR. DIA: It's Yaser, last name
4 Dia, D-i-a. Hello. Pencader Charter is not
5 just a school to me, but is a school to 410
6 other students.

7 A few individuals in the past may
8 have made bad decisions in running the school.
9 Some may have also been corrupt, which is a very
10 sad reality. But what is more devastating is
11 the fact that 410 students may lose faith in the
12 system, because they're scrambling to find an
13 educational institution to house them, when the
14 majority of the institutions have already
15 rejected them.

16 Ladies and gentlemen, the fact is,
17 there will always be corrupt people among us.
18 Every institution has had corrupt people
19 embedded within their microstructure. We live
20 in a very intelligent country, with brilliant
21 resources, and I say this because in this
22 country our leaders are able of capable -- our
23 leaders are capable of identifying those corrupt
24 individuals, penalizing them, and only them, and



1 then move forward to a brighter and more
2 flourishing future.

3 It is my opinion, and I also feel
4 as if it's the opinion of the majority of the
5 people here, that to penalize me, my fellow
6 students, and my respected teachers and
7 counselors, for the few mistakes of other
8 individuals that have been identified and
9 eliminated, will be extremely unfair and
10 unnecessarily stressful.

11 When I first decided to join
12 Pencader Charter, it was not a playful decision
13 for me or my family. It was a decision based on
14 the following facts: One, the structure of the
15 campus being the least important to me. The
16 quality of the students that I had a chance to
17 interact with. Another point is the athletic
18 programs the school had to offer, the
19 educational opportunities the school had to
20 offer.

21 Last, but most importantly, it was
22 the unparalleled level of commitment the
23 educators in this institution have to offer. In
24 this very short period of time I was in this



1 school, I came in contact with many teachers who
2 work -- who had the capacity and knowledge to
3 challenge me physically and mentally to the
4 point that I have none but the highest respect
5 to all of them, because they were successful in
6 making a difference in my life. Principals,
7 teachers, counselors, and coaches, thank you
8 very much for this opportunity you gave me to
9 become a better person.

10 I would like to ask everybody a
11 question. I would like to ask one question to
12 everyone within earshot of my voice. On behalf
13 of all my friends and myself, we would all like
14 to know, and challenge everyone who hears this
15 question to come up with an immediate answer.
16 What did I or my fellow students and teachers do
17 wrong to deserve to be punished for the mistakes
18 of others?

19 In conclusion, it appears that the
20 bad seeds were identified and eliminated. The
21 students, like always, are committed. The
22 teachers, like always, are committed. The
23 coaches, as always, are committed. All we are
24 missing now is the commitment of the State to



1 make our educational journey at Pencader Charter
2 a prosperous one.

3 Thank you for this opportunity, and
4 I look forward to graduating from Pencader
5 Charter High.

6 MR. CARWELL: Thank you.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's
8 right, Yaser.

9 MR. CARWELL: Angela Svenson.

10 MISS SVENSON: My name is Angela
11 Svenson, A-n-g-e-l-a S-v-e-n-s-o-n.

12 MS. JOHNSON: Can you speak up a
13 little bit so she can hear you.

14 MISS SVENSON: Angela Svenson,
15 S-v-e-n-s-o-n. Pencader is the best school I
16 have attended in my life. I was failing all my
17 classes in other schools before coming to
18 Pencader. When I enrolled at Pencader, I
19 thought I was going to continue to fail, but
20 sure enough, first semester I made second
21 honors, and second semester I repeated the same
22 feat again. I was finally passing all my
23 classes and performing very well.

24 I feel Pencader and its teachers



1 are the reason for my success. The teachers
2 here at Pencader actually care about you and are
3 willing to help you become more successful and
4 graduate. Other schools don't offer the same
5 support that this school does for us. I can
6 actually feel like I'm going to pass, and not
7 feel like I'm left to complete more work without
8 any support.

9 Teachers stay after to help us, and
10 some teachers do extra days, just to make sure
11 we pass and get the help we need. Other schools
12 won't do that.

13 Pencader deserves to stay open. I
14 have never had a good connection with the
15 teachers and staff like I have now. They say
16 good morning to us, and they not only like to
17 stay connected to our academics, but our social
18 lives. They realize that our social lives can
19 affect the outcome of students, and success in
20 our lives.

21 For the first time in my life I
22 enjoy going to school, and I feel like I will be
23 able to attend college and earn many
24 scholarships.



1 We all help each other stay on the
2 same page. This school works together. We are
3 a team and a family. I never thought I was able
4 to say that at any of my other schools. It was
5 hard to feel I was important to not only my
6 teachers, but my other peers.

7 Here I have always someone to help
8 and support me through rough times, and
9 reassuring me that I can reach the goals I set
10 for myself to achieve.

11 As a little kid and to this day,
12 I've always been told to never give up, and
13 struggle for success. United we stand, divided
14 we fall.

15 Mr. Anderson always tells me every
16 child can learn. Our school stands strong and
17 works as a team. Why close Pencader? That's
18 too easy. Why not push to become better, and
19 come to an agreement and make this school
20 better?

21 No other school I have attended has
22 such amazing dynamics as Pencader. Thanks to
23 all the teachers, staff, and support, I have
24 grown to be a better and more successful and



1 confident young lady, and with your help I will
2 continue on this path to success.

3 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Lisa
4 Osicky? Osicky?

5 MS. OSICKY: Lisa Osicky,
6 O-s-i-c-k-y. I'm a parent. When it was time
7 for our older child to move from middle school
8 to high school, we did a lot of research to find
9 the best option for her. We narrowed our
10 choices down to three. Arabelle applied to the
11 Cambridge program at Newark High School. She
12 was accepted to the program and she declined.
13 She applied to the Charter School of Wilmington.
14 She was accepted to the program and she
15 declined.

16 She applied to Pencader Charter
17 High School of Business and Finance. She was
18 accepted, and began to make plans for her next
19 four years. As we saw it, Pencader was the only
20 school that could offer her the numerous honors
21 and AP classes she anticipated taking, along
22 with a campus that was safe enough not to
23 require a full-time police officer, and had the
24 diversity in the student body that would allow



1 our daughter to get to know people from a wide
2 range of cultural backgrounds, and with a wide
3 range of interests.

4 In her first year of high school,
5 Arabelle excelled academically. When her
6 Algebra II class proved not challenging enough,
7 her teacher stepped up to provide extra work and
8 rigor.

9 Outside of class, our daughter
10 participated in Math League, and went to the
11 State championship. In Science Olympiad,
12 Arabelle and her partner took second place in
13 the state for their work on water quality. This
14 year, she continues to do well in Math League
15 and Science Olympiad, and has added cross
16 country to her list of activities. In a bigger
17 school where she might have to try out for cross
18 country, she would not have that opportunity.

19 Having heard all of his sister's
20 stories about Pencader, our son never even
21 considered going someplace else. Joey applied
22 to the school and began his freshman year in
23 August. So far, we've been delighted with what
24 we've seen. Joey has always done well



1 academically, but he's discovering new interests
2 and abilities he never even considered. Because
3 Pencader is a small school, our previously
4 sedentary son was able to run on the varsity
5 cross country team as a freshman. He will be
6 competing in the State championships for Math
7 League in April.

8 Both of my children consistently
9 talk about how nice the kids at Pencader are.
10 There's a lot of interactions between members of
11 various groups, and the kids see that
12 stereotypes don't hold up. For instance,
13 football players may also be science olympians,
14 and mathletes may be athletes, as well.

15 There is a real sense of community
16 at Pencader. Students feel supported by each
17 other as well as their teachers. Adults, staff
18 and parents, share a real sense of being in this
19 together and doing whatever needs to be done for
20 the good of our kids.

21 In the backs of our minds, we
22 consider what we would do if there were no more
23 Pencader. I have spoken to other parents. I
24 know I am not the only one with fears.



1 At this point, there is no
2 opportunity to send our kids anywhere else
3 except our feeder pattern school, and at no time
4 in our discussion of high schools was that the
5 best choice.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Linda
8 DiLouie.

9 MS. DiLOUIE: It's sort of
10 interesting that I'm next, because she is -- I'm
11 special ed. So, here we go. My son is, anyway.
12 I know. Pencader needs to survive, to thrive.
13 These kids, our kids, need this one unique
14 school. It is the only safe, clear path to
15 their future success.

16 As a former business teacher, there
17 was two things I always told my kids: No matter
18 what interest you have, there's always a
19 business component. A kid could love to dance,
20 but not really be that good. But they could go
21 and work in a dance studio, or even open their
22 own. You need to know how to do business to do
23 that.

24 The other thing is that everything



1 they learn in business works for all areas of
2 your life. Here, they're learning how to
3 balance checkbooks, be effective managers,
4 resume, interview practice, and my favorite,
5 etiquette for success. That's a class that my
6 son took, who has autism, and he has -- his
7 social skills are tenfold what they used to be,
8 because you're put into this situation which is
9 a business situation, but it could be any
10 situation. How do you interact with somebody?
11 How do you put your best foot forward? How do
12 you publicly speak? All those kind of things.

13 As a parent with a child with an
14 IEP, two things are engrained into our minds.
15 Your child needs a free, appropriate education.
16 Okay. Pencader Charter, it's a charter school,
17 so it's a public school. So that's a free --
18 that's free. All right.

19 Appropriate. Because of the
20 business and finance, it's a very ideal
21 situation for students with any kind of special
22 learning style. The business courses, versus,
23 say, a science class, have the ability to kind
24 of be taught in a variety of different ways, and



1 the kids can be assessed in a variety of
2 different ways. Huge help for my son.

3 The other big thing when you have a
4 kid with an IEP is least restrictive
5 environment. And for anybody who might not know
6 what that means, that means as much exposure to
7 regular ed as you can get. Well, my son is in
8 all regular ed, because there is no special ed
9 at this school. There's special ed support,
10 which are with all regular ed kids.

11 I've already gone over to the
12 William Penn, which is where he is going to be
13 stuck if this school doesn't survive, and
14 they've already told me he will be in resource
15 room, and in order for him to get the same lunch
16 period every day, which he needs because of
17 migraines, he has to be put in with the
18 inclusion kids.

19 He was there, and he somehow
20 managed to bring himself up to this level of
21 regular ed, which by the way, he just got all
22 straight A's. Don't take it away.

23 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Next is
24 Karen M. Keys.



1 MS. KEYS: It's Keys, K-e-y-s. I
2 coach at Pencader. I coach three sports, I've
3 been there for the past two years. I'm also a
4 special ed teacher across the street at a middle
5 school.

6 I teach my students and players not
7 to quit no matter how bleak a situation looks.
8 I tell them live their lives and play the game
9 with heart. No matter who knocks them down,
10 stand back up.

11 For the past two years, I've
12 coached many Pencader students, and I've watched
13 numerous other games. I've been on campus
14 during the school day. I have witnessed
15 Pencader students get knocked down, over and
16 over and over again. I've witnessed the staff,
17 I've witnessed parents, get knocked down, get
18 beaten down in the newspaper. But I've
19 witnessed them bounce back.

20 I've witnessed my students, I've
21 witnessed my athletes step out on the court,
22 getting called names because of their school,
23 and taking it, because they have pride in their
24 school.



1 One of my athletes once said, I'll
2 worry when Coach Keys gives up. I'm not giving
3 up. I'm not giving up on this school. I
4 believe in Pencader. I know that my student
5 athletes, as well as other Pencader students,
6 parents, teachers, and all associated, believe
7 in Pencader. I'm proud to call myself a Titan,
8 and I'll always be proud to be a Titan.

9 I know everyone in this room right
10 now is, too. I've had numerous alumni athletes
11 contact me over the past few months to lend
12 their support to Pencader; get out there on the
13 social media to support their school that they
14 believe in, because they know that they wouldn't
15 be in college, living their lives, without
16 Pencader.

17 Pencader is small, but it is
18 strong, and it is united. It is totally
19 accepting. Whether you be a student with
20 special needs, whether you be a student who is
21 gay, whether you have one parent or no parents,
22 no matter what, you are all accepted. Every
23 student, every teacher, every parent is accepted
24 when they walk in that building.



1 I believe in second, third, even
2 fourth chances. I have to, as an educator.
3 There's no way I could get through the day
4 without doing that. Please give Pencader one
5 more chance.

6 Yeah, people make mistakes. But
7 the people in this room, the people running the
8 school right now, are not the reason that
9 Pencader was failing. Those students who walk
10 through that door, those teachers, those staff
11 members, those coaches, those parents, they
12 didn't make those mistakes. Don't make them
13 suffer for the mistakes of others.

14 And believe me. I am close to the
15 people who used to run the school, and I am
16 saying they made mistakes. Don't take it out on
17 all these people right here.

18 All teachers, coaches,
19 administration are here for the students, every
20 single day, no matter what. These students
21 deserve a place to feel safe and wanted. I have
22 Pencader pride. Please show the world that you
23 do, too.

24 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Elaine



1 Mele.

2 MS. MELE: Elaine Mele, M-e-l-e.
3 I'm actually going to make something short,
4 which is rare for me. My daughter has had
5 difficulties in school until she went to
6 Pencader this year. She's made second honors at
7 grade level, which is a big achievement for her,
8 because she struggled in school all her life.
9 She wants to go to school every day, and it's
10 important to her. She doesn't even mind wearing
11 uniforms, which, like any teenager, she
12 initially didn't like. It invokes school spirit
13 and togetherness.

14 The staff and teachers are amazing.
15 Oliver Wendell Holmes once said the great thing
16 in the world is not so much where we stand as in
17 the direction we are moving. Angie is moving in
18 the right direction. She's successful, she's
19 happy, she's not afraid to ask for help, and she
20 gets help.

21 I had two other children that went
22 to William Penn. When they asked for help and I
23 asked for help, the teachers said to us, oh, we
24 have 15 minutes after school. How much can they



1 help a child in 15 minutes? What if other
2 children need help? How do you fit that all in?

3 At Pencader, they have two days
4 that they devote, with transportation for
5 students, to be after school. It's not 15
6 minutes. They take a 5:00 bus. And if the
7 students want to have additional help on other
8 days, the teachers are willing to stay after and
9 help them. It's an enormous feat to have that.

10 Our children are not numbers at
11 Pencader. They're looked upon as our future,
12 our leaders, and they are their own successes.
13 There's an old saying, it takes a village to
14 raise a child. Pencader is our village. My
15 daughter needs Pencader. I need Pencader. And
16 our children need Pencader. They make a
17 difference in our lives.

18 Thank you.

19 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Mario
20 Rivera.

21 MR. RIVERA: My name is Marco,
22 M-a-r-c-o, Rivera, R-i-v-e-r-a. Hi. I came to
23 Pencader my freshman year, not knowing a soul.
24 I was from the Christiana School District. All



1 my friends went there, and my first week I hated
2 it so much, I remember, but it was mainly
3 because of my friends. I didn't have any of my
4 friends. I didn't really have anybody that I
5 knew.

6 And now, it's -- the page is turned
7 completely. You know, I -- there's people in
8 that school that I don't look at any less than I
9 do my mother, my cousin, my uncles, fathers,
10 however you want to say it. I look at it as a
11 true family. That's something that you can't
12 just buy anywhere. You can't just find any
13 other school. Sometimes people go to their
14 homes and they can't even find it, but they do
15 see it at Pencader.

16 Sometimes there's even students
17 that come to Pencader and they feel -- they just
18 feel welcome. They feel like it's a get-away.
19 And I -- I feel like that sometimes, too.
20 There's people that I know that I could
21 definitely depend on Pencader.

22 Throughout -- for a while now, many
23 people have had a lot of bad things to say about
24 Pencader, have had many opinions about Pencader.



1 But the thing that they fail to remember,
2 really, the only people that Pencader has is the
3 people that it's consisted of, the people that's
4 actually in the school. We don't really have
5 anybody. We haven't had anybody. Until
6 Mr. Quimby stepped up to the plate, we didn't
7 even have a principal. You know, we were
8 running on our own, and we can only lean on each
9 other.

10 So, you know, I guess the only
11 thing that we can really -- you know, me, I'm
12 only -- I'm only part of the student body. I'm
13 not pretty much of much authority. I can't
14 really ask you for much, but all I can really
15 ask you for is your help, you know, as the
16 Department of Education. Because you know, your
17 opinion is probably the one that mostly counts.

18 And Pencader is just in the middle
19 of a race right now. That's all. And what
20 we're just trying to do is we're trying to show
21 you that we're capable of finishing it, pretty
22 much.

23 You know, we -- a lot of reporters
24 and media has a lot of things to say about



1 Pencader, and alls we're trying to do -- I think
2 I can speak for most of everybody here -- that
3 we just want to make you look at Pencader from a
4 different perspective, whether it be that, you
5 know, you can actually send kids here. If they
6 walk in with a bad day, they walk out with a
7 smile. And pretty much that's the point that
8 we're trying to make, and I know that's how I
9 feel when I come to Pencader, at least.

10 It's true that we've tripped, a lot
11 of times. There's been a lot of hurdles we fell
12 over, but that's just part of the -- you know,
13 that's part of the journey. You can't -- things
14 are always going to happen, you know. But we
15 pretty much have each other, and we've gone far.
16 As you can see the numbers from the other
17 meeting, we've only progressed, and we've only
18 done it on our own, without anybody.

19 So, we just can't wait to see how
20 far we will go, and we'll have your support and
21 everybody else's. That's pretty much all I have
22 to say.

23 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Next is
24 Michele Newton.



1 MS. NEWTON: It's Newton, Michele
2 with one L. My name is Michele Newton, and I'm
3 here today to save this school. I have two
4 sons, Aaron and Alec, one 19, one 14. I would
5 love to cut to the chase, because it's my
6 nature, and I'm more than sure you would prefer
7 that, as well. Unfortunately, I'm unable to do
8 that here, because the end result will possibly
9 change the lives of so many, and who am I to
10 throw it down with so much on the line.

11 With that said, I want to share our
12 experience at Pencader Charter High School.
13 Aaron attended PCH all four years. I looked,
14 researched, interviewed and questioned myself
15 and so many others. You see, I could have sent
16 my child anywhere, but I chose Pencader.

17 For more reasons than I can cover,
18 Aaron had a great success in that business
19 charter school. He was not safe in the
20 Christiana School District. I had children
21 removed permanently. He was verbally attacked,
22 physically harmed, while the teachers and the
23 administrators turned their heads. And that's
24 the God's honest truth. It took a lot of legal



1 work on my end, and a lot of inner faith
2 transactions to get things solved.

3 The beauty of Pencader, they won't
4 tolerate that kind of bad behavior, for one
5 second. Not at all. They pulled Aaron in, they
6 engaged him. They made him look forward to
7 going to school every day. He couldn't get
8 enough of the entire experience. He loved it.

9 Aaron has always wanted to serve
10 and help others, but I felt whatever he did, he
11 needed a little bit about business just to get
12 him through what comes day-to-day life.

13 We never looked back or questioned
14 our decision. The teachers embraced his every
15 question and interest. You can't find that just
16 anywhere. I've looked. The teachers in
17 Pencader are second to none. They love their
18 kids, and they accommodate their learning to
19 each individual's needs. Aaron felt respected,
20 cared for, and appreciated in his school. He
21 made some monumental differences there, and
22 that's because of what he was given by his
23 experience.

24 Aaron is now studying for a career



1 in homeland security. He is certified with FEMA
2 to initiate and administer as needed for people
3 in Delaware. He has also signed on with the
4 United States Coast Guard Reserve, in their
5 reserve division, to help when needed. His
6 ultimate goal is the CIA.

7 All of this is as a result of the
8 care, education, respect, and attention to
9 detail that he received in Pencader Charter High
10 School. The teachers make less than most
11 instructors, so they're not in it for the money.
12 Can't say that about many teachers, can you?

13 Let's not fool ourselves. We have
14 had some administrators who have made some bad
15 decisions, and who have not kept up their end of
16 the grand bargain. Their reasons, I believe, in
17 most cases were for the greater good of the
18 school. Unfortunately, things don't always go
19 right. The teachers and the children are the
20 innocent ones here. To me again, why are we
21 punishing them? Please explain.

