

Community Forum – Boulder High – May 16, 2005

[Clark] Appointed by our board of education and representing neighborhood schools, focus schools, and charter schools from throughout the district, Rich Lopez and I are co-chairing the task force and shepherding it through to a final report which we hope will take place in June. So why are we here? You have most of what I'm going to be talking about here in hard copy, so it should make it easier for all of us. The Board commissioned the task force to examine the impacts of open enrollment on social economic stratification in the district. We were asked to develop recommendations that would lessen that stratification and advance the district's strategic initiatives. One, respect and honor diversity and two, profile of the new century graduate. They asked us to examine what patterns, if any, we could find that might be cause or impacted by open enrollment, determine those causes, and generate recommendations to impact that stratification. I want to say at the onset that the Board never asked us to do a thumbs up or thumbs down on choice or open enrollment, but to look at the open enrollment system as it exists in Boulder Valley and what are the consequences both positively and negatively after we have been experiencing open enrollment here in the district for the number of years we have been engaged with it. We started meeting in November, and held twelve task force meetings and as Rich said, most generally every Monday night at least twice per month. One of the first things we did was review the Howe/Eisenhart study of 2000 and examine the recommendations in that study. The study first raised the issue of open enrollment having an impact that seeks to stratify the district along racial and social economic lines. In that 2000 study they put back a number of variables and made a number of recommendations—some of which the district has implemented by the centralized enrollment, some of which we haven't, i.e. transportation, some of which we may consider in the next round of recommendations as we move forward. We've reviewed literature; we've looked at policies and practices, both in our district and state; and across the country. As we have examined this issue it's not just merely a Boulder Valley issue. It's an issue that we find in the state of Colorado and it's an issue that we've found throughout the country. Once we have open enrollment and choice and we've been operating over a period of time, stratification is one of the unintended consequences which have happened. So we've looked at Cambridge Massachusetts, we've looked at a number of places across the United States to see what they have done and what issues that they have dealt with. I know that during this study I was in conversation in Eugene Oregon and they have a task force just as we have a task force which is examining the same issues. They have choice they've got lots of open enrollment they were pleased about a lot of options that they've had for families to engage with but one of the unanticipated consequences was greater stratification particularly along social, economic, and racial lines. We've held six focus groups across the district for elementary, middle, and high school level where we've tried to have a small group of people come in and talk to us about their experience with choice and open enrollment. [We asked them] what they found, why they exercised the choice that they did, what were the factors that impacted them, and if we changed anything around would it make any difference in the choices that they themselves have made. We've interviewed some selected building principals in terms of trying to ask them about issues

that choice and open enrollment have caused for them and if we did some interventions, what might be the consequences of those interventions from their perspective.

This is the first of two community forums, we're holding another one at Angevine Middle School from seven to nine-thirty and we will have a high tech version going on there with power point. So what have we found? Generally speaking we have found much the same information as contained in the Howe-Eisenhart study: we are more social-economically stratified. We see two fundamental causes for that; one is choice and open enrollment and the selections that people make, who they leave behind and where people go make a difference and they cause the district to look dramatically different then before and after the open enrollment period itself. Another factor that we have found is program location - that there are things we do as a district that impact the stratification issues; particularly where we have centralized programs like second language programs. That is called densification; it's caused some of the stratification and that is one of the issues we are looking at. You've got two charts in front of you: one shows white enrollment versus attendance area based on neighborhood open enrolled students. That line is the line of actual representation in those schools as it goes across. The dots, if you will, or the diamonds are the actual numbers within the school's attendance area in itself. What you can begin to see is that the fewer white parents in an attendance area; the more socially stratified it becomes after open enrollment. [This is] something that was a truism that we found throughout. The next chart looks at the... [interrupted with a question from the audience as follows:] "Can you just clarify what the x and y axes are?" [Lecturer again:] Okay the bottom is the enrollment key, or the percent of enrollment which is white and the other is the attendance area enrollment of what you would find it. Now let me give you an example. [Question from audience:] "The percentage of white is the attendance area?" Yes, in the attendance area. Those dots are specific schools, yes. Those dots are specific schools as we have laid them out. [Question] "Can you explain what the y axis is?" The y axis is the percent white in the attendance area. The x axis is the actual enrollment in the attendance area...the enrollment of white, yes. It's a demographic of the neighborhood compared to the actual demographics of the school. Now, the next chart; we'll spend a lot of time on this because we want to get your comments. [Garbled] This here is to show you examples, if you will, of some of the data that we have examined. The next is the open enrollment; what that looks like pre and post open enrollment and the impact upon the individual schools. The significant piece of this graph is that it virtually, almost totally resembles the first graph. So, race and ethnic and SES really look a lot alike in terms of actual percentages in the attendance area and then actual percentages after open enrollment itself. Now what we have found real quickly in terms of the observations: schools with more white students in their attendance area tend toward greater net gains of white students through open enrollment; schools with fewer white students in their attendance area tend toward a net loss of white students through open enrollment. Schools with more students not on free and reduced lunch tend toward a greater net gain of non-free reduced lunch students through open enrollment. Schools with more eligible for free and reduced lunch tend toward a net loss of non-free and reduced program students through open enrollment. Placement of students for administrative reasons (i.e. special programs, particularly the placement of ESL programs) tend to stratify the schools even further. These days our whole concept for when we look at schools is an aggregate and when we have considered a school by school

basis pre and post open enrollment statistics within individual elementary schools. [Question:] “Are you talking about non-Hispanic Caucasians?” Yes. So, what are we thinking about? The task force has spent a lot of time brainstorming, cussing, and discussing and we by no means have a full or even a beginning set of recommendations outlined. We’ve put topics down here from a brainstorm session and these are things that we believe if we did something with them could impact the stratification and I’ll share that with you. Boundary review; lots of people said our boundary lines have not been examined in the Boulder Valley for a long period of time. Some people have used the term jerry-maundering, some have said that the demographics of certain neighborhoods have changed since boundaries were established and that we really need to adjust boundaries so that there is more ethnicity[?] within the attendance areas themselves.

So in our proposal for the Board to examine during the course of this next year, may be which of our schools and which of our boundaries if we change them would give greater diversity throughout more of our schools in the Boulder Valley. Another idea that we have talked about a bit is enrollment caps, because open enrollment is a system that thrives on seats available. The more seats available; the more choice there is available, the more people can go wherever they wish to go. If we would establish some enrollment caps—we’ve got an enrollment cap at Boulder high school and we have an enrollment cap at Monarch high school, we have an enrollment cap at Fairview High School—if we thought about the strategic location or placement of enrollment caps and we have enrollment caps within our charter schools that we have negotiated with them. So if we put some caps on some of the most engaged or highly popular programs that may again spread some of the diversity throughout the school system.

Transportation; this was a recommendation that came to us from the Howe study. It was a recommendation that folks who are eligible for free and reduced lunch should have transportation provided for them because that seems to be an issue for people with less means - having the ability to get to choice and open enrollment. So if the district provided transportation, that may be a way of opening the system up and allowing greater participation for all folks here.

Program reconfiguration, what we mean by program reconfiguration is the decentralization of certain programs like ESL programs if you will. In other words instead of having it be center-based programs where kids from four or five schools will come to a school; we would decentralize those and have them in as large a number of schools as possible so kids who need those programmatic options can do it at their neighborhood schools.

Adjustment of open enrollment guidelines when a school is significant or below district averages. This is a technique that has been used in school districts throughout the country. So take the district average, say the district average is twenty percent minority and it saves fifteen percent free and reduced lunch, and if we use fifteen percent free and reduced lunch as the average and I’m a school and I’ve got three percent free and reduced lunch, and we would say what you’ve done then is that you’re outside of the boundary plus or minus I’d say it’s twenty five percent of the district average or thirty percent of the district average or forty percent of the district average and if you’re outside of that district average you’re priorities would automatically change. In other words, kids on free and reduced lunch would move up to the top of the list in terms of eligibility to go to this open enrolled school; again the school is outside those particular parameters.

Increasing the student funding allocations for students who qualify for free or reduced lunch; there has been a lot of conversation with the task force about having the money follow the child and that we make a differentiation because of the lack of opportunity for some children and how that impacts their education; that we make a real significant student-per-student differential and that that money would follow the kids to the school in which they go. So when a child who comes, who hasn't necessarily been participating in choice and open enrollment, comes to the school they're going to be bringing resources with them.

The next idea is one that we have heard multiple times and I'm sure you will all have something to say about it. It would be a condition of participating in open enrollment that you go visit and tour the neighborhood school. We can't tell you the number of times that we have heard that, "I had forty five people open enroll out of my kindergarten and only had three people come and visit the school." Or other folks who said I wasn't going to; but I came and visited the school and it was a wonderful opportunity for me and a wonderful opportunity for my child, and we have certain parts of the district where we will have hundreds of children who will open enroll out and never visit their local neighborhood school. It's the belief that all Boulder Valley schools are of high quality and we would love for them to be able to see what that opportunity is - so that's a possibility also.

The next one is talking about a broader array of student measurements to determine school quality. We have come to understand that probably the majority of people make open enrollment decisions through the informal system. One of the primary pieces of that decision is CSAP scores and the quality qualitative marker that the state puts on the school itself and that that is only one measure of a school's quality. It measures achievement; it doesn't measure progress over time. Progress over time and achievement may look very different for various schools. Some schools may have a greater gain over time in terms of progress than they will in terms of their student achievement score—what we call the Dow Jones average. And yet people seem to use that Dow Jones average as the marker for what a quality school itself is. So they may want to say to us that we try to work with the Boulder Camera and that we do things as a school district to signify schools who make great progress and show more than a year's worth of gain and show that they are actually outperforming other schools who may have a higher achievement score. So get with that and get with the idea of trying to talk about opening an array of measurements so that you have as much information at your disposal as to what a quality school is and how we measure that quality school.