22 In any business, it takes years
23 before you work the bugs out, and years before
24 you show profit. The school is no different.



1 It will take time for growth and perfection.
2 You have to get the right mix before you start
3 to see that growth.

4 The teachers are mighty, and they
5 love what they do. The Department of Education
6 is stealing their happy. They, too, are
7 innocent in this, and they are doing their job.
8 The teachers, that is. Why don't you mentor,
9 guide, teach, get your hands dirty, come to the
10 school, donate your time, help the board, the
11 PTA, the teachers, the students, and the growth
12 of this fine establishment? Do no harm.

13 MR. CARWELL: Ten more seconds.

14 WENDY SOMEONE: The bottom line is
15 if you take this away from these children,
16 you're going to do more harm than good. You
17 have no idea what kind of damage you'll do.

18 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Tracey
19 Turner.

20 MS. TURNER: Tracey, T-r-a-c-e-y,
21 Turner. Good evening. I come before the Board
22 of Education this evening to discuss the closing
23 of Pencader. I currently have a child in tenth
24 grade enrolled at Pencader. My daughter, who



1 attended a private school until high school, has
2 flourished at Pencader High School. I selected
3 Pencader after exploring several schools in
4 Delaware. Imagine my surprise when I realized
5 the choices are very limited for a public
6 education. Evidently, Delaware believes that a
7 child's education stops at sixth grade. Middle
8 schools are few, and high schools are even less.

9 The dropout rate for high schools
10 in Delaware are shameful at best. Yet here I
11 am, a concerned parent, standing before you
12 wondering why, or how, for that matter, can you
13 possibly even consider closing a high school
14 when the selection is already poor. How can you
15 look at me and tell me that my child will be
16 better off in a high school of 900 or greater
17 students?

18 How will my child get the best
19 education in overcrowded classes? Why should
20 she have to go to a school where her safety may
21 be compromised? I don't understand how you can
22 close a school when your own schools are worse;
23 mired in red ink, unsafe schools, and poor
24 education, and that just describes only



1 Christiana High School.

2 This school has offered and can
3 offer so much to our children, if the same
4 opportunity that -- opportunities that you
5 extend to your current substandard schools are
6 extended to Pencader. You cannot offer my child
7 an accessible staff, a safe environment and a
8 quality education, so please do the right and
9 honorable thing, and keep Pencader High School
10 open.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Mary
13 Turner.

14 MS. TURNER: Good evening.

15 MR. CARWELL: Good evening.

16 MS. TURNER: I'm here on behalf of
17 the Pencader School, also. I'm deeply concerned
18 about the closure, why you would want to close a
19 school that is performing academically well
20 under the circumstances of being threatened
21 closure every few months.

22 I don't understand how, you know,
23 this -- you would concentrate on closing this
24 school instead of fixing the problem. But of



1 course, the numbers are down, because what
2 parent would send their child there if they --
3 under those circumstances?

4 We know all schools have faults, so
5 please allow Pencader to fix their problem.
6 Whatever it is that needs to be fixed, fix it.
7 You don't close public schools when -- with
8 their many problems.

9 So, please continue -- please fix
10 the problem and continue to educate children.
11 That is the top priority. Children. This seems
12 to be forgotten. Not crossing the T's and
13 dotting the I's. We need the children to be
14 remembered.

15 11th and 12th graders, what will
16 happen to them? Where do you send them? To
17 your overcrowd public school already? Already
18 they don't have room for what the -- the kids
19 that they have.

20 So please, fix Pencader, and allow
21 it to stay open. If it ain't broke, don't fix
22 it. But fix what needs to be fixed. Thank you.

23 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. John
24 Stock.



1 MR. STOTT: Mine is seven pages, so
2 I'm going to read really quick.

3 MS. JOHNSON: You can submit public
4 comment, as well.

5 MR. STOTT: My name is John Stott,
6 S-t-o-t-t. I've had children attending Pencader
7 Charter High School since the second year it was
8 open, when my son started there as a freshman.
9 I now have my fifth and sixth child attending
10 the school. Just for clarification, I call them
11 mine. My wife and I only have two. The other
12 four actually are exchange students.

13 My son John attended all four
14 years, and was very involved academically, as
15 well as extracurricular activities, including
16 National Honor Society, baseball, cross country,
17 mentoring program, the ecology club. A lot of
18 things he was involved in. He's since moved on
19 to UD, where he is a sophomore. On the Dean's
20 List I might add, and doing very well.

21 Marco, from Germany, he attended
22 his junior year after he was at another American
23 high school and he struggled quite a bit with
24 the student body. With Pencader's nurturing



1 environment, he thrived. He is now gainfully
2 employed and doing very well.

3 Jan from Hamburg, he attended his
4 senior year, graduated, and he now attends
5 Kaiserslautern University -- University of
6 Technology in Germany, doing very well.

7 Nate from Spain, he struggled
8 academically when he first came to live with us,
9 and he was in danger of actually failing
10 academically. We met with the teachers of
11 Pencader, developed an improvement plan, and I
12 was impressed with the involvement of the
13 teachers and their willingness to tackle the
14 problems head on and find a solution. He began
15 to believe in himself, and he saw his grades
16 rise. With his new-found confidence, he began
17 training at a trade school back home to become
18 an automotive technician.

19 Our latest edition, Jess, she is
20 from New Zealand, just started a few weeks ago,
21 and she's jumped in with both feet. She is
22 doing well academically and very excited to be
23 working on the yearbook, as a matter of fact.

24 Then there is my daughter Michelle,



1 who was against Pencader from the start. That's
2 where my son wanted to go, and you know how
3 siblings can be. If John went there, then I
4 don't want to go. But after hearing the daily
5 stories from John and some of our exchange
6 students, she changed her mind and attended the
7 school.

8 No, I'm not naive or looking
9 through rose colored glasses. I've been to
10 these hearings in the past. I remember you
11 gentlemen from the previous hearing, as the list
12 of concerns were voiced by the board.

13 I watched as the school did what
14 they could do to meet the standards. I
15 understand the board's concerns, and encourage
16 them to continue to expect the school to
17 improve, as I do. I just ask that they be given
18 the time to make the improvements.

19 As I mentioned before, I've had six
20 kids in this school, and I would send more.
21 They all have been well taught in a safe
22 environment, with caring teachers, and
23 administrators. The Merriam Webster dictionary
24 defines a school as "An institution for the



1 teaching of children," which I believe Pencader
2 does. If a school's success is to be measured
3 by the quality of education it provides,
4 Pencader is a success, and I can show you six
5 examples.

6 Thank you for your time.

7 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. According
8 to my list, that's the last of the individual
9 comments. We're going to move to the school
10 representatives. Any other speakers? Okay. We
11 have Steve Quimby.

12 MR. QUIMBY: Dear members of the
13 Charter School Accountability Committee, the
14 State Board, and other distinguished guests.
15 Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to
16 have a few minutes to have my thoughts and
17 feelings about Pencader Charter High School be
18 placed into the record.

19 I came to Pencader in the fall of
20 2006, after many years in private education.
21 Indeed, I am one of the last few hold-outs from
22 our school's very first day of operation. I am
23 uniquely qualified, therefore, to shed some
24 historical perspective.



1 Yes, I have been there through our
2 growing pains and our self-inflicted wounds.
3 The unfortunate part of our checkered six and a
4 half years is that the mistakes of a
5 well-publicized select few have overshadowed the
6 efforts and accomplishments of a much more
7 anonymous group.

8 In my time at the school, I have
9 worked with dedicated, energetic and passionate
10 educators. We have sent graduates on to
11 colleges of all shapes and sizes. We have
12 graduates in our Armed Forces. We have had
13 State and National BPA officers, students with
14 5's on AP tests, distinguished Science Olympiad
15 students and Mathletes, all conference athletes,
16 and an untold number of students who found a
17 passion for a subject that they never knew they
18 had. Their stories never receive the level of
19 publicity they deserve, even in the best of
20 times.

21 I began this school year as I had
22 the previous 22 of my professional career, in
23 the classroom. When I was offered the
24 opportunity to serve the school as its leader, I



1 was faced with a difficult decision. Honestly,
2 I did not have a burning desire to immediately
3 break away totally from the classroom. However,
4 the school was in crisis, and I did not want to
5 say that I had idly stood by while the community
6 was in need.

7 More than that, I was convinced
8 that the students, teachers, and parents that
9 wanted to keep this school open needed someone
10 to assist them in this fight. Time will tell if
11 I will be successful.

12 In closing, I do not want to see
13 the people who had the least to do with our
14 schools problems have to suffer the ultimate
15 price if the school is to close.

16 Certainly, the future for the staff
17 of the school will be uncertain if we were to
18 close. However, that pales in comparison to
19 what will be facing the students and parents
20 that you see in front of you, and will see in
21 front of you again on Wednesday night.

22 Through these weeks of uncertainty,
23 we continue to get inquiries and applications
24 from prospective students and families. The



1 talents and skills assembled on this new board
2 of directors is unmatched in our short history.
3 They are all busy and successful people who do
4 not need another item on their resume. They
5 have joined this cause because they have, in
6 their short time together, seen something worth
7 devoting this large amount of time to.

8 Read our response to the
9 committee's concerns, and I think that will be
10 reflected quite clearly. They see the school's
11 potential, as do the many voices that you have
12 heard and will continue to hear in the next two
13 nights.

14 Let me stop now, so that you may
15 hear more of their stories. Thank you.

16 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Ann
17 Terranova.

18 MS. TERRANOVA: Good evening. My
19 name is Ann Terranova. This is my second year
20 at Pencader Charter High School. I am the
21 Department Chair for the business department. I
22 am the advisor for our Business Professionals of
23 America chapter at our school, and I most
24 recently am the teacher representative on our



1 board.

2 I actually am going to find myself
3 echoing a lot of what Mrs. DiLouie told you. As
4 a business teacher, I was very excited to come
5 to a school that focused on business and
6 finance, since that is my background and my
7 passion. I feel very strongly that students
8 need to learn business and finance concepts.
9 This benefits them whether they choose a career
10 in business or ultimately decide not to. Many
11 of our students have gone on to other pursuits,
12 as you have heard, but learning about those
13 basic concepts in banking and financing and
14 markets, these are skills that will benefit them
15 in many areas of their lives.

16 Many people look at our current
17 recession, and they don't really understand or
18 properly know how to manage their finances and
19 credit. Our students regularly hear terms,
20 financial terms such as assets, liabilities,
21 equity and collateral. This is in many of their
22 business classes, not just accounting as you
23 would expect.

24 Again, these are things that



1 they're going to take with them. These are life
2 skills that they will learn and be able to
3 better prepare them for life beyond our doors.

4 Our business curriculum at
5 Pencader, it is varied. It is very strong, and
6 we are looking forward to developing that more
7 in the future. We have made connections to the
8 business community through the New Castle County
9 Chamber of Commerce, Junior Achievement, and
10 certainly, through some of our new members of
11 our own board.

12 I personally, again, as part of the
13 business department, look forward to developing
14 these connections and others in the future,
15 because we certainly do want to keep our
16 curriculum current and fresh and relevant to our
17 students.

18 Being a business and finance-based
19 school, our Business Professionals of America
20 chapter is very strong. We currently have 37
21 students preparing to come down here to Dover at
22 the Sheraton and compete. That will be on
23 February 28th of this year. And BPA students
24 develop their business knowledge. They compete



1 in many events, everything from interview
2 skills, video production, to entrepreneurship.

3 This also develops leadership
4 skills, public speaking skills for them.
5 Currently Pencader has two students that are
6 officers, BPA officers at this State level.
7 Carrisa Anderson is the State president of the
8 Business Professionals of America and Nathan
9 Rouwhorst is historian and parliamentarian. So
10 as you can see, that has helped our students
11 greatly.

12 Last year, Pencader's chapter won
13 the BPA State cup, which I just had to return
14 this evening. You can't win tow years in a row,
15 although we've won twice in the last few years.
16 Nine students last year qualified to go on to
17 our national competition, and one actually did
18 place at the national level, and she is
19 currently a student at the University of
20 Delaware, doing very well. I recently saw her.

21 You've heard many stories. I could
22 tell you more, but the bottom line is we have
23 wonderful students, top-notch staff -- top-notch
24 staff, and teachers that are very dedicated, and



1 we have strong programs that we want to continue
2 to develop to benefit the students. And we
3 respectfully request that we be allowed to do
4 this and move on to further success.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Dan
7 Young.

8 DR. YOUNG: It's Dan Young,
9 Y-o-u-n-g. First of all, I'd like to get on the
10 record how proud I am of Pencader parents,
11 students and coaches who are here. You all are
12 truly the best out there, and I'm -- I'm so
13 honored to try to do my small part to represent
14 you here today.

15 I am vice chairman of the Board of
16 Directors. I am a professor at Wilmington
17 University and University of Delaware in the
18 area of marketing, especially in the area of
19 social media, technology, and brand name. And
20 while we will have many great stories about what
21 Pencader means to people, I'm also a
22 businessman, so I also know some of the things
23 that you want to hear from us.

24 The board has taken some necessary



1 steps, gone through some qualitative research,
2 to see what we need to do to improve student
3 recruitment. And one thing that we are prepared
4 to do on a board level is if the school is
5 allowed to stay open, that next board meeting
6 will have a vote on the floor to change the name
7 of the school from Pencader to the Delaware
8 Business Academy. We've secured the URL for
9 Delaware Business Academy.

10 We've heard all of the commentary
11 from different community groups about the name
12 Pencader, what it now means to a number of
13 people. We want to maintain Titans, because we
14 truly believe in that moniker, and we also want
15 to maintain the colors. But this community,
16 this Pencader family, is prepared to humble
17 itself in such a way to keep the family
18 together.

19 We have done some cost analysis
20 about what that will take to do. We're prepared
21 to start to curtail our monthly spending in paid
22 advertising to pay for those changes.
23 Whatever's necessary to keep this family
24 together, we're prepared to do that.



1 Also, we have had conversations
2 with Charter School of Wilmington, with members
3 of Delaware Military Academy, members of
4 Prestige Academy and Newark Charter School, to
5 begin to -- to galvanize our student
6 recruitment. All these different schools, they
7 do not use a great deal of paid advertising.
8 They just make sure that they get out there to
9 the middle schools and high schools in the area,
10 to community events, and talk about what their
11 school's about. And this school is about
12 business and finance.

13 Now, one of the other things that I
14 know that the board wants to talk about is
15 leadership. And I'll keep coming back to one
16 date; that's November 11th. That's when I was
17 voted in as vice president of Pencader's board.
18 That's when the president of the board came.

19 I certainly can't speak for
20 anything that happened before November 11th, but
21 this has been the first experience that I've had
22 on a board where people like the teachers, like
23 the students, like the board, has been vilified
24 for trying to help kids. My wife, who is a --



1 who is an eighth grade teacher, is vilified
2 because her husband is on the board. And yet,
3 we're still here.

4 You have a Board of Directors now
5 of winners. You have one of the top financial
6 advisors in the state of Delaware. You have one
7 of the youngest female chief executives of a
8 nonprofit. You have the only person in the
9 state of Delaware who has a Ph.D. in marketing
10 and is a certified planner, and you have a
11 president of the board who ran Junior
12 Achievement for 25 years.

13 We are the team that can bring this
14 school out of the malaise it's been in, and
15 we're not going anywhere. You can depend on us
16 to stand up for Pencader, to stand up for this
17 family, and to bring it to where it needs to be.

18 Besides the work that we're going
19 to do with the Charter School of Wilmington,
20 besides simply getting out in the community and
21 recruiting effectively, we are going to make
22 some inroads into the community to start to
23 bring other people into the school.

24 For example as a Wilmington



1 University professor, I've also secured
2 commitments from the College of Business to make
3 sure that we have programming in the school. A
4 number of members of the College of Business, in
5 the master's program, the doctoral program, have
6 children of school age that would go to
7 Pencader, and that is another opportunity.

8 So we have a great number of
9 opportunities. We've had the opportunity to
10 bring on Frank Hagen as the assistant school
11 leader, who has almost 30 years of experience;
12 ran Charter School of Wilmington, ran Newark
13 High School. We are on the right way.

14 Do not hold anything that happened
15 before mid-November against these kids. This
16 board will not leave these children. This board
17 will not leave these parents. This board will
18 not leave the coaches of Pencader.

19 So, in closing, what I'd like to
20 say is, please give us an opportunity.
21 Everything that we have done through the
22 holidays, through kids being born, through new
23 members on the board, we've made advancements.

24 Kids are doing better at school.



1 We're cleaning up messes that were made by
2 people who are not sitting here today, who are
3 not supporting these parents, who live in a
4 blogosphere where they can talk about other
5 people without having to be present and be
6 accountable for what they said.

7 Do not penalize these children for
8 people who are not standing here today.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Frank
11 Hagen.

12 DR. HAGEN: Frank Hagen, retired
13 administrator and currently serving as interim
14 assistant principal. Thank you for allowing me
15 to address you relate relative to the future of
16 Pencader Charter High School.

17 I've only been at the school for
18 one week and I can tell you that the school is a
19 good place for students to learn and teachers to
20 teach. In visiting with and observing teachers
21 and students, it is a school climate and culture
22 where the teachers care for and about the
23 students, are engaging students in meaningful
24 and relevant daily lessons, and preparing them



1 for success in the 21st century, both for
2 college and career readiness.

3 I base these observations on my
4 past 18 years experience as a school principal
5 in Delaware at Cape Henlopen High School and
6 Newark High School, and five years at St.
7 Michael's Middle High School, as well as one
8 year appointment as an interim vice president at
9 Charter School of Wilmington.

10 In addition, I have been teaching
11 school leadership at Wilmington University for
12 the past 11 years, as well as consulting part
13 time with the Delaware Academy for School
14 Leadership.

15 I plan to remain an active part of
16 the school for the remainder of the school year.
17 I will be working with the school and board
18 leadership to make improvements in the
19 day-to-day operations of the school, formal
20 planning for the 2013-2014 school year -- and I
21 do say that positively -- informal observations
22 with feedback for teachers, and collaboratively
23 designing professional development to improve
24 the quality of instruction in the classroom, and



1 ultimately, student learning.

2 Yes, there have been a number of
3 issues at the school, in terms of its school and
4 board leadership, including compliance with
5 State regulation, policies and procedures.
6 However, there is new leadership at the school
7 level and the governing board, including a
8 dedicated staff willing to do what is necessary
9 to keep the school alive and functioning for the
10 sake of the students.

11 There is no perfect school. Every
12 school can benefit from effective and dedicated
13 leadership, investment in human capital, a
14 positive climate and culture with high
15 expectations for all students, and a willingness
16 on the part of the staff to do the tasks to make
17 the school a better place for all students.

18 I have just described Pencader.
19 And I hope you will approach your vote with an
20 open mind, listen to the testimony about the
21 school, and decide to allow the school the
22 opportunity to remain open to serve its students
23 in preparation for their successes in the 21st
24 century.



1 Thank you.

2 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Fred
3 Dawson.

4 MR. DAWSON: Before I begin my
5 formal remarks, I'd like to confess that I
6 opened the Christiana High School. I was 14
7 when I went there. What the hell has happened?
8 And I hold you all accountable to fix it.
9 That's inexcusable.

10 I was approached by Frank McIntosh
11 regarding joining the board of this school last
12 November. At that time, I had no idea that the
13 school was under such pressures as are readily
14 apparent now. I cannot speak to what had or had
15 not transpired by the previous board, as I did
16 not witness certain things first hand.

17 I will say that one of the previous
18 board members, a CPA, very good friend and
19 fellow Rotarian, shared some background
20 information that I found quite stunning. Lack
21 of financial transparency, as well as financial
22 procedural missteps, with a little arrogance
23 thrown in for good measure, seemed to be the
24 rule of the day of the previous administration.



1 I've known, worked with, and had a
2 personal relationship, friendship, with
3 Mr. McIntosh for many years. He is a can-do
4 person who works well with all people at all
5 levels. His extraordinarily successful
6 background of about 30 years of Junior
7 Achievement speaks for itself. I've witnessed
8 him in action, even with my very short tenure
9 with the board.

10 He convinced another very good
11 friend and neighbor of mine Dr. Jacalyn Beam,
12 Ph.D., to join, as well. Her qualifications,
13 talents, and experience are extraordinary. A
14 recent addition, former Newark High School
15 principal Frank Hagen, who just spoke, also
16 brings with him a depth of experience that only
17 can enhance what we will bring to the school if
18 given the chance.

19 Combined with remaining board
20 members who demonstrate commitment and
21 professionalism, I am excited about the
22 possibilities. With over 30 years of
23 successfully running my own business in wealth
24 management, my background of business and



1 finance, as well as a previous career centered
2 around business consulting, will be used to
3 bring actual hands-on learning opportunities to
4 the student, as I plan to solicit my business
5 colleagues to appear at the school to give
6 presentations about actually running a business,
7 and what that means.

8 In this land of incredible
9 opportunities and the need for to us develop
10 future entrepreneurs and producers of wealth,
11 who employ others, pay taxes, provide jobs and
12 much needed products and services, we cannot in
13 good faith make our children pay for the
14 mistakes or the incompetence demonstrated by the
15 previous administrations of this school.

16 I've listened to parents who have
17 extolled the virtues of this school's
18 environment, educational programs, and
19 commitments of its very caring teachers. Even
20 though I cannot attest to the quality of the
21 education provided to the students first-hand,
22 many parents have taken the time to express
23 their feelings of appreciation and gratitude. I
24 know it appears that, well, here we go again, as



1 the school has not stepped up to its past
2 obligations and potential, with the begging for
3 more time approach yet again.

4 My opinion, I don't think this
5 school has ever had the caliber of
6 administration and people that Mr. McIntosh has
7 assembled. It would be a huge mistake to not
8 give us the opportunity to make Pencader Charter
9 School of Business and Finance the premier
10 charter school in Delaware that we think it can
11 be. Failure is not an option. And my time is
12 up.

13 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Jemuel
14 Anderson.

15 MR. ANDERSON: Before I begin, I
16 would like to thank the Charter School
17 Accountability Committee for taking the time
18 that was rescheduled to be here today. I would
19 first like to make mention the fact that I am
20 currently an instructor in the learning support
21 department, and I also have the pleasure of
22 being on the board of directors.

23 I first came to Pencader four years
24 ago. I was very nervous about coming here,



1 because of the fact I was transitioning from an
2 intermediate school, which consisted of students
3 from grades K through 8, and I was coming to a
4 high school, focusing on students from grades 9
5 through 12. My first day, I was so hardily
6 welcomed by staff, students, and even parents.
7 Many of them approached me and gave me a warm
8 welcome. I felt at home, and I settled in very
9 nicely.

10 I noticed the unique diversity that
11 existed here at Pencader, the many different
12 ethnicities, and the bond that each student has
13 for one another is amazing. I said to myself I
14 must be at the United Nations, after entering
15 these classrooms.

16 Students who are engaged in
17 learning, and teachers who are prepared and
18 confident in their lessons. I realized that
19 there was definitely something special going on
20 here at Pencader.

21 When I went home that night, my
22 wife said, how was your first day? I said,
23 honey, Pencader is the best kept secret in
24 Delaware. I said both of our children will be



1 attending the school.

2 Now I want to fast forward to this
3 summer. I was nominated by my fellow colleagues
4 to represent the faculty as the teacher
5 representative of the staff, which was an honor
6 for me. My father always told me, if someone
7 chooses you, stand up, be accountable. Always
8 make sure you take pride in who you are. I try
9 to teach that to my students every day.

10 Many students have come to me
11 throughout this ordeal and have asked me why
12 this school is closing, and if it was their
13 fault. Do they do well enough for the DCAS?
14 Were their grades high enough? I immediately
15 felt sick to my stomach, because I knew in my
16 heart that these students have always given
17 their utmost, and have made great strides and
18 improvements in academics.

19 We may have been a school in
20 turmoil, but we have stuck together through it
21 all. And saying that, I ask you to dig deep
22 into your hearts and minds and think about the
23 students that will be affected by closing this
24 school. They have done nothing but strive for



1 excellence.

2 We as educators teach our students
3 to work together, to strive when they have a
4 crisis, to think outside the box. I ask you to
5 do the same, and allow our new Board of
6 Directors and our school leaders to transform
7 Pencader Charter High School to a top-notch
8 institution of learning.

9 In conclusion, please do not waiver
10 from your decision. Dig deep into your hearts,
11 allow your natural God-given ability to make a
12 conscientious decision. The decision that you
13 make will affect many students, families, and
14 members alike. Allow our school to remain open,
15 and give us a chance to correct our issues that
16 you feel are hindering our progress. I promise
17 you, we will exceed your expectations.

18 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Barry
19 Willoughby.

20 MR. WILLOUGHBY: I'd like to first,
21 as a housekeeping matter, I'm not sure if you're
22 going to mark exhibits, but I'd like to have our
23 submission marked, to be sure it's in the
24 record.



1 MR. HINDMAN: We'll have the court
2 reporter mark it as Exhibit A, and the
3 Department will retain the submission, as part
4 of the record.

5 MR. WILLOUGHBY: Thank you. We've
6 provided 25 copies, and an electronic copy for
7 the Board's use.

8 MR. HINDMAN: Thank you.

9 MR. WILLOUGHBY: The first thing I
10 want to say is I am very proud to be the Board's
11 attorney. I came onto the scene in August of
12 this year, and it's no understatement to say
13 that this was a troubled school; that there were
14 massive problems. The former school leader was
15 under fire for misrepresenting her academic
16 credentials, the board was down to two people,
17 and board meetings were just horrendous
18 experiences. John, I met you the first time in
19 August, I believe, of this year. By that time
20 there were some new board members that had taken
21 over, but things were not much better.

22 There was tremendous acrimony, and
23 a tremendous call for the resignation of the
24 prior school leader. For good and obvious



1 reasons, she should go. And I remember being at
2 a meeting with you, John, where the atmosphere
3 and the call for that was just immense.

4 Two weeks later, the board finally,
5 finally, finally met and removed that person.
6 And you were there, as I was. And amazingly,
7 there was acrimony then. There were people who
8 were bitter about the decision, who came forward
9 and said it should not have been made.

10 That may sound inconsistent, but
11 it's not. When you have leadership that does
12 that kind of thing to a school, to an
13 institution, it creates division, and it's
14 altogether normal that people are going to take
15 sides when that happens.

16 So, the healing for Pencader began,
17 in my mind, on that day, September 10th, when
18 the school leader was terminated. Over the next
19 two months, the school basically muddled along.
20 The acrimony died down, things were going well
21 academically, but the Board had not had any
22 significant changes.

23 As I think Dan Young had mentioned,
24 on November 11th of 2012, two things happened.



1 Mr. Young was appointed vice chair of the board,
2 and Frank McIntosh, my friend of 30 years,
3 agreed to come onto the board to lead the
4 school.

5 Mr. McIntosh, there's nobody
6 better, I would say, in the country, maybe the
7 world, who has the kind of credentials to do
8 that than he does. He has been the leader of
9 Junior Achievement for 30 years. Junior
10 Achievement's mission is totally aligned in
11 every way to Pencader's mission.

12 And Frank -- if I did one thing to
13 help, it was to ask Frank to take that position.
14 After that, Frank has taken control. He has
15 brought on five new board members. We now have
16 a total of six new board members. The board's
17 been reconstituted. That was November 11. That
18 was exactly three months ago. Only three months
19 ago.

20 In that time, we have reconstituted
21 the board, the bylaws have been changed, we have
22 a completely diverse board that's designed to --
23 to -- perfectly selected, that's designed to
24 bring the school to its height, to where it



1 should be.

2 That was only three months ago.
3 The school needs time to rectify these problems.
4 The new board needs time. As everybody here has
5 said, these problems were visited upon these
6 kids and these parents by the prior
7 administration, not the new board.

8 So, in making your decision, I
9 guess I come here as a lawyer, and I think about
10 things as a lawyer thinks about them. I
11 remember as a young lawyer, I'm not sure if
12 anybody knows, former Chancellor William Allen,
13 Bill Allen, one of the great chancellors in our
14 state. And he said, when I have to make these
15 kinds of decisions, I look at two things: One
16 course is irrevocable. If I'm wrong about that,
17 I better be darned sure I made the right
18 decision. Another course is a chance to achieve
19 the results that the parties and the public
20 interest want, but allows that to go on;
21 allows the opportunity to fix the problem.

22 If I choose the first course, then
23 everything ends. There is no second chance. In
24 this case, the revocation of the charter is



1 irrevocable. If I choose the second course,
2 give them the opportunity for success, I always
3 have in my back pocket the chance to go back to
4 the first course, if things are not made right
5 and not set right.

6 One thing we agree upon here is
7 this is about the kids. None of these people,
8 none of these kids deserve this. It's not their
9 making. Frank McIntosh said the first day at
10 the board meeting, every school he has been
11 associated with has a top-notch leader. The
12 problem is not the faculty, it's not the
13 students. It was the leadership.

14 The leadership has changed. We ask
15 just for one year to prove to you that we can
16 turn this school around. Thank you.

17 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Rebecca
18 Faber.

19 MS. FABER: Good evening. Rebecca
20 Faber, it's F-a-b-e-r. I am board treasurer,
21 and I'm president and CEO of the World Trade
22 Center Delaware. And I have to take a moment
23 and echo my -- my colleague Dan's remarks.

24 I am brand new to your community.



1 I am so proud, especially tonight, to be a part
2 of it. Thank you, all of you who got up and
3 spoke. And those of you students who got up and
4 spoke should really feel very proud of yourself
5 for the effort that you're making, and for being
6 part of this fight. It's a really big deal.

7 It actually makes my day. I think
8 it's incredible to see kids who are this willing
9 to fight for their school, and I think it's
10 incredible to see kids who are asking to be
11 challenged. And I think when you take kids like
12 that, and you focus them, and you give them as
13 many opportunities as you can, the potential is
14 amazing. Think about what can be achieved with
15 that.

16 Think about the kinds of business
17 leaders we're turning out, with kids who at the
18 high school level are facing a challenge like
19 this and fighting for it, and standing up for
20 what they believe in.

21 As I said, I'm brand new to the
22 board, and I was brought on the board because of
23 my understanding of and my link to the business
24 community. Since joining the board, my focus



1 has been on establishing partnerships with
2 business organizations and outlining ways in
3 which we can further enhance the curriculum and
4 the opportunities given to students at Pencader.

5 Some of the organizations, of
6 course, that we're exploring partnerships with
7 have already been mentioned. Junior
8 Achievement, the State and County Chambers. My
9 organization, of course, World Trade Center
10 Delaware; the Port of Wilmington and the Port of
11 Wilmington Maritime Society. We have an
12 incredible opportunity for learning down at the
13 port, and the things going on there.

14 The Technology Forum of Delaware.
15 We have a wonderful organization focusing on
16 tech companies, and there is a brand new
17 organization Start It Up Delaware, which is an
18 entrepreneur-focused nonprofit that is supported
19 by the Governor and headquartered in a new
20 coworking space in the city of Wilmington. It's
21 an incredible place where young people in their
22 20s are starting companies and starting new
23 opportunities here in the state of Delaware.

24 We're also looking at ways of



1 working with businesses, as I mentioned, and
2 providing as many opportunities to students as
3 possible. These would include things like
4 bringing businesses and entrepreneurs into the
5 schools and job shadowing experiences.

6 I wanted to be brief, so I'm going
7 to close at this point. But as I see it, our
8 goal is to create CEOs and entrepreneurs who are
9 capable of creating jobs that do not exist
10 today. And for a business school, you really
11 can't ask for better student leaders than, as I
12 said before, those who are facing challenges
13 like Pencader has right now, head on, and who
14 are fighting for a change, and who are willing
15 to be engaged in that change and in that
16 process.

17 My goal is that Pencader graduates
18 are the business leaders of tomorrow. Thank
19 you.

20 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Are there
21 any other representatives of the school who wish
22 to speak? If not, I will now accept comments
23 from anyone else who desires to speak. And
24 please remember to identify yourself before you



1 speak.

2 MR. CLAMPITT: May I make a
3 comment?

4 MR. CARWELL: Yes.

5 MR. CLAMPITT: My name is Henry
6 Clampitt, C-l-a-m-p-i-t-t. I currently serve on
7 the Charter School of Wilmington Board of
8 Directors as the governance chair and secretary.

9 I only know about this school by
10 reading. I read a lot. And everything I've
11 read is pretty good. When my children started
12 at Charter School of Wilmington four years ago,
13 I think it's fair to say it was in a mess. In
14 the four years my sons were there, we went
15 through four leaders, and we still succeeded.
16 And I think most people recognize the Charter
17 School of Wilmington is a reasonably successful
18 school.

19 What I hear going on here tonight
20 is exactly what we were going through. And what
21 you brought on the board with Fred, with Frank,
22 the other Frank, Dan, you've brought on people
23 who are going to fix this. I can feel it. I've
24 been through it.



1 So, have faith in the skills and
2 the love for this school that everybody's
3 bringing to it, and give it a shot. Thank you.

4 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Is there
5 anyone else who desires to speak? Yes. Please
6 identify yourself and come forward.

7 MS. FLECK: Last name Fleck,
8 F-l-e-c-k, first name Millie, M-i-l-l-i-e. I'm
9 an educator. I have been an educator for 40
10 years in mental health. I worked at A.I. DuPont
11 High School for 30 odd years. I'm retired.

12 I own a business in New Castle.
13 And when I came to this meeting, I was hoping
14 that you would allow it to stay open for one
15 more year. That was my hope, merely because of
16 the fact that kids have invested in the school,
17 and they should not be short-changed because of
18 the fact that you want to close it after, after
19 the other charter schools have already closed
20 their applications.

21 So, my feeling is you weren't
22 giving them an application -- you weren't giving
23 them a chance to be the number one. Because
24 there's quite a number. There's a young man



1 that spoke back here, I was like that guy is
2 going into politics, because he's really good.

3 But my feeling is now -- I listened
4 to the board that's on board now. I -- my --
5 when I was reading the paper, my main concern is
6 that this school was not a business school. A
7 year ago, they were doing -- they were doing
8 rotating schedules.

9 I don't think they need to blame
10 another high school for the problems, or say
11 that this school's not good, that's the reason.
12 No kid fits into any one block, and it
13 doesn't -- they need -- it's not -- it's not
14 putting a round peg in a square hole. It's a --
15 kids are kids, and they can fit into any high
16 school.

17 But the problem is, is that this
18 school's title is business, and I listened to
19 the board, and I actually sat back there and
20 changed my mind. Not because it should be given
21 a full block of a number of years to be open,
22 but to look at if the population increases in
23 the school, and if the board does what it says
24 it's going to do, one more year will not make



1 that much difference. Financially, it's a -- I
2 know it's a hardship on the State. That's what
3 we're look at, greenbacks. That's what it's all
4 about.

5 But I really think that this
6 school, if the board does what it says it's
7 going to do -- and I am very impressed with --
8 with you. I mean I'm involved with the
9 University of Delaware, my husband's on a board,
10 on the Library Associates Board there, and we're
11 very involved. That's our school. And he
12 actually said it, in that he offers ed -- he
13 offers a -- a link with adding the business to
14 this school.

15 You can't have a rotating schedule
16 and have kids go out working. It's just
17 impossible. They're not doing that now.
18 They're not -- and I think with having you on
19 board, I think you're going to bring a big, big
20 step to it, and having this is going to make a
21 difference.

22 Give them a year. Let them say
23 they did what they did. But don't wait next
24 year to make this meeting after charter has been



1 decided. These kids deserve to be number one in
2 the pick, not if there's an opening. Because
3 I'll bet you there's not some openings in those
4 charter schools now. And you did a disservice
5 to them, and that's your fault, not theirs, for
6 making this meeting when you did.

7 Sorry. I hope I didn't take too
8 much time, but I -- I could talk some more. But
9 let these kids get involved. They deserve it.
10 I'm not talking about staff. I'm talking about
11 the kids, and this board that's going to, I
12 think, make a change. And I wasn't here to say
13 that.

14 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Is there
15 anyone else who desires to speak? Please
16 identify yourself.

17 MR. EVANS: My name is Shawn Evans,
18 S-h-a-w-n E-v-a-n-s. Okay. So I was kind of
19 talked into coming up here. I come from a
20 broken family. I have no dad, I've lost three
21 brothers, my sister died, and me and my mom
22 don't talk, because of the disagreements that we
23 have.

24 I come to Pencader, I find family,



1 friends, and people who actually care about me.
2 I -- hmm. I guess I'm just trying to say that
3 if you take away Pencader, then you're taking
4 away a lot more than just our education. You're
5 taking away people's families.

6 Like over there, those are some of
7 my best friends, Yaser, his girlfriend
8 Mackenzie, and my girlfriend Gabby. We're some
9 of the most dysfunctional people you will ever
10 meet at this school. We are weird, loud,
11 sometimes disrespectful.

12 But at the end of the day,
13 everybody's talking about how they should shut
14 us down, and how we're not trying, but not
15 everybody's sitting in a classroom with us and
16 taking the advice from the teachers, or the
17 people that try to help us, like Ms. Blevin or
18 Mr. Anderson. I've sat with both of them, and
19 they've both helped me.

20 I came from MOT Charter School,
21 Middletown, Delaware. I was a troubled student.
22 I'm not going to lie. I got into fights, I did
23 some stuff I shouldn't have, and I kind of lost
24 myself.



1 I came here, I found people that
2 cared enough to make me find who I really wanted
3 to be, because their -- in life, at MOT people
4 just make me mad. I got really mad. I come
5 here, and people make me happy. But you guys
6 are trying to take it away and make me go to
7 Glasgow.

8 If I go to Glasgow, there are kids
9 that I personally know that would try to jump me
10 because of where I live and what I've done in
11 the past. Because they've tried it before. And
12 each time, I'm always the one taking the blame.

13 Here, I don't have that problem. I
14 have people that annoy me, but not to that
15 degree, that they're out to get me. At least I
16 hope not.

17 I just don't want to see a family
18 break up, because my family's already broken,
19 and here, I actually have one. And if you guys
20 take that away, then I guess I'll just be -- be
21 stuck alone again. And nobody wants to be
22 alone.

23 Thank you.

24 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Are there



1 any others who desire to speak?

2 MR. TAYLOR: My name is Chuck
3 Taylor. All of you know me pretty well. I've
4 been involved in the charter world for ten years
5 plus. I've seen charter schools go up and down.
6 Having been an administrator at a charter
7 school, I know the dilemma that's going on with
8 charter schools and leadership, and things of
9 that nature.

10 But what -- I got involved with
11 Pencader back in -- I believe it was August or
12 September, and sort of gave my two cents to some
13 of the board members and the administrator, and
14 helped them along with some guidance, as far as
15 what do's and don't's of charter schools and
16 administration is concerned.

17 But the bottom line was, the
18 present administrators and the present board
19 have taken the -- the bull by the horns, I
20 guess, in really trying to make Pencader what it
21 can be. And they're trying to make Pencader
22 what it can be for the kids. It's not about the
23 parents, not about the administrators, it's not
24 about the teachers, not about the board. It's



1 all about the kids.

2 That's what we're supposed to be in
3 education for, about the kids. And I certainly
4 hope that the State Board and everyone on the
5 Accountability Committee takes that into
6 consideration, that it's all about the kids.
7 Because sometimes I believe we lose sight of why
8 we're here, but it is about the kids. I believe
9 that the board is taking the bull by the horns,
10 and I believe that they can make Pencader into a
11 fine, fine school.

12 I did not plan to speak tonight,
13 had no intention to. Like to remain neutral.
14 However, after hearing the students and the
15 parents, and the commitment from the board, it's
16 tough to just look at it as impersonal as you
17 can. You have to look at it for the kids. You
18 have to look at the commitment that the board
19 has made. Because let me tell you, the board's
20 getting a lot of money. They're getting a heck
21 of a lot of money to be a board member. Zero.
22 And we all know that.

23 I've been a board member in the
24 public school district, managing director of a



1 charter school for ten years. Quasi
2 semi-retired. Two-minute warning. Ready to go.

3 But please, think long and hard
4 about the decisions you're about to make. It's
5 not about anything but about the kids. That's
6 what motivates me. That's why I'm here.

7 Thank you very much.

8 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Any
9 others who desire to speak? Come forward,
10 please.

11 MISS PRENTICE: Kylee Prentice,
12 P-r-e-n-t-i-c-e, K-y-l-e-e. I've been attending
13 Pencader Charter for three years now, and I
14 could want nothing more. The teachers, the
15 students, they're all like my second family.
16 Like since my freshman year, I have come close
17 with everybody in this school. Everybody. The
18 teachers have made me feel so welcome, and have
19 encouraged me to do my best in everything.

20 I came from a failing student up to
21 the second honors, and it's taken a lot. Like
22 Ms. Blevin, Mr. Anderson, all of them, like they
23 encouraged me and pushed me to success.

24 I want to be able to proudly walk



1 across that stage next year, saying I graduated
2 from Pencader Charter High School. You
3 shouldn't make us like struggle and have to like
4 suffer from other people's faults. That's my
5 opinion. I wasn't intentionally going to come
6 up here today and speak, because I just like to
7 listen to what other people say, but other
8 students encouraged me to come here, because
9 this is my school, and I want to stand for
10 what's right.

11 So, that's all I have to say.

12 Thank you.

13 MR. CARWELL: Thank you. Is there
14 anyone else who desires to speak? Yes? Well
15 you already spoke. I'm sorry. You already
16 spoke.

17 MS. JOHNSON: You've already
18 spoken.

19 MR. CARWELL: Unless you have a
20 twin. Any others? If not, I want to thank you
21 all for participating today. Okay. I just want
22 to thank everyone for participating.

23 I will adjourn the meeting at this
24 point. And the Secretary will consider your



1 comments in deciding what recommendation to
2 propose for the consent of the State Board of
3 Education. The comments are part of the record
4 provided to, and on which the Secretary and the
5 State Board will base their decisions. And we
6 will adjourn.

7 MR. HINDMAN: I just want to make
8 one comment, so it's clear what's happening
9 here. This hearing was scheduled to go until
10 8:30. Since nobody else desires to speak, we're
11 going adjourn this meeting, but we will be here
12 until 8:30, and if somebody decides that they do
13 want to speak, just come forward and we'll
14 reopen the hearing. Thank you.

15 (Briefly off the record)?

16 MR. CARWELL: I'm coming back on
17 the record. It is now 8:30, and I am closing
18 the meeting.

19 MR. HINDMAN: No one else has
20 appeared.

21 MR. CARWELL: No one else has
22 appeared, and I am closing the meeting.

23 (Hearing concluded at 8:30 p.m.)
24



	I N D E X	
		PAGE
1		
2		
3	SPEAKER: Andrew Santoleri	5
4	SPEAKER: Toni Santoleri	9
5	SPEAKER: Matt Santoleri	14
6	SPEAKER: Cabrina Wang	18
7	SPEAKER: Yaser Dia	20
8	SPEAKER: Angela Svenson	23
9	SPEAKER: Lisa Osicky	26
10	SPEAKER: Linda DiLouie	29
11	SPEAKER: Karen Keys	32
12	SPEAKER: Elaine Mele	33
13	SPEAKER: Marco Rivera	36
14	SPEAKER: Michele Newton	40
15	SPEAKER: Tracey Turner	43
16	SPEAKER: Mary Turner	45
17	SPEAKER: John Stott	47
18	SPEAKER: Steve Quimby	50
19	SPEAKER: Ann Terranova	53
20	SPEAKER: Dan Young	57
21	SPEAKER: Frank Hagen	62
22	SPEAKER: Fred Dawson	65
23	SPEAKER: Jemuel Anderson	68
24	SPEAKER: Barry Willoughby	72



1	SPEAKER: Rebecca Faber	77
2	SPEAKER: Henry Clampitt	80
3	SPEAKER: Millie Fleck	81
4	SPEAKER: Shawn Evans	85
5	SPEAKER: Chuck Taylor	87
6	SPEAKER: Kylee Prentice	90
7		
8	CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER	94
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		

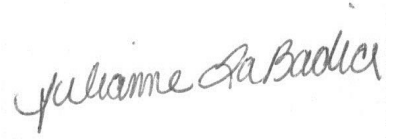


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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, JULIANNE LaBADIA, Registered Diplomate Reporter and Notary Public, do hereby certify that the foregoing record, pages 1 through 93 inclusive, is a true and accurate transcript of my stenographic notes taken on February 11, 2013, in the above-captioned matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 16th day of February, 2013, at Wilmington.



Julianne LaBadia, RDR, CRR

A	accountable (4) 8:11 62:6 65:8 70:7	11:13 12:5 13:4 15:23 34:19 65:24	aid (1) 15:1 ain't (1) 46:21 Alec (1) 40:4 Algebra (1) 27:6 aligned (1) 74:10	American (1) 47:22 among (1) 20:17 amount (1) 53:7 analysis (1) 58:19
A114 (1) 4:4	accounting (1) 54:22	68:6 75:7 87:16	alike (1) 71:14 alive (1) 64:9 Allen (2) 75:12, 13	Anderson (6) 25:15 56:7 68:14,15 85:18 89:22
A116 (1) 4:4	achieve (2) 25:10 75:18	administrations (1) 67:15	allow (8) 26:24 46:5,20 64:21 71:5,11,14 81:14	ANDREW (4) 5:23,24 6:5 9:3
Aaron (7) 40:4, 13,18 41:5,9, 19,24	achieved (1) 77:14	administrative (1) 11:6	allowed (2) 57:3 58:5	Angela (3) 23:9, 10,14
abilities (1) 28:2	achievement (6) 35:7 55:9 60:12 66:7 74:9 78:8	administrator (3) 62:13 87:6,13	allowing (3) 13:5 50:15 62:14	A-n-g-e-l-a (1) 23:11
ability (2) 30:23 71:11	Achievement's (1) 74:10	administrators (5) 40:23 42:14 49:23 87:18,23	allows (2) 75:20, 21	Angie (1) 35:17 angry (1) 12:4 animal (1) 7:9
able (11) 4:20 8:18 11:19 16:14,15 20:22 24:23 25:3 28:4 55:2 89:24	acrimony (3) 72:22 73:7,20	Adults (1) 28:17	almost (1) 61:11	Ann (2) 53:16,19 annoy (1) 86:14
above (1) 8:2	across (3) 8:18 32:4 90:1	advancements (1) 61:23	alone (3) 8:5 86:21,22	anonymous (1) 51:7
abreast (1) 12:2	act (1) 16:4	advertising (2) 58:22 59:7	alma (1) 11:1	anticipated (1) 26:21
academic (2) 15:9 72:15	action (2) 2:20 66:8	advice (1) 85:16	almost (1) 61:11	AP (2) 26:21 51:14
academically (9) 16:15 27:5 28:1 45:19 47:14 48:8,10, 22 73:21	actions (1) 12:10	advisor (1) 53:22	along (3) 26:21 73:19 87:14	apart (1) 13:6
academics (2) 24:17 70:18	activities (3) 19:11 27:16 47:15	advisors (1) 60:6	although (1) 56:15	apparent (2) 11:24 65:14
Academy (5) 58:8,9 59:3,4 63:13	actual (1) 67:3	affect (3) 12:3 24:19 71:13	altogether (1) 73:14	appear (1) 67:5
accept (1) 79:22	actually (16) 15:3 24:2,6 35:3 38:4 39:5	affected (1) 70:23	alumni (1) 33:10	appeared (2) 91:20,22
accepted (5) 26:12,14,18 33:22,23	actions (1) 12:10	afraid (2) 7:17 35:19	always (21) 8:4 11:16 20:17 22:21,22,23 25:7,12,15 27:24 29:17, 18 33:8 39:14 41:9 42:18 70:6,7,16 76:2 86:12	appears (2) 22:19 67:24
accepting (1) 33:19	active (1) 63:15	age (2) 10:24 61:6	amazing (4) 25:22 35:14 69:13 77:14	applause (1) 9:6
accessible (1) 45:7	activities (3) 19:11 27:16 47:15	again (11) 12:14, 19 23:22 32:16 42:20 52:21 54:24 55:12 67:24 68:3 86:21	amazingly (1) 73:6	application (1) 81:22
accommodate (1) 41:18	add (1) 47:20	agenda (1) 19:9	America (4) 18:11 53:23 55:19 56:8	applications (2) 52:23 81:20
accomplishments (1) 51:6	added (1) 27:15	ago (8) 9:22 48:20 68:24 74:18,19 75:2 80:12 82:7		applied (4) 26:10, 13,16 27:21
According (1) 50:7	adding (1) 83:13	agree (1) 76:6		appointed (2) 2:6 74:1
Accountability (8) 2:13,24 3:8, 21 4:7 50:13 68:17 88:5	addition (3) 3:7 63:10 66:14	agreed (1) 74:3		appointment (1) 63:8
	additional (1) 36:7	agreeing (1) 10:9		appreciated (1) 41:20
	address (1) 62:15	agreement (1) 25:19		
	adjourn (3) 90:23 91:6,11	AI (1) 81:10		
	administer (1) 42:2			
	administration (9)			

<p>appreciation (1) 67:23</p> <p>approach (2) 64:19 68:3</p> <p>approached (2) 65:10 69:7</p> <p>appropriate (2) 30:15,19</p> <p>April (1) 28:7</p> <p>Arabelle (3) 26:10 27:5,12</p> <p>area (3) 57:18, 18 59:9</p> <p>areas (2) 30:1 54:15</p> <p>Armed (1) 51:12</p> <p>around (2) 67:2 76:16</p> <p>arrogance (1) 65:22</p> <p>A's (3) 16:8,9 31:22</p> <p>assembled (2) 53:1 68:7</p> <p>assent (1) 2:11</p> <p>assessed (1) 31:1</p> <p>assets (1) 54:20</p> <p>assignments (1) 12:2</p> <p>assist (2) 2:18 52:10</p> <p>assistant (2) 61:10 62:14</p> <p>associated (2) 33:6 76:11</p> <p>Associates (1) 83:10</p> <p>athletes (6) 28:14 32:21 33:1,5,10 51:15</p> <p>athletic (1) 21:17</p> <p>athletically (1) 16:16</p> <p>atmosphere (1) 73:2</p> <p>attacked (1) 40:21</p> <p>attempt (1) 12:9</p>	<p>attend (1) 24:23</p> <p>attended (8) 23:16 25:21 40:13 44:1 47:13,21 48:3 49:6</p> <p>attending (4) 47:6,9 70:1 89:12</p> <p>attends (1) 48:4</p> <p>attention (3) 11:18 16:11 42:8</p> <p>attest (1) 67:20</p> <p>attorney (1) 72:11</p> <p>August (4) 27:23 72:11,19 87:11</p> <p>authority (1) 38:13</p> <p>autism (1) 30:6</p> <p>automotive (1) 48:18</p> <p>available (2) 9:9 17:21</p> <p>aware (2) 11:5 12:15</p> <p>away (10) 8:23 12:14 31:22 43:15 52:3 85:3,4,5 86:6, 20</p>	<p>backs (1) 28:21</p> <p>bad (7) 6:14 20:8 22:20 37:23 39:6 41:4 42:14</p> <p>balance (1) 30:3</p> <p>banking (1) 54:13</p> <p>bargain (1) 42:16</p> <p>Barry (1) 71:18</p> <p>base (2) 63:3 91:5</p> <p>baseball (2) 15:13 47:16</p> <p>based (1) 21:13</p> <p>basic (1) 54:13</p> <p>basically (1) 73:19</p> <p>basketball (1) 7:12</p> <p>bathrooms (1) 6:20</p> <p>Beam (1) 66:11</p> <p>beaten (1) 32:18</p> <p>beauty (1) 41:3</p> <p>Become (5) 13:2 22:9 24:3 25:18 48:17</p> <p>Bedford (1) 16:20</p> <p>began (7) 5:15 26:18 27:22 48:14,16 51:21 73:16</p> <p>begged (1) 10:24</p> <p>begging (1) 68:2</p> <p>begin (4) 6:3 59:5 65:4 68:15</p> <p>beginning (1) 4:19</p> <p>behalf (3) 6:1 22:12 45:16</p> <p>behavior (1) 41:4</p> <p>believes (1) 44:6</p> <p>benefit (3) 54:14 57:2 64:12</p> <p>benefits (1) 54:9</p> <p>Besides (2) 60:18,20</p> <p>best (11) 23:15</p>	<p>26:9 29:5 30:11 44:10, 18 51:19 57:12 69:23 85:7 89:19</p> <p>bet (1) 84:3</p> <p>better (14) 9:23 12:8 22:9 25:18,20,24 44:16 55:3 61:24 64:17 72:21 74:6 75:17 79:11</p> <p>beyond (2) 8:3 55:3</p> <p>big (5) 31:3 35:7 77:6 83:19,19</p> <p>bigger (1) 27:16</p> <p>Bill (1) 75:13</p> <p>biology (3) 18:16, 19,24</p> <p>bit (3) 23:13 41:11 47:23</p> <p>bitter (1) 73:8</p> <p>blame (2) 82:9 86:12</p> <p>bleak (1) 32:7</p> <p>Blevin (2) 85:17 89:22</p> <p>block (2) 82:12, 21</p> <p>blogosphere (1) 62:4</p> <p>Board (81) 2:11, 18 4:12,24 5:16 12:13,21 13:3 43:10,21 49:12 50:14 53:1 54:1 55:11 57:15, 24 58:4,5 59:14,17,18, 22,23 60:2,4, 11 61:16,16, 17,23 63:17 64:4,7 65:11, 15,18 66:9,19</p>	<p>68:22 71:5 72:16,17,20 73:4,21 74:1, 3,15,16,21,22 75:4,7 76:10, 20 77:22,22, 24 80:7,21 82:4,4,19,23 83:6,9,10,19 84:11 87:13, 18,24 88:4,9, 15,18,21,23 91:2,5</p> <p>board's (5) 49:15 72:7,10 74:16 88:19</p> <p>body (3) 26:24 38:12 47:24</p> <p>bond (1) 69:12</p> <p>born (1) 61:22</p> <p>both (7) 10:20 28:8 48:21 63:1 69:24 85:18,19</p> <p>bottom (3) 43:14 56:22 87:17</p> <p>bounce (1) 32:19</p> <p>Bowmanor (1) 14:11</p> <p>box (1) 71:4</p> <p>BPA (4) 51:13 55:23 56:6,13</p> <p>brand (4) 57:19 76:24 77:21 78:16</p> <p>break (2) 52:3 86:18</p> <p>brick (1) 13:15</p> <p>brief (1) 79:6</p> <p>Briefly (1) 91:15</p> <p>brighter (1) 21:1</p> <p>brilliant (1) 20:20</p> <p>bring (9) 31:20 60:13,17,23 61:10 66:17 67:3 74:24 83:19</p> <p>bringing (2) 79:4</p>
	B			
	<p>back (20) 5:10 12:19 13:9 15:15,17 16:18,18,18, 22 32:10,19 41:13 48:17 59:15 76:3,3 82:1,19 87:11 91:16</p> <p>background (4) 54:6 65:19 66:6,24</p> <p>backgrounds (1) 27:2</p>			

81:3		38:21 79:9	certain (1) 65:16	characteristics (1)
brings (1) 66:16	C	capacity (1) 22:2	certainly (6) 19:6	18:15
broke (2) 7:13		Cape (1) 63:5	52:16 55:10,	Charter (59) 2:4,
46:21	Cabrina (2) 18:7,	capital (1) 64:13	15 59:19 88:3	8,9,13,24 3:1,
broken (2) 84:20	10	care (6) 7:1,24	CERTIFICATE (1)	8,14,20 4:6
86:18	calendar (3) 3:10,	24:2 42:8	93:8	5:6 6:9 9:22
brother-in-law (1)	23 4:10	62:22 85:1	certified (2) 42:1	11:10 14:8
11:9	caliber (1) 68:5	cared (3) 7:9	60:10	15:18,19
brothers (1) 84:21	call (5) 7:15	41:20 86:2	Chair (3) 53:21	17:20 20:4
brought (4)	33:7 47:10	career (5) 41:24	74:1 80:8	21:12 23:1,5
74:15 77:22	72:23 73:3	51:22 54:9	chairman (1)	26:13,16
80:21,22	called (1) 32:22	63:2 67:1	57:15	30:16,16
bugs (1) 42:23	Cambridge (1)	caring (2) 49:22	challenge (3)	40:12,19 42:9
building (3)	26:11	67:19	22:3,14 77:18	47:7 50:13,17
11:12 13:16	came (20) 7:16,	Carrisa (1) 56:7	challenged (1)	53:20 59:2,4
33:24	19 9:21 10:16	CARWELL (42)	77:11	60:19 61:12
bull (2) 87:19	11:10 14:8,10	2:1,3 6:4 9:2,	challenges (1)	62:16 63:9
88:9	22:1 36:22	4,18 13:23	79:12	68:8,10,16
bullied (1) 7:3	48:8 50:19	14:3 18:5,7	challenging (1)	71:7 75:24
bullies (1) 13:18	59:18 68:23	19:24 23:6,9	27:6	80:7,12,16
bullying (1) 11:6	72:11 73:8	26:3 29:7	Chamber (1) 55:9	81:19 83:24
bunch (1) 19:10	81:13 85:20	31:23 34:24	Chambers (1)	84:4 85:20
burning (1) 52:2	86:1 89:16,20	36:19 39:23	78:8	87:4,5,6,8,15
bus (1) 36:6	campus (4) 4:5	43:13,18	championship (1)	89:1,13 90:2
Business (50) 2:8	21:15 26:22	45:12,15	27:11	chase (1) 40:5
3:9,13,21 4:8	32:13	46:23 50:7	championships (1)	check (1) 15:19
26:17 29:16,	can (45) 4:17	53:16 57:6	28:6	checkbooks (1)
19,22 30:1,9,	8:1 17:21	62:10 65:2	chance (9) 13:6	30:3
20,22 40:18	23:12,13 24:5,	68:13 71:18	21:16 34:5	checked (2)
41:11 42:22	18 25:9,16	76:17 79:20	66:18 71:15	14:13 17:12
53:21,22 54:4,	31:1,7 35:24	80:4 81:4	75:18,23 76:3	checkered (1)
5,8,10,22	38:8,11,14	84:14 86:24	81:23	51:3
55:4,8,13,18,	39:2,5,16	89:8 90:13,19	Chancellor (1)	chief (1) 60:7
19,24 56:8	40:17 42:12	91:16,21	75:12	child (16) 10:10
58:8,9 59:12	44:12,14,21	case (1) 75:24	chancellors (1)	11:20 13:9
61:2,4 66:23,	45:2 47:3	cases (1) 42:17	75:13	25:16 26:7
24 67:2,4,6	49:3 50:4	Castle (2) 55:8	chances (1) 34:2	30:13,15 36:1,
68:9 77:16,23	56:10 60:13,	81:12	change (5) 40:9	14 40:16
78:2 79:10,18	15 62:4,18	cause (1) 53:5	58:6 79:14,15	43:23 44:15,
81:12 82:6,18	64:12 66:17	cell (1) 11:3	84:12	18 45:6 46:2
83:13	68:10 76:15	Center (2) 76:22	changed (7) 3:16	47:9
businesses (2)	77:13,14 78:3	78:9	4:15 11:2	children (27)
79:1,4	80:23 82:15	centered (1) 67:1	49:6 74:21	10:13 11:17,
businessman (1)	87:21,22	cents (1) 87:12	76:14 82:20	18 12:11,14
57:22	88:10,17	century (2) 63:1	changes (2)	13:16,21 28:8
busy (1) 53:3	can-do (1) 66:3	64:24	58:22 73:22	35:21 36:2,10,
buy (1) 37:12	capable (4)	CEO (1) 76:21	chapter (3) 53:23	16 40:20
bylaws (1) 74:21	20:22,23	CEOs (1) 79:8	55:20 56:12	42:19 43:15

45:3 46:10,11, 13 47:6 50:1 61:6,16 62:7 67:13 69:24 80:11 children's (1) 17:4 child's (1) 44:7 China (1) 18:11 choice (2) 13:10 29:5 choices (2) 26:10 44:5 choose (3) 54:9 75:22 76:1 chooses (1) 70:7 chose (2) 11:7 40:16 Christiana (14) 6:11,12 8:5 9:24 10:3,18, 21 11:14 14:17 17:4 36:24 40:20 45:1 65:6 Chuck (2) 87:2 93:5 CIA (1) 42:6 circumstances (2) 45:20 46:3 city (1) 78:20 CLAMPITT (4) 80:2,5,6 93:2 C-l-a-m-p-i-t-t (1) 80:6 clarification (1) 47:10 class (19) 14:17, 23 15:1,2,2 16:3,9,23,24 18:16,19,20, 23 19:1,8 27:6,9 30:5,23 classes (6) 16:10 23:17,23 26:21 44:19 54:22 classroom (4) 51:23 52:3	63:24 85:15 classrooms (1) 69:15 cleaning (1) 62:1 clear (2) 29:14 91:8 clearly (2) 4:18 53:10 climate (2) 62:21 64:14 cliques (1) 13:17 close (12) 8:15 13:1 25:17 34:14 44:22 45:18 46:7 52:15,18 79:7 81:18 89:16 closed (1) 81:19 closes (1) 13:8 closing (11) 6:7 12:23 43:22 44:13 45:23 52:12 61:19 70:12,23 91:17,22 closure (2) 45:18, 21 club (1) 47:17 coach (3) 32:2,2 33:2 coached (1) 32:12 coaches (6) 22:7, 23 34:11,18 57:11 61:18 Coast (1) 42:4 Code (1) 2:20 collaboratively (1) 63:22 collateral (1) 54:21 colleague (1) 76:23 colleagues (2) 67:5 70:3 college (5) 24:23 33:15 61:2,4 63:2	colleges (1) 51:11 College's (1) 4:5 Colonial (1) 16:20 colored (1) 49:9 colors (1) 58:15 Combined (1) 66:19 comfortable (2) 11:23 17:9 coming (6) 23:17 59:15 68:24 69:3 84:19 91:16 comment (5) 3:2 5:7 47:4 80:3 91:8 commentary (1) 58:10 comments (6) 5:1, 8 50:9 79:22 91:1,3 Commerce (1) 55:9 commitment (5) 21:22 22:24 66:20 88:15,18 commitments (2) 61:2 67:19 committed (3) 22:21,22,23 Committee (5) 2:13,24 50:13 68:17 88:5 Committee's (5) 3:8,21 4:7 5:7 53:9 Community (11) 4:5 28:15 52:5 55:8 58:11,15 59:10 60:20, 22 76:24 77:24 companies (2) 78:16,22 comparison (1) 52:18 compete (2)	55:22,24 competing (1) 28:6 competition (1) 56:17 complete (1) 24:7 completely (2) 37:7 74:22 compliance (1) 64:4 component (1) 29:19 compromised (1) 44:21 concentrate (1) 45:23 concepts (2) 54:8, 13 concern (2) 6:8 82:5 concerned (3) 44:11 45:17 87:16 concerns (3) 49:12,15 53:9 concluded (1) 91:23 conclusion (2) 22:19 71:9 conduct (1) 2:6 conference (1) 51:15 confess (1) 65:5 confidence (1) 48:16 confident (4) 11:24 19:5 26:1 69:18 confrontation (1) 6:22 connected (1) 24:17 connection (1) 24:14 connections (2) 55:7,14 conscientious (1) 71:12	consent (1) 91:2 consider (3) 28:22 44:13 90:24 consideration (3) 8:21 12:20 88:6 considered (2) 27:21 28:2 consisted (2) 38:3 69:2 consistently (1) 28:8 constant (1) 17:23 constantly (1) 16:17 consulting (2) 63:12 67:2 contact (2) 22:1 33:11 continue (9) 13:22 23:19 26:2 46:9,10 49:16 52:23 53:12 57:1 continues (1) 27:14 continuously (1) 16:9 contract (1) 10:8 control (2) 18:1 74:14 conversations (1) 59:1 convinced (2) 52:7 66:10 copies (1) 72:6 cops (1) 7:15 copy (2) 18:24 72:6 corporal (1) 10:7 corrupt (4) 20:9, 17,18,23 cost (1) 58:19 counselors (2) 21:7 22:7 count (2) 15:8,13 country (7) 20:20,
--	---	--	---	---

22 27:16,18 28:5 47:16 74:6 counts (1) 38:17 County (2) 55:8 78:8 course (8) 46:1 75:16,18,22 76:1,4 78:6,9 courses (1) 30:22 court (4) 4:16,20 32:21 72:1 cousin (1) 37:9 cover (1) 40:17 coworking (1) 78:20 CPA (1) 65:18 create (2) 11:17 79:8 creates (1) 73:13 creating (1) 79:9 credentials (2) 72:16 74:7 credit (3) 15:4,5 54:19 crisis (2) 52:4 71:4 criteria (1) 2:19 cross (4) 27:15, 17 28:5 47:16 crossing (1) 46:12 cultural (1) 27:2 culture (3) 10:13 62:21 64:14 cup (1) 56:13 current (3) 45:5 54:16 55:16 currently (7) 43:23 55:20 56:5,19 62:13 68:20 80:6 curriculum (3) 55:4,16 78:3 curtail (1) 58:21 cut (2) 16:22 40:5 cutbacks (1) 14:22	cutting (3) 16:17, 18,18 D dad (1) 84:20 daily (3) 10:16 49:4 62:24 damage (1) 43:17 Dan (4) 57:6,8 73:23 80:22 dance (2) 29:19, 21 danger (1) 48:9 Dan's (1) 76:23 darned (1) 75:17 date (3) 3:4,15 59:16 dating (1) 7:11 daughter (20) 6:1, 5 9:23,24 10:23 11:5,14, 15,21 14:7 15:15,24 16:5, 8 27:1,9 35:4 36:15 43:24 48:24 daughters (2) 16:19 17:8 Dawson (2) 65:3, 4 day (21) 6:12,13 7:20 19:9 25:11 31:16 32:14 34:3,20 35:9 39:6 41:7 50:22 65:24 69:5,22 70:9 73:17 76:9 77:7 85:12 days (3) 24:10 36:3,8 day-to-day (2) 41:12 63:19 DCAS (1) 70:13 deal (3) 11:18 59:7 77:6	Dean's (1) 47:19 Dear (1) 50:12 deceitful (1) 12:12 decide (2) 54:10 64:21 decided (2) 21:11 84:1 decides (1) 91:12 deciding (1) 91:1 decision (11) 2:19 21:12, 13 41:14 52:1 71:10,12,12 73:8 75:8,18 decisions (6) 11:7 20:8 42:15 75:15 89:4 91:5 declare (1) 2:2 declined (2) 26:12,15 dedicated (4) 51:9 56:24 64:8,12 deep (2) 70:21 71:10 deeply (1) 45:17 defend (3) 6:13 7:2,3 defending (1) 8:5 defines (1) 49:24 definitely (3) 10:19 37:21 69:19 degree (1) 86:15 Delaware (25) 2:20 3:5 4:4 42:3 44:4,6, 10 56:20 57:17 58:7,9 59:3 60:6,9 63:5,13 68:10 69:24 76:22 78:10,14,17, 23 83:9 85:21 delighted (1) 27:23 demonstrate (1)	66:20 demonstrated (1) 67:14 Department (13) 2:5,10,17 4:1, 8,12 38:16 43:5 53:21,21 55:13 68:21 72:3 Department's (1) 3:22 depend (2) 37:21 60:15 depth (1) 66:16 described (1) 64:18 describes (1) 44:24 deserve (7) 8:19 22:17 34:21 51:19 76:8 84:1,9 deserves (1) 24:13 designed (2) 74:22,23 designing (1) 63:23 desire (4) 5:10 52:2 87:1 89:9 desires (6) 5:9 79:23 81:5 84:15 90:14 91:10 destroy (1) 12:9 detail (1) 42:9 devastating (1) 20:10 develop (3) 55:24 57:2 67:9 developed (1) 48:11 developing (2) 55:6,13 development (1) 63:23 develops (1) 56:3	devote (1) 36:4 devoting (1) 53:7 Dia (3) 20:2,3,4 D-i-a (1) 20:4 dictionary (1) 49:23 died (2) 73:20 84:21 difference (4) 22:6 36:17 83:1,21 differences (1) 41:21 different (8) 10:6 30:24 31:2 39:4 42:24 58:11 59:6 69:11 difficult (1) 52:1 difficulties (1) 35:5 dig (2) 70:21 71:10 dilemma (1) 87:7 DiLouie (3) 29:8, 9 54:3 direction (2) 35:17,18 Director (2) 2:4 88:24 directors (6) 53:2 57:16 60:4 68:22 71:6 80:8 dirty (1) 43:9 disagreed (1) 10:8 disagreements (1) 84:22 discipline (2) 10:9 19:6 discovering (1) 28:1 discuss (1) 43:22 discussed (1) 11:13 discussion (1) 29:4 disorders (1) 7:2 disrespectful (1)
---	--	---	---	---

85:11		eliminated (2)	entrepreneurs (3)	7:12 8:6 9:13
disservice (1) 84:4	E	21:9 22:20	67:10 79:4,8	22:12,14 33:9
distinguished (2)		else (10) 5:8	entrepreneurship (1)	88:4 90:22
50:14 51:14	earn (1) 24:23	27:21 29:2	56:2	Evidently (1) 44:6
District (4) 10:3	ears (1) 6:24	79:23 81:5	environment (10)	exactly (3) 12:22
36:24 40:20	earshot (1) 22:12	84:15 90:14	8:12,23	74:18 80:20
88:24	easier (1) 17:3	91:10,19,21	10:11 15:17	example (1)
diverse (1) 74:22	easy (1) 25:18	else's (1) 39:21	19:12 31:5	60:24
diversity (2)	eating (1) 19:7	embedded (1)	45:7 48:1	examples (1) 50:5
26:24 69:10	echo (1) 76:23	20:19	49:22 67:18	exceed (1) 71:17
divided (1) 25:13	echoing (1) 54:3	embraced (1)	equity (1) 54:21	excelled (1) 27:5
division (2) 42:5	ecology (1) 47:17	41:14	especially (2)	excellence (1)
73:13	ed (9) 29:11	employ (1) 67:11	57:18 77:1	71:1
doctoral (1) 61:5	31:7,8,8,9,10,	employed (1) 48:2	establishing (1)	except (1) 29:3
donate (1) 43:10	21 32:4 83:12	encourage (1)	78:1	exchange (3)
done (7) 27:24	edition (1) 48:19	49:15	establishment (1)	18:10 47:12
28:19 39:18	educate (1) 46:10	encouraged (3)	43:12	49:5
58:19 61:21	Education (27)	89:19,23 90:8	ethnicities (1)	excited (3) 48:22
70:24 86:10	2:5,10,11,17,	encouraging (1)	69:12	54:4 66:21
don't's (1) 87:15	18 4:23,24	13:5	etiquette (1) 30:5	excuse (1) 6:19
door (1) 34:10	12:13 16:18	end (4) 40:8	EVANS (3) 84:17,	executives (1)
doors (1) 55:3	17:5,17 30:15	41:1 42:15	17 93:4	60:7
do's (1) 87:15	38:16 42:8	85:12	E-v-a-n-s (1)	Exhibit (1) 72:2
dose (1) 14:20	43:5,22 44:6,	ended (1) 7:14	84:18	exhibits (1) 71:22
dotting (1) 46:13	7,19,24 45:8	ends (1) 75:23	even (17) 11:7	exist (1) 79:9
doubled (1) 14:24	50:3,20 67:21	energetic (1) 51:9	16:2 18:1	existed (1) 69:11
Dover (1) 55:21	85:4 88:3 91:3	engaged (3) 41:6	27:20 28:2	expect (2) 49:16
down (18) 6:23	educational (4)	69:16 79:15	29:21 34:1	54:23
8:15 12:24	20:13 21:19	engaging (1)	35:10 37:14,	expectations (2)
13:1 19:21	23:1 67:18	62:23	16 38:7 44:8,	64:15 71:17
26:10 32:9,15,	Education's (1) 4:8	engrained (1)	13 51:19 66:8	expected (1) 7:6
17,18 40:10	educator (3) 34:2	30:14	67:19 69:6	experience (10)
46:1 55:21	81:9,9	enhance (2)	evening (8) 2:1	7:18 10:2
72:16 73:20	educators (3)	66:17 78:3	43:21,22	40:12 41:8,23
78:12 85:14	21:23 51:10	enjoy (1) 24:22	45:14,15	59:21 61:11
87:5	71:2	enormous (1) 36:9	53:18 56:14	63:4 66:13,16
DR (3) 57:8	effective (2) 30:3	enough (11) 9:5,	76:19	experiences (2)
62:12 66:11	64:12	13 15:6,8	events (2) 56:1	72:18 79:5
drinking (1) 19:7	effectively (1)	23:20 26:22	59:10	explain (1) 42:21
dropout (1) 44:9	60:21	27:6 41:8	eventually (1)	explained (1) 19:1
due (1) 11:6	effort (1) 77:5	70:13,14 86:2	15:7	exploring (2)
DuPont (1) 81:10	efforts (1) 51:6	enrolled (2)	everybody (7)	44:3 78:6
during (1) 32:14	eighth (1) 60:1	23:18 43:24	18:9 22:10	exposure (1) 31:6
dynamics (1)	Elaine (2) 34:24	ensuring (1) 13:3	39:2,21 75:4	express (2) 6:6
25:22	35:2	entering (1) 69:14	89:17,17	67:22
dysfunctional (1)	electronic (2) 5:1	entire (1) 41:8	everybody's (3)	extend (1) 45:5
85:9	72:6	entrepreneur-focused (1)	81:2 85:13,15	extended (1) 45:6
	eligibility (1) 15:9	78:18	everyone (9) 2:2	extolled (1) 67:17

extra (4) 11:21 16:10 24:10 27:7	17:22 21:13 25:3 37:11 58:16,17,23	felt (9) 6:12 7:20 8:4 11:23,24	First (31) 5:5,17, 19 7:20 9:21 10:2 13:7	Forces (1) 51:12 foremost (1) 13:7 forgive (1) 5:20
extracurricular (1) 47:15	60:17 84:20, 24 86:17 89:15	41:10,19 69:8 70:15	14:14,18 18:13 21:11 23:20 24:21	forgotten (2) 8:13 46:12
extraordinarily (1) 66:5	family's (1) 86:18 far (6) 5:11 7:8	FEMA (1) 42:1 female (1) 60:7	27:4 37:1 48:8 50:22	formal (3) 2:9 63:19 65:5
extraordinary (1) 66:13	27:23 39:15, 20 87:14	few (10) 20:7 21:7 33:11	57:9 59:21 65:16 68:19, 23 69:5,22	former (4) 29:16 66:14 72:14 75:12
extremely (1) 21:9	fast (1) 70:2	44:8 45:21 48:20 50:16, 21 51:5 56:15	71:20 72:9,18 75:22 76:4,9 81:8	forth (1) 2:19 fortunate (1) 16:12
eyes (1) 7:7	father (2) 14:7 70:6	fifth (1) 47:9 fight (4) 13:2	first-hand (1) 67:21	Forum (1) 78:14 forward (11) 21:1 23:4 30:11
F	fathers (1) 37:9 fault (3) 13:19 70:13 84:5	fighting (2) 77:19 79:14	fit (2) 36:2 82:15 fits (1) 82:12	41:6 55:6,13 70:2 73:8 81:6 89:9 91:13
Faber (4) 76:18, 19,20 93:1	faults (2) 46:4 90:4	fight (2) 10:17 85:22	five (3) 9:11 63:6 74:15	found (4) 13:18 51:16 65:20 86:1
F-a-b-e-r (1) 76:20	favorite (1) 30:4 fears (1) 28:24	final (3) 2:14,23 5:7	fix (10) 12:17 46:5,6,9,20, 21,22 65:8	four (8) 26:19 40:13 47:12, 13 68:23 80:12,14,15
faced (1) 52:1	feat (2) 23:22 36:9	finally (5) 11:6 23:22 73:4,5,5	75:21 80:23 fixed (2) 46:6,22 fixing (1) 45:24	80:12,14,15 fourth (1) 34:2 Frank (12) 61:10 62:10,12
facing (3) 52:19 77:18 79:12	February (7) 3:20 4:3,6,11 5:3 7:13 55:23	Finance (9) 2:9 3:14 26:17	Fleck (3) 81:7,7 93:3	65:10 66:15 74:2,12,13,14 76:9 80:21,22
fact (10) 12:15 17:7,17 20:11, 16 48:23	feedback (1) 63:22	30:20 54:6,8 59:12 67:1 68:9	floor (1) 58:6 flourish (2) 16:15, 16	76:9 80:21,22 frankly (1) 17:24 Fred (2) 65:2 80:21
68:19 69:1 81:16,18	feeder (1) 29:3 feel (26) 6:21	59:12 67:1 68:9	flourished (1) 44:2 flourishing (1) 21:2	free (3) 30:15, 17,18 fresh (1) 55:16 freshman (7) 10:14 14:18
facts (1) 21:14	7:21 8:6,8,9, 24 12:12	finance-based (1) 55:18	flourishing (1) 44:2 21:2	27:22 28:5 36:23 47:8 89:16
faculty (2) 70:4 76:12	17:22 21:3 23:24 24:6,7, 22 25:5 28:16	finances (1) 54:18 financial (4) 54:20 60:5	focus (2) 77:12, 24	89:16 Friday (2) 3:6,11 friend (3) 65:18 66:11 74:2
fail (3) 18:23 23:19 38:1	23:24 24:6,7, 22 25:5 28:16	65:21,21 Financially (1) 83:1	focused (2) 11:16 54:5	friendly (1) 18:14
failing (4) 23:16 34:9 48:9 89:20	34:21 37:17, 18,18,19 39:9	financing (1) 54:13	focusing (2) 69:4 78:15	
Failure (1) 68:11	54:7 71:16 77:4 80:23	find (10) 10:1 20:12 26:8	following (2) 5:4 21:14	
fair (2) 14:19 80:13	89:18 feeling (2) 81:21 82:3	37:12,14 41:15 48:14	fool (1) 42:13 foot (1) 30:11	
faith (4) 20:11 41:1 67:13 81:1	54:7 71:16 77:4 80:23	54:2 84:24 86:2	football (1) 28:13 force (1) 17:14	
fall (2) 25:14 50:19	89:18 feeling (2) 81:21 82:3	fine (3) 43:12 88:11,11	forced (1) 15:1	
fallen (1) 18:12	50:17 67:23 feels (1) 6:6	finishing (1) 38:21 fire (1) 72:15		
families (3) 52:24 71:13 85:5	feet (1) 48:21 fell (1) 39:11			
family (15) 8:9 13:16 15:21	22:16 65:19 70:3			

<p>friends (8) 7:13, 23 22:13 37:1, 3,4 85:1,7 friendship (1) 66:2 front (2) 52:20, 21 full (3) 14:10 15:4 82:21 full-time (1) 26:23 functioning (1) 64:9 funding (1) 14:22 Further (3) 3:13 57:4 78:3 future (9) 8:22 21:2 29:15 36:11 52:16 55:7,14 62:15 67:10</p>	<p>78:4 82:20 gives (2) 17:20 33:2 giving (4) 33:2,3 81:22,22 Glasgow (4) 10:12,15 86:7,8 glasses (1) 49:9 goal (3) 42:6 79:8,17 goals (1) 25:9 God-given (1) 71:11 God's (1) 40:24 Good (32) 2:1 7:19 11:15 14:20 18:16 19:7,11,12,15, 15,18,22 24:14,16 28:20 29:20 42:17 43:16, 21 45:14,15 53:18 62:19 65:18,23 66:10 67:13 72:24 76:19 80:11 82:2,11 governance (1) 80:8 governing (1) 64:7 Governor (1) 78:19 grade (6) 14:12 16:1 35:7 43:24 44:7 60:1 graders (1) 46:15 grades (5) 12:3 48:15 69:3,4 70:14 graduate (5) 8:17 14:16 15:6,12 24:4 graduated (4) 10:20 16:13 48:4 90:1</p>	<p>graduates (3) 51:10,12 79:17 graduating (1) 23:4 grand (1) 42:16 gratitude (1) 67:23 great (8) 11:18 35:15 40:18 57:20 59:7 61:8 70:17 75:13 greater (2) 42:17 44:16 greatly (1) 56:11 greenbacks (1) 83:3 group (2) 9:12 51:7 groups (2) 28:11 58:11 growing (1) 51:2 grown (1) 25:24 growth (3) 43:1, 3,11 Guard (1) 42:4 guess (6) 17:4 38:10 75:9 85:2 86:20 87:20 guests (1) 50:14 guidance (1) 87:14 guide (1) 43:9 Gunning (1) 16:20 guy (1) 82:1 guys (2) 86:5,19</p>	<p>hallways (1) 11:3 Hamburg (1) 48:3 hand (2) 11:3 65:16 hands (1) 43:9 hands-on (1) 67:3 happen (2) 39:14 46:16 happened (4) 59:20 61:14 65:7 73:24 happening (1) 91:8 happens (2) 8:3 73:15 happy (3) 35:19 43:6 86:5 hard (4) 18:20 19:16 25:5 89:3 hardily (1) 69:5 hardship (1) 83:2 harm (2) 43:12, 16 harmed (1) 40:22 hated (1) 37:1 haven (1) 13:18 head (2) 48:14 79:13 headquartered (1) 78:19 heads (1) 40:23 healing (1) 73:16 health (1) 81:10 hear (7) 5:5 23:13 53:12, 15 54:19 57:23 80:19 heard (7) 5:14 15:17 27:19 53:12 54:12 56:21 58:10 hearing (18) 2:3, 7,16,22 3:4, 16 4:2,5,14, 17,22 5:2 49:4,11 88:14 91:9,14,23</p>	<p>hearings (1) 49:10 hears (1) 22:14 heart (2) 32:9 70:16 hearts (2) 70:22 71:10 heck (1) 88:20 height (1) 74:24 held (3) 2:17 4:2 8:10 hell (1) 65:7 Hello (2) 18:9 20:4 help (25) 7:24 13:2 19:4 24:3,9,11 25:1,7 26:1 31:2 35:19,20, 22,23 36:1,2, 7,9 38:15 41:10 42:5 43:10 59:24 74:13 85:17 helped (4) 19:1 56:10 85:19 87:14 Henlopen (1) 63:5 Henry (2) 80:5 93:2 herself (1) 4:19 Hi (3) 9:19 14:5 36:22 High (49) 6:10, 11 7:18 9:23, 24 10:12,18, 23 14:17,19 16:2,14 23:5 26:8,11,17 27:4 29:4 40:12 42:9 44:1,2,8,9,13, 16 45:1,9 47:7,23 50:17 53:20 59:9 61:13 62:16 63:5,6,7 64:14 65:6</p>
G				
<p>Gabby (1) 85:8 gainfully (1) 48:1 galvanize (1) 59:5 game (1) 32:8 games (1) 32:13 gave (4) 18:24 22:8 69:7 87:12 gay (1) 33:21 gentleman (1) 16:8 gentlemen (2) 20:16 49:11 Germany (2) 47:21 48:6 get-away (1) 37:18 gets (2) 8:11 35:20 girlfriend (2) 85:7, 8 girls (1) 7:15 given (9) 11:17 12:17 16:11 41:22 49:17 66:18 70:16</p>				
		H		
		<p>Hagen (5) 61:10 62:11,12,12 66:15 half (2) 9:22 51:4 halls (1) 6:23</p>		

66:14 69:4 70:14 71:7 77:18 81:11 82:10,15 90:2 highest (1) 22:4 himself (2) 31:20 48:15 hindering (1) 71:16 HINDMAN (4) 72:1,8 91:7, 19 historian (1) 56:9 historical (1) 50:24 history (1) 53:2 hmm (1) 85:2 hold (4) 9:6 28:12 61:14 65:8 holding (1) 9:7 hold-outs (1) 50:21 hole (1) 82:14 holidays (1) 61:22 Hollie (7) 5:21, 22 6:2,8 9:1 13:23 14:1 H-o-l-l-i-e (1) 6:2 Holmes (1) 35:15 home (7) 8:16 10:16 11:8 13:11 48:17 69:8,21 homeland (1) 42:1 homes (1) 37:14 honest (1) 40:24 Honestly (1) 52:1 honey (1) 69:23 Honor (2) 47:16 70:5 honorable (1) 45:9 honored (1) 57:13 honors (5) 10:22 23:21 26:20 35:6 89:21 hope (5) 64:19	81:15 84:7 86:16 88:4 hoping (2) 8:20 81:13 horns (2) 87:19 88:9 horrendous (1) 72:17 house (1) 20:13 housekeeping (1) 71:21 huge (5) 8:18 10:12 19:10 31:2 68:7 human (1) 64:13 humble (1) 58:16 hurdles (1) 39:11 husband (2) 10:4 60:2 husband's (1) 83:9	important (4) 17:5 21:15 25:5 35:10 importantly (1) 21:21 impossible (1) 83:17 impressed (3) 11:12 48:12 83:7 improve (3) 49:17 58:2 63:23 improvement (2) 10:20 48:11 improvements (3) 49:18 63:18 70:18 incidents (1) 13:20 include (1) 79:3 included (1) 4:14 including (3) 47:15 64:4,7 inclusion (1) 31:18 incompetence (1) 67:14 inconsistent (1) 73:10 increases (1) 82:22 incredible (5) 67:8 77:8,10 78:12,21 Indeed (1) 50:21 indicate (1) 19:9 individual (3) 5:20 9:11 50:8 individuals (3) 20:7,24 21:8 individual's (1) 41:19 inexcusable (1) 65:9 informal (1) 63:21 information (1)	65:20 initially (1) 35:12 initiate (1) 42:2 ink (1) 44:23 inner (1) 41:1 innocent (2) 42:20 43:7 inquiries (1) 52:23 inroads (1) 60:22 instance (1) 28:12 instead (1) 45:24 institution (6) 20:13,18 21:23 49:24 71:8 73:13 institutions (1) 20:14 instruction (2) 11:21 63:24 instructor (1) 68:20 instructors (1) 42:11 intelligent (1) 20:20 intention (1) 88:13 intentionally (1) 90:5 interact (2) 21:17 30:10 interactions (1) 28:10 interest (3) 29:18 41:15 75:20 interesting (1) 29:10 interests (2) 27:3 28:1 interim (2) 62:13 63:8 intermediate (1) 69:2 interstate (1) 17:2 interview (2) 30:4 56:1 interviewed (1)	40:14 into (23) 7:22 8:21 10:12 11:12 15:1,17 17:2,10 30:8, 14 50:18 60:22,23 70:22 71:10 79:4 82:2,12, 15 84:19 85:22 88:5,10 invested (1) 81:16 investment (1) 64:13 invokes (1) 35:12 involved (9) 13:3 16:4 47:14,18 83:8,11 84:9 87:4,10 involvement (1) 48:12 involving (1) 11:4 irrevocable (2) 75:16 76:1 I's (1) 46:13 issued (2) 2:14 4:13 issues (6) 11:4, 14 12:2 15:22 64:3 71:15 item (1) 53:4
	I			J
	idea (2) 43:17 65:12 ideal (2) 10:19 30:20 identified (2) 21:8 22:20 identify (4) 4:19 79:24 81:6 84:16 identifying (1) 20:23 idly (1) 52:5 IEP (2) 30:14 31:4 II (1) 27:6 Imagine (1) 44:4 immediate (1) 22:15 immediately (2) 52:2 70:14 immense (1) 73:3 impersonal (1) 88:16 importance (1) 7:7			Jacalyn (1) 66:11 Jan (1) 48:3 January (2) 3:6, 11 Jemuel (1) 68:13 Jess (1) 48:19 job (3) 7:16 43:7 79:5 jobs (2) 67:11 79:9 Joey (2) 27:21, 24 John (8) 2:3 46:23 47:5,13

49:3,5 72:18 73:2 Johnson (4) 9:7 23:12 47:3 90:17 join (2) 21:11 66:12 joined (1) 53:5 joining (2) 65:11 77:24 joint (2) 2:16 4:13 Journal (1) 3:5 journey (2) 23:1 39:13 Jr (1) 2:4 judging (1) 7:21 jump (2) 7:16 86:9 jumped (1) 48:21 junior (10) 6:9, 11 14:9 47:22 55:9 60:11 66:6 74:9,9 78:7	11,20 29:2,13, 13,17 31:1,10, 18 39:5 41:18 46:18 49:20 59:24 61:15, 22,24 75:6 76:7,8 77:8, 10,11,17 81:16 82:15, 15 83:16 84:1, 9,11 86:8 87:22 88:1,3, 6,8,17 89:5 Kind (10) 15:14 30:12,21,23 41:4 43:17 73:12 74:7 84:18 85:23 kinds (2) 75:15 77:16 knew (3) 37:5 51:17 70:15 knocked (2) 32:15,17 knocks (1) 32:9 knowing (1) 36:23 knowledge (2) 22:2 55:24 known (1) 66:1 knows (1) 75:12 Kylee (2) 89:11 93:6 K-y-l-e-e (1) 89:12	81:7 later (1) 73:4 latest (1) 48:19 law (1) 2:12 lawyer (3) 75:9, 10,11 lead (1) 74:3 leader (7) 51:24 61:11 72:14, 24 73:18 74:8 76:11 leaders (8) 20:22, 23 36:12 71:6 77:17 79:11, 18 80:15 leadership (12) 56:3 59:15 63:11,14,18 64:4,6,13 73:11 76:13, 14 87:8 League (3) 27:10,14 28:7 lean (1) 38:8 learn (5) 25:16 30:1 54:8 55:2 62:19 learning (12) 8:23 15:3 30:2,22 41:18 54:12 64:1 67:3 68:20 69:17 71:8 78:12 least (5) 21:15 31:4 39:9 52:13 86:15 leave (3) 61:16, 17,18 Leaving (1) 10:11 left (1) 24:7 legal (1) 40:24 lend (1) 33:11 less (4) 10:14 37:8 42:10 44:8 lessons (2) 62:24 69:18	letter (2) 6:6 8:21 level (9) 21:22 31:20 35:7 51:18 56:6,18 58:4 64:7 77:18 levels (1) 66:5 Lewis (1) 16:3 liabilities (1) 54:20 Library (1) 83:10 lie (1) 85:22 life (10) 16:1 22:6 23:16 24:21 30:2 35:8 41:12 55:1,3 86:3 liked (1) 7:12 limit (1) 9:9 limited (1) 44:5 Linda (1) 29:7 line (4) 40:10 43:14 56:22 87:17 link (2) 77:23 83:13 Lisa (2) 26:3,5 list (5) 9:15 27:16 47:20 49:11 50:8 listen (2) 64:20 90:7 listened (4) 12:6 67:16 82:3,18 little (4) 23:13 25:11 41:11 65:22 live (6) 14:10 20:19 32:8 48:8 62:3 86:10 lives (8) 24:18, 18,20 32:8 33:15 36:17 40:9 54:15 living (2) 8:17 33:15 long (1) 89:3	look (14) 23:4 37:8,10 39:3 41:6 44:15 54:16 55:13 75:15 82:22 83:3 88:16,17, 18 looked (4) 36:11 40:13 41:13,16 looking (3) 49:8 55:6 78:24 looks (1) 32:7 lose (2) 20:11 88:7 lost (5) 6:16 11:22 14:23 84:20 85:23 lot (23) 8:24 18:13,19 19:3, 11,14,19 26:8 28:10 37:23 38:23,24 39:10,11 40:24 41:1 47:17 54:3 80:10 85:4 88:20,21 89:21 loud (1) 85:10 Louisiana (2) 10:5,5 love (6) 18:12 29:19 40:5 41:17 43:5 81:2 loved (1) 41:8 lunch (1) 31:15 lying (1) 12:12
K				
Kaiserslautern (1) 48:5 Karen (1) 31:24 keep (8) 12:1 45:9 52:9 55:15 58:17, 23 59:15 64:9 kept (2) 42:15 69:23 Keys (4) 31:24 32:1,1 33:2 K-e-y-s (1) 32:1 kid (8) 6:14 11:15 15:10, 11 25:11 29:19 31:4 82:12 kids (47) 7:2 8:5 13:7,7 16:24 17:21,24 28:9,	L			
	Lack (1) 65:20 Ladies (1) 20:16 lady (1) 26:1 land (1) 67:8 large (1) 53:7 last (14) 9:20 13:14 14:9 17:12 18:17 20:3 21:21 50:8,21 56:12, 15,16 65:11			
				M
				Mackenzie (1) 85:8 mad (2) 86:4,4 main (1) 82:5 mainly (1) 37:2 maintain (2) 58:13,15 majority (2)

20:14 21:4 makes (1) 77:7 making (5) 22:6 75:8 76:9 77:5 84:6 malaise (1) 60:14 Mall (1) 17:4 man (1) 81:24 manage (1) 54:18 managed (1) 31:20 management (1) 66:24 managers (1) 30:3 managing (1) 88:24 manner (1) 5:5 many (32) 7:1, 13,23 11:4,15 13:14 22:1 24:23 32:12 37:22,24 40:9, 15 42:12 46:8 50:20 53:11 54:10,15,16, 21 56:1,21 57:20 66:3 67:22 69:7,11 70:10 71:13 77:13 79:2 Marco (2) 36:21 47:21 M-a-r-c-o (1) 36:22 Mario (1) 36:19 Maritime (1) 78:11 mark (2) 71:22 72:2 marked (1) 71:23 marketing (2) 57:18 60:9 markets (1) 54:14 Mary (1) 45:12 Maryland (1) 14:11 massive (1) 72:14 master's (1) 61:5	mater (1) 11:1 math (5) 16:1,10 27:10,14 28:6 mathletes (2) 28:14 51:15 MATT (2) 14:5 18:6 M-a-t-t (1) 14:6 matter (10) 2:12, 15 29:17 32:7, 9 33:22 34:20 44:12 48:23 71:21 may (11) 6:8 20:7,9,11 28:13,14 44:20 53:14 70:19 73:10 80:2 maybe (3) 16:3, 4 74:6 McIntosh (6) 65:10 66:3 68:6 74:2,5 76:9 mean (1) 83:8 meaningful (1) 62:23 means (6) 6:7 31:6,6 57:21 58:12 67:7 meant (1) 11:7 measure (1) 65:23 measured (1) 50:2 media (5) 13:6, 14 33:13 38:24 57:19 meet (3) 7:6 49:14 85:10 meeting (16) 3:10,23 4:10, 15 5:15 39:17 58:5 73:2 76:10 81:13 83:24 84:6 90:23 91:11, 18,22	meetings (1) 72:17 Mele (3) 35:1,2,2 M-e-l-e (1) 35:2 member (2) 88:21,23 members (16) 4:24 28:10 34:11 50:12 55:10 59:2,3 61:4,23 65:18 66:20 71:14 72:20 74:15, 16 87:13 mental (2) 7:2 81:10 mentally (1) 22:3 mention (1) 68:19 mentioned (4) 49:19 73:23 78:7 79:1 mentor (1) 43:8 mentoring (1) 47:17 mercy (2) 12:21 14:7 merely (1) 81:15 merits (1) 18:13 Merriam (1) 49:23 mess (2) 17:19 80:13 messes (1) 62:1 met (3) 48:10 72:18 73:5 Michael's (1) 63:7 Michele (3) 39:24 40:1,2 Michelle (1) 48:24 microstructure (1) 20:19 middle (6) 26:7 32:4 38:18 44:7 59:9 63:7 Middletown (1) 85:21 mid-November (1) 61:15 might (3) 27:17	31:5 47:20 mighty (1) 43:4 migraines (1) 31:17 military (2) 10:4 59:3 Millie (2) 81:8 93:3 M-i-l-l-i-e (1) 81:8 mind (5) 35:10 49:6 64:20 73:17 82:20 minds (3) 28:21 30:14 70:22 Mine (3) 47:1,11 66:11 minute (1) 11:11 minutes (6) 9:10, 11 35:24 36:1, 6 50:16 mired (1) 44:23 mispronounce (1) 5:21 misrepresenting (1) 72:15 MISS (4) 18:9 23:10,14 89:11 missed (2) 12:2 13:10 missing (1) 22:24 mission (2) 74:10,11 missteps (1) 65:22 mistake (1) 68:7 mistakes (8) 21:7 22:17 34:6,12, 13,16 51:4 67:14 mistreated (1) 7:4 mix (1) 43:2 mom (1) 84:21 moment (2) 5:12 76:22 money (5) 17:2, 6 42:11 88:20, 21 moniker (1) 58:14	monthly (1) 58:21 months (6) 33:11 45:21 73:19 74:18,18 75:2 monumental (1) 41:21 more (24) 13:15 20:10 21:1 24:3,7 25:24 28:22 34:5 40:6,17 43:13, 16 49:20 51:6 52:7 53:15 55:6 56:22 68:3 81:15 82:24 84:8 85:4 89:14 moreover (1) 17:16 morning (1) 24:16 mortar (1) 13:16 most (7) 21:21 39:2 42:10,17 53:23 80:16 85:9 mostly (1) 38:17 MOT (2) 85:20 86:3 mother (1) 37:9 motivates (1) 89:6 move (4) 21:1 26:7 50:9 57:4 moved (2) 10:4 47:18 moving (2) 35:17, 17 Mrs (1) 54:3 much (24) 9:8 11:1 13:1 18:3 22:8 31:6 35:16,24 37:2 38:13,13, 14,22 39:7,15, 21 40:10 45:3 51:6 67:12 72:21 83:1 84:8 89:7 muddled (1)
--	---	---	---	--

73:19 must (1) 69:14 myself (9) 6:13 15:14 22:13 25:10 33:7 40:14 54:2 69:13 85:24	28:19 29:12 30:15 31:16 33:20 36:15 41:19 46:6,22 60:17 75:3,4 neighbor (1) 66:11 nervous (1) 68:24 neutral (1) 88:13 new (20) 7:17 28:1 48:20 53:1 55:8,10 61:22 64:6 71:5 72:20 74:15,16 75:4, 7 76:24 77:21 78:16,19,22 81:12 Newark (5) 26:11 59:4 61:12 63:6 66:14 new-found (1) 48:16 News (2) 3:5,6 newspaper (1) 32:18 Newton (4) 39:24 40:1,1, 2 Next (12) 9:15 10:23 18:7 26:18 29:10 31:23 39:23 53:12 58:5 73:18 83:23 90:1 nice (1) 28:9 nicely (1) 69:9 night (2) 52:21 69:21 nights (1) 53:13 Nine (1) 56:16 ninth (1) 14:11 nobody (3) 74:5 86:21 91:10 nominated (1) 70:3	none (4) 22:4 41:17 76:7,8 nonprofit (2) 60:8 78:18 normal (3) 7:5,8 73:14 normalcy (1) 8:8 northern (1) 17:18 note (1) 4:21 notice (3) 3:3,7 9:7 noticed (1) 69:10 notified (1) 3:15 nouns (1) 18:20 November (5) 59:16,20 65:12 73:24 74:17 number (9) 51:16 58:12 61:4,8 64:2 81:23,24 82:21 84:1 numbers (3) 36:10 39:16 46:1 numerous (3) 26:20 32:13 33:10 nurturing (1) 47:24	91:15 offer (7) 21:18, 20,23 24:4 26:20 45:3,6 offered (2) 45:2 51:23 offers (2) 83:12, 13 Office (1) 2:5 officer (1) 26:23 officers (3) 51:13 56:6,6 official (6) 3:9,11, 22,24 4:9,10 old (2) 14:15 36:13 older (1) 26:7 oldest (1) 10:13 Oliver (1) 35:15 Olympiad (3) 27:11,15 51:14 olympians (1) 28:13 once (2) 33:1 35:15 one (42) 7:9,19 10:21 21:14 22:11 23:2 28:24 29:13 33:1,21 34:4 38:17 40:2,4, 4 41:4 50:21 56:17 58:3 59:13,15 60:5, 6 62:18 63:7 65:17 69:13 74:12 75:13, 15 76:6,15 81:14,23 82:12,24 84:1 86:12,19 91:8, 19,21 ones (1) 42:20 only (24) 7:18 8:22 16:14 20:24 24:16 25:5 26:19	28:24 29:14 38:2,8,10,12, 12 39:17,17 44:24 47:11 60:8 62:17 66:16 74:18 75:2 80:9 onto (2) 72:11 74:3 open (13) 2:3 24:13 29:21 45:10 46:21 47:8 52:9 58:5 64:20,22 71:14 81:14 82:21 opened (1) 65:6 opening (1) 84:2 openings (1) 84:3 operation (1) 50:22 operations (1) 63:19 opinion (5) 21:3, 4 38:17 68:4 90:5 opinions (1) 37:24 opportunities (10) 12:17 21:19 45:4 61:9 67:3,9 77:13 78:4,23 79:2 opportunity (17) 2:23 13:10 22:8 23:3 27:18 29:2 45:4 50:15 51:24 61:7,9, 20 64:22 68:8 75:21 76:2 78:12 option (3) 11:11 26:9 68:11 ordeal (1) 70:11 order (2) 7:6 31:15 organization (3)
N				
naive (1) 49:8 name (22) 2:3 5:19,21,23 6:2,8 9:20 14:5 20:3 23:10 36:21 40:2 47:5 53:19 57:19 58:6,11 80:5 81:7,8 84:17 87:2 names (1) 32:22 narrowed (1) 26:9 Nate (1) 48:7 Nathan (1) 56:8 National (4) 47:16 51:13 56:17,18 Nations (1) 69:14 native (1) 18:18 natural (1) 71:11 nature (2) 40:6 87:9 necessary (4) 4:18 57:24 58:23 64:8 need (17) 8:13 17:19 19:20 24:11 29:13, 22 36:2,15,16 46:13 52:6 53:4 54:8 58:2 67:9 82:9,13 needed (5) 41:11 42:2,5 52:9 67:12 needs (13) 11:21				
			O	
			object (1) 2:15 obligations (1) 68:2 observations (2) 63:3,21 observing (1) 62:20 obvious (1) 72:24 occasions (1) 12:19 occurred (2) 10:17 13:20 odd (1) 81:11 off (2) 44:16	

<p>78:9,15,17 organizations (2) 78:2,5 Osicky (4) 26:4, 4,5,5 O-s-i-c-k-y (1) 26:6 others (9) 22:18 34:13 40:15 41:10 55:14 67:11 87:1 89:9 90:20 ourselves (1) 42:13 out (18) 8:14 14:13 15:19 17:3 18:1 27:17 32:21 33:12 34:16 39:6 42:23 57:12 59:8 60:14,20 77:17 83:16 86:15 outcome (1) 24:19 outlining (1) 78:2 Outside (2) 27:9 71:4 over (10) 31:11 32:15,16,16 33:11 39:12 66:22 72:21 73:18 85:6 overcrowd (1) 46:17 overcrowded (1) 44:19 overshadowed (1) 51:5 own (10) 10:10 11:20 29:22 36:12 38:8 39:18 44:22 55:11 66:23 81:12</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">P</p> <p>paddling (1) 10:8 page (2) 25:2 37:6 pages (1) 47:1 paid (2) 58:21 59:7 pains (1) 51:2 pales (1) 52:18 paper (1) 82:5 parent (7) 10:7 26:6 30:13 33:21,23 44:11 46:2 parents (18) 5:17 28:18,23 32:17 33:6,21 34:11 52:8,19 57:10 61:17 62:3 67:16,22 69:6 75:6 87:23 88:15 parliamentarian (1) 56:9 part (15) 17:18, 18 38:12 39:12,13 51:3 55:12 57:13 63:12,15 64:16 72:3 77:1,6 91:3 participated (1) 27:10 participating (2) 90:21,22 parties (1) 75:19 partner (1) 27:12 partnerships (2) 78:1,6 pass (4) 8:1 16:21 24:6,11 passing (1) 23:22 passion (2) 51:17 54:7 passionate (1) 51:9</p>	<p>past (13) 8:12 12:17 13:20 15:23 20:7 32:3,11 33:11 49:10 63:4,12 68:1 86:11 path (2) 26:2 29:14 patient (1) 18:15 pattern (1) 29:3 pause (1) 5:12 pay (3) 58:22 67:11,13 PCH (1) 40:13 peers (1) 25:6 peg (1) 82:14 penalize (2) 21:5 62:7 penalizing (1) 20:24 Pencader (129) 2:8 3:13 6:7, 9,10 7:20 8:9 9:22 11:10,23 12:5,16,24 13:3,8,13 14:8,9 15:18, 18 17:12 18:10,12,14 19:18,22 20:4 21:12 23:1,4, 15,18,18,24 24:2,13 25:17, 22 26:16,19 27:20 28:3,9, 16,23 29:12 30:16 32:2,12, 15 33:4,5,7, 12,16,17 34:4, 9,22 35:6 36:3,11,14,15, 15,16,23 37:15,17,21, 24,24 38:2,18 39:1,3,9 40:12,16 41:3, 17 42:9 43:23, 24 44:2,3</p>	<p>45:6,9,17 46:5,20 47:6 48:11 49:1 50:1,4,17,19 53:20 55:5 56:5 57:10,21 58:7,12,16 60:16 61:7,18 62:16 64:18 68:8,23 69:11, 20,23 71:7 73:16 78:4 79:13,17 84:24 85:3 87:11,20,21 88:10 89:13 90:2 Pencader's (5) 8:22 47:24 56:12 59:17 74:11 Penn (3) 14:14 31:12 35:22 Pennsylvania (1) 16:13 People (51) 6:19 7:5,21 8:24 12:6 17:5 19:19 20:17, 18 21:5 27:1 34:6,7,7,15, 17 37:7,13,20, 23 38:2,3,3 42:2 52:13 53:3 54:16 57:21 58:13 59:22 60:23 62:2,5,8 66:4 68:6 72:16 73:7,14 76:7 78:21 80:16, 22 85:1,9,17 86:1,3,5,14 90:7 people's (2) 85:5 90:4 per (1) 9:10 perfect (1) 64:11</p>	<p>perfection (1) 43:1 perfectly (1) 74:23 performing (2) 23:23 45:19 period (2) 21:24 31:16 permanently (1) 40:21 permit (1) 5:12 person (4) 22:9 60:8 66:4 73:5 personal (1) 66:2 personality (1) 19:15 personally (3) 3:14 55:12 86:9 perspective (2) 39:4 50:24 PhD (2) 60:9 66:12 phone (1) 11:3 phones (1) 6:24 physically (2) 22:3 40:22 pick (1) 84:2 placards (1) 9:8 place (14) 3:4,9, 15,21 4:7 8:24 13:15 17:8 27:12 34:21 56:18 62:19 64:17 78:21 placed (3) 2:9 12:18 50:18 plan (4) 48:11 63:15 67:4 88:12 planner (1) 60:10 planning (1) 63:20 plans (1) 26:18 plate (1) 38:6 play (2) 15:13 32:8 players (2) 28:13 32:6</p>
--	---	--	---	--

playful (1) 21:12	89:11,11 93:6	12:18	39:17	push (1) 25:18
please (18) 5:11	P-r-e-n-t-i-c-e (1)	problem (11)	promise (1) 71:16	pushed (1) 89:23
9:6 19:21	89:12	11:22 12:18	proper (2) 18:20,	put (7) 13:8
34:4,22 42:21	preparation (1)	17:1 18:18	20	15:7,11,16
45:8 46:5,9,9,	64:23	45:24 46:5,10	properly (1) 54:18	30:8,11 31:17
20 61:20 71:9	prepare (1) 55:3	75:21 76:12	propose (1) 91:2	putting (3) 17:2,
79:24 81:5	prepared (5) 58:3,	82:17 86:13	prospective (1)	9 82:14
84:15 89:3,10	16,20,24 69:17	problems (10)	52:24	
pleasure (1)	preparing (2)	11:17 13:13	prosperous (1)	Q
68:21	55:21 62:24	14:19 46:8	23:2	qualifications (1)
plus (1) 87:5	present (5) 4:16	48:14 52:14	proud (6) 33:7,8	66:12
pm (5) 3:17,17,	13:21 62:5	72:14 75:3,5	57:10 72:10	qualified (2)
18 4:2 91:23	87:18,18	82:10	77:1,4	50:23 56:16
pocket (1) 76:3	presentations (1)	procedural (1)	proudly (1) 89:24	qualitative (1)
point (6) 21:17	67:6	65:22	prove (1) 76:15	58:1
22:4 29:1	president (6)	procedures (1)	proved (1) 27:6	quality (6) 21:16
39:7 79:7	56:7 59:17,	64:5	provide (3) 19:12	27:13 45:8
90:24	18 60:11 63:8	proceed (1) 5:4	27:7 67:11	50:3 63:24
Police (3) 17:10,	76:21	process (1) 79:16	provided (4) 4:23	67:20
14 26:23	press (2) 4:13,14	producers (1)	67:21 72:6	Quasi (1) 89:1
policies (1) 64:5	pressures (1)	67:10	91:4	quick (1) 47:2
politics (1) 82:2	65:13	production (1)	provides (2) 2:22	Quimby (3) 38:6
poor (3) 11:6	Prestige (1) 59:4	56:2	50:3	50:11,12
44:14,23	pretty (8) 19:6	productive (1)	providing (1) 79:2	quit (1) 32:7
population (1)	38:13,21 39:7,	8:23	PTA (1) 43:11	quite (6) 17:5,24
82:22	15,21 80:11	products (1)	public (24) 2:2,6,	47:23 53:10
Port (3) 78:10,	87:3	67:12	16 3:2,4,10,	65:20 81:24
10,13	previous (8) 12:5	professional (2)	14,16,23 4:9	
position (2)	49:11 51:22	51:22 63:23	5:2 11:16	R
17:13 74:13	65:15,17,24	professionalism (1)	12:7 13:9,17	race (1) 38:19
positive (1) 64:14	67:1,15	66:21	17:17 30:17	raise (1) 36:14
positively (1)	previously (1)	Professionals (3)	44:5 46:7,17	ran (4) 6:18
63:21	28:3	53:22 55:19	47:3 56:4	60:11 61:12,12
possibilities (1)	price (1) 52:15	56:8	75:19 88:24	range (2) 27:2,3
66:22	pride (3) 32:23	professor (2)	publicity (1) 51:19	rare (1) 35:4
possible (1) 79:3	34:22 70:8	57:16 61:1	publicly (1) 30:12	rate (1) 44:9
possibly (2) 40:8	principal (4) 38:7	profit (1) 42:24	published (1) 3:5	rather (3) 8:17
44:13	62:14 63:4	program (7) 12:8	pull (1) 11:7	13:1 15:2
posted (3) 3:7,	66:15	26:11,12,14	pulled (2) 10:15	reach (1) 25:9
19 4:6	Principals (1) 22:6	47:17 61:5,5	41:5	reached (1) 10:23
potential (4) 13:2	prior (2) 72:24	programming (1)	pulling (2) 16:8,9	read (5) 14:3
53:11 68:2	75:6	61:3	punished (1)	47:2 53:8
77:13	priority (1) 46:11	programs (3)	22:17	80:10,11
practice (2) 10:6	private (2) 44:1	21:18 57:1	punishing (1)	readily (1) 65:13
30:4	50:20	67:18	42:21	readiness (1) 63:2
prefer (1) 40:6	probably (1)	progress (1)	punishment (1)	reading (3) 6:1
premier (1) 68:9	38:17	71:16	10:7	
PRENTICE (3)	probation (1)	progressed (1)	pursuits (1) 54:11	

80:10 82:5 Ready (1) 89:2 real (3) 14:20 28:15,18 reality (1) 20:10 realize (1) 24:18 realized (2) 44:4 69:18 really (17) 29:20 37:4 38:2,4, 11,14,14 47:2 54:17 77:4,6 79:10 82:2 83:5 86:2,4 87:20 reason (3) 24:1 34:8 82:11 reasonably (1) 80:17 reasons (3) 40:17 42:16 73:1 reassured (1) 12:7 reassuring (1) 25:9 Rebecca (3) 76:17,19 93:1 receive (3) 3:2 15:4 51:18 received (3) 5:2 15:20 42:9 recent (1) 66:14 recently (3) 5:14 53:24 56:20 recession (1) 54:17 recognize (1) 80:16 recommendation (1) 91:1 recommended (1) 3:1 reconstituted (2) 74:17,20 record (10) 3:3 4:17,22 50:18 57:10 71:24 72:4 91:3,15,	17 recruiting (1) 60:21 recruitment (2) 58:3 59:6 rectify (1) 75:3 red (1) 44:23 referendum (2) 16:21,22 referred (1) 2:12 reflected (1) 53:10 regarding (2) 8:21 65:11 regular (4) 31:7, 8,10,21 regularly (1) 54:19 regulation (1) 64:5 rejected (1) 20:15 relate (1) 62:15 relationship (1) 66:2 relative (1) 62:15 release (2) 4:13, 14 relevant (2) 55:16 62:24 remain (4) 63:15 64:22 71:14 88:13 remainder (1) 63:16 remaining (1) 66:19 remarks (2) 65:5 76:23 remedial (1) 2:20 remember (6) 37:2 38:1 49:10 73:1 75:11 79:24 remembered (1) 46:14 removed (2) 40:21 73:5 reopen (1) 91:14 repeated (1)	23:21 report (3) 2:14, 23 5:7 reporter (4) 4:16, 20 72:2 93:8 reporters (1) 38:23 represent (2) 57:13 70:4 representative (2) 53:24 70:5 representatives (5) 5:6,16 9:12 50:10 79:21 request (2) 3:18 57:3 require (1) 26:23 required (1) 2:12 rescheduled (1) 68:18 research (2) 26:8 58:1 researched (1) 40:14 Reserve (2) 42:4, 5 resignation (1) 72:23 resource (1) 31:14 resources (1) 20:21 respect (2) 22:4 42:8 respected (2) 21:6 41:19 respectfully (1) 57:3 respond (1) 2:23 response (1) 53:8 responsible (1) 18:14 rest (1) 7:14 restrictive (1) 31:4 result (2) 40:8 42:7 results (1) 75:19 resume (2) 30:4	53:4 retain (1) 72:3 retired (3) 10:4 62:12 81:11 return (1) 56:13 review (2) 2:10, 14 revocation (1) 75:24 revoked (1) 3:2 ridicule (1) 17:23 Ridley (1) 16:14 right (20) 5:18 16:19,20 20:1 23:8 30:18 33:9 34:8,17 35:18 38:19 42:19 43:2 45:8 61:13 75:17 76:4,5 79:13 90:10 rigor (1) 27:8 rise (1) 48:16 Rivera (3) 36:20, 21,22 R-i-v-e-r-a (1) 36:22 room (8) 5:10 7:22 8:17,18 31:15 33:9 34:7 46:18 rooms (1) 4:3 rose (1) 49:9 Rotarian (1) 65:19 rotating (2) 82:8 83:15 rough (1) 25:8 round (1) 82:14 Rouwhorst (1) 56:9 row (1) 56:14 rule (1) 65:24 run (2) 28:4 34:15 running (5) 20:8 34:7 38:8 66:23 67:6	S sad (2) 13:12 20:10 safe (10) 8:24 12:1 13:18 17:22 26:22 29:14 34:21 40:19 45:7 49:21 safety (1) 44:20 sake (1) 64:10 same (7) 15:17 23:21 24:4 25:2 31:15 45:3 71:5 Santoleri (20) 5:21,22,22, 23,24 6:5,9 9:1,3,16,17, 17,19,20 13:24 14:1,5, 6,7 18:6 S-a-n-t-o-l-e-r-i (3) 5:24 9:21 14:6 sat (2) 82:19 85:18 satisfied (1) 2:21 save (2) 19:21 40:3 saw (4) 13:14 26:19 48:15 56:20 saying (5) 20:1 34:16 36:13 70:21 90:1 scene (1) 72:11 schedule (1) 83:15 scheduled (3) 4:1 5:3 91:9 schedules (1) 82:8 scholarships (1) 24:24 School (252) 2:4,
--	---	--	---	--

9,13,22,24 3:8,14,18,20 4:7 5:6,15,16 6:10,11 7:17, 19 9:12,23 10:1,1,3,9,12, 19,24 11:2,16 12:7,14,24 13:1,5,9 14:15,17,20 15:7,19 16:2, 2,11,13,14 17:13,15,20, 21 18:2 19:4, 6,9,11,16,18, 20,21,22 20:5, 5,8 21:18,19 22:1 23:15 24:5,22 25:2, 16,19,21 26:7, 8,11,13,17,20 27:4,17,22 28:3 29:3,14 30:16,17 31:9, 13 32:5,14,22, 24 33:3,13 34:8,15 35:5, 8,9,12,24 36:5,24 37:8, 13 38:4 40:3, 12,19,20 41:7, 20 42:10,18, 24 43:10 44:1, 1,2,13,16,20, 22 45:1,2,9, 17,19,24 46:17 47:7,10, 23 48:17 49:7, 13,16,20,24 50:9,13,17 51:8,21,24 52:4,9,15,17 53:20,23 54:5 55:19 58:4,7 59:2,4,11 60:14,19,23 61:3,6,10,12, 13,24 62:16,	17,18,21 63:4, 5,6,7,9,11,13, 16,16,17,19, 20 64:3,3,6,9, 11,12,17,21, 21 65:6,11,13 66:14,17 67:5, 15 68:1,5,9, 10,16 69:2,4 70:1,12,19,24 71:6,7,14 72:13,14,24 73:12,18,19 74:4,24 75:3 76:10,16 77:9, 18 79:10,21 80:7,9,12,17, 18 81:2,11,16 82:6,6,10,16, 23 83:6,11,14 85:10,20 87:7 88:11,24 89:1, 17 90:2,9 schooled (2) 8:16 13:11 schooling (1) 11:8 schools (28) 10:5 13:17 17:10, 11 23:17 24:4, 11 25:4 29:4 44:3,8,8,9,22, 23 45:5 46:4, 7 52:14 59:6, 9,9 79:5 81:19 84:4 87:5,8,15 school's (8) 3:1 50:2,22 53:10 59:11 67:17 82:11,18 Science (5) 27:11,15 28:13 30:23 51:14 scrambling (1) 20:12 search (1) 9:22 second (16) 4:2,	13 5:2 23:20, 21 27:12 34:1 35:6 41:5,17 47:7 53:19 75:23 76:1 89:15,21 seconds (1) 43:13 secret (1) 69:23 Secretary (4) 4:23 80:8 90:24 91:4 secured (2) 58:8 61:1 security (1) 42:1 sedentary (1) 28:4 seeds (1) 22:20 seem (1) 11:22 seemed (3) 6:15, 15 65:23 seems (1) 46:11 select (1) 51:5 selected (2) 44:2 74:23 selection (1) 44:14 self-inflicted (1) 51:2 self-motivated (1) 11:19 semester (3) 18:17 23:20, 21 semi-retired (1) 89:2 send (6) 10:24 29:2 39:5 46:2,16 49:20 senior (3) 13:11 14:7 48:4 sense (4) 8:8 9:8 28:15,18 sent (2) 40:15 51:10 September (2) 73:17 87:12 serve (4) 41:9 51:24 64:22 80:6	services (1) 67:12 serving (1) 62:13 set (3) 2:19 25:9 76:5 settled (1) 69:8 seven (1) 47:1 several (2) 12:19 44:3 shadowing (1) 79:5 shameful (1) 44:10 shapes (1) 51:11 share (3) 14:19 28:18 40:11 shared (1) 65:19 Shawn (2) 84:17 93:4 S-h-a-w-n (1) 84:18 shed (1) 50:23 sheet (1) 5:20 sheets (1) 5:9 Sheraton (1) 55:22 shock (2) 10:13 15:14 shocked (1) 11:1 shopping (1) 17:6 short (6) 18:11 21:24 35:3 53:2,6 66:8 short-changed (1) 81:17 shortly (1) 16:7 shot (1) 81:3 show (4) 34:22 38:20 42:24 50:4 shut (2) 19:21 85:13 siblings (1) 49:3 sick (1) 70:15 sides (1) 73:15 sight (1) 88:7 sign (1) 5:13 signed (4) 5:11, 13 10:8 42:3	significant (1) 73:22 sign-up (1) 5:9 similar (2) 12:16, 20 simply (1) 60:20 Sincerely (1) 9:1 single (1) 34:20 sister (1) 84:21 sister-in-law (1) 15:20 sister's (1) 27:19 sitting (2) 62:2 85:15 situation (6) 12:20 30:8,9, 10,21 32:7 situations (1) 12:16 six (4) 49:19 50:4 51:3 74:16 sixth (2) 44:7 47:9 size (2) 14:14 16:23 sizes (2) 14:23 51:11 skills (8) 30:7 53:1 54:14 55:2 56:2,4,4 81:1 sleeping (1) 19:8 slew (1) 14:23 small (3) 28:3 33:17 57:13 smart (1) 19:16 smell (1) 6:20 smelling (1) 10:16 smile (1) 39:7 Smith (3) 18:17, 23 19:4 smoke (2) 6:20 10:16 social (5) 24:17, 18 30:7 33:13 57:19 Society (2) 47:16
---	---	---	--	---

78:11 solicit (1) 67:4 solution (1) 48:14 solved (1) 41:2 somebody (2) 30:10 91:12 somehow (1) 31:19 someone (4) 25:7 43:14 52:9 70:6 someplace (1) 27:21 Sometimes (5) 37:13,16,19 85:11 88:7 son (10) 14:16 27:20 28:4 29:11 30:6 31:2,7 47:8, 13 49:2 sons (2) 40:4 80:14 soon (1) 7:21 sophomore (4) 9:24 10:14 14:21 47:19 sorry (3) 3:19 84:7 90:15 sort (2) 29:9 87:12 soul (1) 36:23 sound (1) 73:10 space (1) 78:20 Spain (1) 48:7 speak (23) 4:20 5:9,10,13 9:14,14 23:12 30:12 39:2 59:19 65:14 79:22,23 80:1 81:5 84:15 87:1 88:12 89:9 90:6,14 91:10,13 speaker (11) 4:18 9:5,10 18:18 23:7	93:1,2,3,4,5,6 speakers (1) 50:10 speaking (1) 56:4 speaks (1) 66:7 special (7) 29:11 30:21 31:8,9 32:4 33:20 69:19 spelled (1) 6:2 spending (2) 17:6 58:21 spent (1) 10:14 spirit (1) 35:12 spoke (6) 66:15 77:3,4 82:1 90:15,16 spoken (2) 28:23 90:18 sports (2) 15:9 32:2 square (1) 82:14 St (1) 63:6 staff (17) 6:24 12:1 24:15 25:23 28:17 32:16 34:10 35:14 45:7 52:16 56:23, 24 64:8,16 69:6 70:5 84:10 stage (2) 8:19 90:1 stand (11) 7:1 19:17,19,20 25:13 32:10 35:16 60:16, 16 70:7 90:9 standard (1) 7:5 standards (1) 49:14 standing (4) 8:4 44:11 62:8 77:19 stands (1) 25:16 Stanton (1) 4:5 star (1) 7:11	start (7) 4:15 7:17 43:2 49:1 58:21 60:22 78:17 started (3) 47:8 48:20 80:11 starting (2) 78:22, 22 State (33) 2:11, 18 3:6,10,23 4:9,12,24 14:22 16:17 17:1,10,13,18 22:24 27:11, 13 28:6 50:14 51:13 56:6,7, 13 60:6,9 64:5 75:14 78:8,23 83:2 88:4 91:2,5 States (1) 42:4 State's (3) 3:11, 23 4:10 stationed (2) 17:11,14 status (1) 19:5 stay (9) 8:14 24:9,13,17 25:1 36:8 46:21 58:5 81:14 stealing (1) 43:6 step (2) 32:21 83:20 stepped (3) 27:7 38:6 68:1 steps (1) 58:1 stereotypes (1) 28:12 Steve (1) 50:11 still (5) 10:6 16:9 19:3 60:3 80:15 Stock (1) 46:24 stomach (1) 70:15 stood (1) 52:5 Stop (2) 13:5 53:14	stops (1) 44:7 stories (7) 12:6 27:20 49:5 51:18 53:15 56:21 57:20 STOTT (3) 47:1, 5,5 S-t-o-t-t (1) 47:6 straight (2) 6:14 31:22 street (2) 15:7 32:4 stressful (1) 21:10 strides (1) 70:17 strive (2) 70:24 71:3 strong (6) 8:21 25:16 33:18 55:5,20 57:1 strongly (1) 54:7 structure (1) 21:14 struggle (4) 6:13 13:17 25:13 90:3 struggled (4) 16:1 35:8 47:23 48:7 stuck (3) 31:13 70:20 86:21 student (20) 6:15 15:1 18:10 19:5 26:24 33:4,19,20,23 38:12 47:24 56:19 58:2 59:5 64:1 67:4 69:12 79:11 85:21 89:20 Students (76) 6:23 7:8 8:2 11:2 19:12,14, 16 20:6,11 21:6,16 22:16, 21 24:19 28:16 30:21 32:6,12,15,20	33:5 34:9,19, 20 36:5,7 37:16 43:11 44:17 47:12 49:6 51:13,15, 16 52:8,19,24 54:7,11,19 55:17,21,23 56:5,10,16,23 57:2,11 59:23 62:19,21,23, 23 64:10,15, 17,22 67:21 69:2,4,6,16 70:9,10,16,23 71:2,13 76:13 77:3 78:4 79:2 88:14 89:15 90:8 studio (1) 29:21 study (1) 19:13 studying (1) 41:24 stuff (1) 85:23 stunning (1) 65:20 style (1) 30:22 subject (1) 51:17 submission (2) 71:23 72:3 submit (1) 47:3 substandard (1) 45:5 succeed (1) 8:2 succeeded (1) 80:15 success (13) 24:1,19 25:13 26:2 29:15 30:5 40:18 50:2,4 57:4 63:1 76:2 89:23 successes (2) 36:12 64:23 successful (8) 22:5 24:3 25:24 35:18 52:11 53:3
---	--	--	---	---

66:5 80:17 successfully (1) 66:23 suffer (4) 13:22 34:13 52:14 90:4 summer (1) 70:3 support (9) 24:5, 8 25:8,23 31:9 33:12,13 39:20 68:20 supported (2) 28:16 78:18 supporting (1) 62:3 supposed (1) 88:2 sure (15) 8:3 9:4 12:22 13:14 20:1 23:20 24:10 40:6 59:8 61:3 70:8 71:21,23 75:11,17 surprise (1) 44:4 survive (2) 29:12 31:13 Svenson (5) 23:9, 10,11,14,14 S-v-e-n-s-o-n (2) 23:11,15 switched (1) 10:18 system (7) 11:17, 22 12:7 15:14 17:17,20 20:12	tasks (1) 64:16 taught (2) 30:24 49:21 taxes (1) 67:11 TAYLOR (3) 87:2, 3 93:5 teach (5) 32:6 43:9 62:20 70:9 71:2 teacher (9) 18:24 27:7 29:16 32:4 33:23 53:24 54:4 60:1 70:4 teachers (52) 6:20 7:24 14:23,24 16:23 18:13, 16 19:3 21:6 22:1,7,16,22 23:24 24:1,9, 10,15 25:6,23 28:17 33:6 34:10,18 35:14,23 36:8 40:22 41:14, 16 42:10,12, 19 43:4,8,11 48:10,13 49:22 52:8 56:24 59:22 62:19,20,22 63:22 67:19 69:17 85:16 87:24 89:14,18	teenager (1) 35:11 teens (1) 11:15 tells (1) 25:15 Ten (3) 43:13 87:4 89:1 tenfold (1) 30:7 tenth (2) 14:11 43:23 tenure (1) 66:8 terminated (1) 73:18 terms (3) 54:19, 20 64:3 Terranova (3) 53:17,18,19 terrible (1) 7:14 terrified (1) 14:15 testimony (1) 64:20 tests (1) 51:14 Thanks (1) 25:22 theirs (1) 84:5 therefore (1) 50:23 Third (2) 19:14 34:1 though (1) 67:20 thought (4) 15:10 18:22 23:19 25:3 thoughts (1) 50:16 threatened (1) 45:20 three (9) 9:10 14:14 26:10 32:2 74:18,18 75:2 84:20 89:13 thrive (1) 29:12 thrived (1) 48:1 Throughout (2) 37:22 70:11 throw (1) 40:10 thrown (1) 65:23 times (5) 7:1 14:14 25:8	39:11 51:20 Titan (2) 33:7,8 Titans (1) 58:13 title (1) 82:18 Today (11) 19:17,18,20 40:3 57:14 62:2,8 68:18 79:10 90:6,21 today's (4) 3:4, 15,17,19 together (8) 5:1 25:2 28:19 53:6 58:18,24 70:20 71:3 togetherness (1) 35:13 told (6) 11:9 25:12 29:17 31:14 54:3 70:6 tolerate (1) 41:4 tomorrow (1) 79:18 Toni (2) 9:16,19 T-o-n-i (1) 9:20 tonight (3) 77:1 80:19 88:12 tonight's (1) 4:15 took (5) 15:18 18:16 27:12 30:6 40:24 top (2) 46:11 60:5 top-notch (4) 56:23,23 71:7 76:11 total (1) 74:16 totally (3) 33:18 52:3 74:10 tough (1) 88:16 tow (1) 56:14 towards (1) 15:8 Tracey (2) 43:18, 20 T-r-a-c-e-y (1) 43:20 track (1) 8:14	trade (3) 48:17 76:21 78:9 training (1) 48:17 transactions (1) 41:2 transferred (2) 6:10 14:9 transform (1) 71:6 transitioning (1) 69:1 transparency (1) 65:21 transpired (1) 65:15 transportation (1) 36:4 travesty (1) 15:10 treasurer (1) 76:20 treated (1) 7:9 treats (1) 8:6 tremendous (2) 72:22,23 tried (1) 86:11 tripped (1) 39:10 trooper (1) 17:13 trouble (1) 8:14 troubled (2) 72:13 85:21 true (2) 37:11 39:10 truly (2) 57:12 58:14 truth (1) 40:24 try (5) 27:17 57:13 70:8 85:17 86:9 trying (12) 9:9 12:13 38:20, 20 39:1,8 59:24 85:2,14 86:6 87:20,21 T's (1) 46:12 turmoil (1) 70:20 turn (1) 76:16 turned (2) 37:6 40:23 Turner (6) 43:19,
T	teaching (2) 50:1 63:10 team (5) 7:12 25:3,17 28:5 60:13 tear (1) 13:6 tech (1) 78:16 Technical (1) 4:4 technician (1) 48:18 Technology (3) 48:6 57:19 78:14			
tackle (1) 48:13 talents (2) 53:1 66:13 talk (6) 28:9 59:10,14 62:4 84:8,22 talked (2) 7:22 84:19 talking (4) 10:16 84:10,10 85:13				

20,21 45:13, 14,16 turning (1) 77:17 tutor (1) 16:5 tutored (1) 16:7 twice (1) 56:15 twin (1) 90:20 two (21) 7:15 10:13,14 16:19 17:8 29:17 30:14 32:3,11 35:21 36:3 40:3 47:11 53:12 56:5 72:16 73:4,19,24 75:15 87:12 Two-minute (1) 89:2 type (2) 7:6 8:12	uniform (1) 19:8 uniforms (1) 35:11 unique (2) 29:13 69:10 uniquely (1) 50:23 United (4) 25:13 33:18 42:4 69:14 University (8) 48:5,5 56:19 57:17,17 61:1 63:11 83:9 Unless (1) 90:19 unmatched (1) 53:2 unnecessarily (1) 21:10 unparalleled (1) 21:22 unsafe (1) 44:23 untold (1) 51:16 up (37) 5:11,13, 13 6:24 7:1, 13,15 9:7 17:17 22:15 23:12 25:12 27:7 28:12 31:20 32:10 33:2,3,3 38:6 42:15 60:16, 16 62:1 68:1, 12 70:7 77:2, 3,19 78:17 84:19 86:18 87:5 89:20 90:6,8 upon (3) 36:11 75:5 76:6 URL (1) 58:8 use (3) 19:9 59:7 72:7 used (3) 30:7 34:15 67:2 utmost (1) 70:17	V varied (1) 55:5 variety (2) 30:24 31:1 various (1) 28:11 varsity (1) 28:4 verbally (1) 40:21 versus (1) 30:22 vice (4) 57:15 59:17 63:8 74:1 victimize (1) 12:13 victimized (1) 12:11 video (1) 56:2 vilified (2) 59:23 60:1 village (2) 36:13, 14 virtues (1) 67:17 visited (1) 75:5 visiting (1) 62:20 voice (1) 22:12 voiced (1) 49:12 voices (1) 53:11 vote (2) 58:6 64:19 voted (1) 59:17	86:21 warm (1) 69:7 warning (1) 89:2 watched (2) 32:12 49:13 water (1) 27:13 way (12) 6:17, 17 8:1,6 13:19,19 15:16 31:21 34:3 58:17 61:13 74:11 ways (4) 30:24 31:2 78:2,24 wealth (2) 66:23 67:10 wear (1) 19:8 wearing (1) 35:10 website (6) 3:9, 11,22,24 4:9, 10 Webster (1) 49:23 Wednesday (3) 4:3 5:3 52:21 week (3) 13:15 37:1 62:18 weeks (4) 10:15 48:20 52:22 73:4 weird (1) 85:10 welcome (4) 2:2 37:18 69:8 89:18 welcomed (2) 7:20 69:6 well-publicized (1) 51:5 Wendell (1) 35:15 WENDY (1) 43:14 weren't (2) 81:21, 22 Whatever's (1) 58:23 whatnot (3) 14:22 15:9,23 what-not (1) 17:24 what's (2) 90:10	91:8 whole (1) 16:1 wide (2) 27:1,2 wife (3) 47:11 59:24 69:22 Wilbur (1) 16:19 William (4) 14:13 31:12 35:22 75:12 willing (7) 5:17 7:24 24:3 36:8 64:8 77:8 79:14 willingness (2) 48:13 64:15 Willoughby (4) 71:19,20 72:5,9 Wilmington (14) 26:13 57:16 59:2 60:19,24 61:12 63:9,11 78:10,11,20 80:7,12,17 win (1) 56:14 wing (1) 16:5 winners (1) 60:5 wish (2) 5:6 79:21 within (2) 20:19 22:12 without (6) 13:13 24:7 33:15 34:4 39:18 62:5 witness (1) 65:16 witnessed (7) 32:14,16,17, 19,20,21 66:7 won (2) 56:12,15 wonderful (2) 56:23 78:15 wondering (1) 44:12 work (10) 11:19 22:2 24:7 27:7,13 29:21 41:1 42:23
U UD (1) 47:19 ultimate (2) 42:6 52:14 ultimately (2) 54:10 64:1 unable (1) 40:7 uncertain (1) 52:17 uncertainty (1) 52:22 uncles (1) 37:9 under (8) 2:20 16:5,21 17:23 45:20 46:3 65:13 72:15 understatement (1) 72:12 unfair (1) 21:9 unfortunate (2) 17:7 51:3 Unfortunately (5) 14:16 15:3,5 40:7 42:18 UNIDENTIFIED (1) 23:7	W wait (3) 13:19 39:19 83:23 waiver (1) 71:9 walk (7) 8:18 11:2 33:24 34:9 39:6,6 89:24 walked (3) 6:23 7:22 11:11 walking (1) 10:12 Wang (3) 18:8,9, 10 wants (4) 9:13 35:9 59:14	W wait (3) 13:19 39:19 83:23 waiver (1) 71:9 walk (7) 8:18 11:2 33:24 34:9 39:6,6 89:24 walked (3) 6:23 7:22 11:11 walking (1) 10:12 Wang (3) 18:8,9, 10 wants (4) 9:13 35:9 59:14	W wait (3) 13:19 39:19 83:23 waiver (1) 71:9 walk (7) 8:18 11:2 33:24 34:9 39:6,6 89:24 walked (3) 6:23 7:22 11:11 walking (1) 10:12 Wang (3) 18:8,9, 10 wants (4) 9:13 35:9 59:14	W wait (3) 13:19 39:19 83:23 waiver (1) 71:9 walk (7) 8:18 11:2 33:24 34:9 39:6,6 89:24 walked (3) 6:23 7:22 11:11 walking (1) 10:12 Wang (3) 18:8,9, 10 wants (4) 9:13 35:9 59:14

60:18 71:3 worked (3) 51:9 66:1 81:10 working (5) 19:16 48:23 63:17 79:1 83:16 works (4) 25:2, 17 30:1 66:4 world (6) 34:22 35:16 74:7 76:21 78:9 87:4 worry (1) 33:2 worse (1) 44:22 worth (1) 53:6 wounds (1) 51:2 written (1) 5:1 wrong (3) 12:4 22:17 75:16 wrote (1) 6:6	63:4,6,12 66:3,6,22 68:23 74:2,9 80:12,14 81:10,11 82:21 87:4 89:1,13 yield (1) 5:17 young (9) 26:1 57:7,8,8 73:23 74:1 75:11 78:21 81:24 Y-o-u-n-g (1) 57:9 younger (2) 16:19 17:8 youngest (1) 60:7 Yup (1) 18:6	2012 (2) 7:13 73:24 2013 (7) 3:6,12, 20 4:3,6,11 5:3 2013-2014 (1) 63:20 20s (1) 78:22 21st (2) 63:1 64:23 22 (2) 16:24 51:22 25 (2) 60:12 72:6 28th (1) 55:23	8 (1) 69:3 8:30 (5) 3:17 91:10,12,17,23 80 (1) 93:2 81 (1) 93:3 85 (1) 93:4 87 (1) 93:5
Y	Z	3	9
Yaser (4) 20:2,3 23:8 85:7 year (34) 6:11 7:14 9:22 13:11 14:8,9, 12,21 27:4,14, 22 35:6 36:23 47:7,22 48:4 51:21 53:19 55:23 56:12, 16 63:8,16,20 72:12,19 76:15 81:15 82:7,24 83:22, 24 89:16 90:1 yearbook (1) 48:23 years (31) 16:3 26:19 32:3,11 40:13 42:22, 23 47:14 50:20 51:4 56:14,15 60:12 61:11	Zealand (1) 48:20 Zero (1) 88:21	30 (6) 61:11 66:6,22 74:2, 9 81:11 35 (1) 16:24 37 (1) 55:20	9 (2) 4:2 69:4 90 (1) 93:6 900 (1) 44:16 94 (1) 93:8
	1	4	
	10th (1) 73:17 11 (2) 63:12 74:17 11th (6) 3:6,12 46:15 59:16, 20 73:24 12 (1) 69:5 12th (1) 46:15 13th (2) 4:3 5:3 14 (2) 40:4 65:6 15 (3) 35:24 36:1,5 18 (1) 63:4 19 (1) 40:4	40 (1) 81:9 410 (2) 20:5,11	5 5 (1) 3:16 5:00 (1) 36:6 5's (1) 51:14
	2	6	6
	2003 (1) 10:3 2006 (2) 10:21 50:20 2007 (1) 10:21 2008 (1) 14:17	6 (2) 4:6,11 6:30 (2) 3:17 4:2 6th (1) 3:20	7
		7 (1) 3:17 77 (1) 93:1	8