Then the last piece was a piece that we had heard lots of times, is that in this marketing mechanism, schools who are net losers in the open enrollment process have a lot of their folks who are energized about the schools and about schools themselves leave. And they take on a marketing expertise step, and that some schools have more capability in this area than other schools in terms of trying to market themselves. Others have said to us that really you need market to every darn school in the Boulder Valley because they're all high quality schools; they all do great jobs for children. So we've got that as a template in their, what kind of a marketing program are we talking about? Who gets it, what gets it, how do we do that with the whole concept of marketing itself and others?

Now, what we have found or what we have looked at is that there is no silver bullet. There is no one thing that would change the direction in which choice and open

enrollment has gone in the Boulder Valley. It's going to take a junction of multiple factors working together in order to be able to change some of that demographic if that is in fact what we wish to be able to do, if that's the end product that we're trying to work for. But to do nothing, to continue to do as we have done; we will continue to replicate the same results that we have and probably make it more significant over time. So, as the paper addressed this morning, we have six schools that have majority minority right now, we've got five schools that have over fifty percent free and reduced lunch rate in their schools themselves. So I think it's a question the Board is going to have to wrestle with: is that what we wish as a school system? Do we wish that all schools try to reflect the richness of diversity that is Boulder Valley? If so, then what's the way that we go about that? No decisions have been made, no one is saying that we're not going to have choice and open enrollment but what we are saying is that there probably are a series of tweaks that could go through here. So enough of my yipping, we want to hear from you and what you have to say about what we've had to say here about the things that we're thinking about or not thinking about. So we wish to ask you what's your opinion, what is it you wish for us to think about as a task force; we will keep your recommendations and it's important for us to consider.

[Co-facilitator (Lopez):] "I think we will take a few minutes just for some questions on some of the material. Then we really would like to hear from you and so if there is a question or two...yes."

[Audience member:] I'm curious about the motivation behind the task force. Whether it's an economic issue, or is it a race issue? I see that there are some conflicting pieces of information as far as why are we doing this and what the big issue behind this question is.

[Clark:] To me, the issue behind the question is what I stated earlier - it's the amount of diversity that is in the district. Should all the diversity in the district be visited in just a few schools or is it something as a community that we think is a really good thing and that we wish to see a lot more of our schools reflect the richness which is within Boulder Valley. That's what's caused that issue to come to the fore, a fact that we now have one elementary school that's eighty five percent free and reduced and five years ago it was less than fifty percent free and reduced.

[Audience member from above:] Right, and I understand where you're coming from on that and I guess my question is that over the past several years, particularly when you read articles in the Daily Camera they have insinuated that there's a white flight going on, which I personally disagree with, but what that says to me is that it's a racial conflict and that's one issue whereas diversity and economics is another.

[Lopez:] These are the types of comments we'd like to hear from you. What are your views? You think it's a racial issue or not any issue at all...that's what we'd like to hear.

[2nd Audience member:] I have several questions. Is local cost of housing forcing segregation? Boulder is not a cheap place to live and the areas that are considered affordable, that's where your lower socio-economic people are going to live. For instance Foothills, at the base of Chautauqua practically, how are you going to diversify Foothills? Are you going to move them into the neighborhood? I'm sorry Flatirons...you can't afford to live there. Okay, so that's one of the things or problems. I'm curious to hear how did the school closings affect the stratification specifically in

Washington and Mapleton? My personal opinion and I could be completely wrong, Washington was bilingual and I believe some of those people were moved to Uni-Hill, is that correct? So now you're going from the northern end of Boulder all the way across to Uni-Hill and I'm sure that some parents are like, 'I can't put my child on a bus ride that long'.

[Lopez:] There is a distinction between focus schools, charter schools, and regular neighborhood schools. Bilingual and dual immersion programs like Washington are by definition an open enrollment accepted school. You're pulling kids from all over the community to comprise the fifty percent elements of that particular program. Charter schools are pulling kids from wherever to comprise that program.

[2nd Audience member:] Did you feel that Washington was diversified and that closing it really scattered the socio-economic status more?

[Clark:] To some degree, not a great degree, but some degree.

[2nd Audience member:] The last comment I have is...

[Lopez:] If they're comments why don't you save them, if you have a question...

[Clark:] So what we want to do is get people's comments relative to what we say.

[3rd audience member:] I have a question on your first chart. If I understand it correctly it shows that there are few students there are people of white enrollment lower than the minimal school of what they would be in the neighborhood schools [garbled!]. I will say in terms of schools are...statistically relevant... [garbled]. Do we have a similar chart for non-white children?

[Lopez:] We have charts coming out of our ears.

[Clark:] We have school by school comparisons both with race and ethnicity and what that looked like pre and post open enrollment so we have...the communities have looked at those.

[3rd member:] We would expect that for non-white we would see a similar pattern because we have open schools and charter schools without the attendance area all over the district which means by statistical average every school loses some children to a charter or focus schools, which means that the non-white chart would look pretty much the same which wouldn't support any of the conclusions.

[4th member:] On the broader array of student attendance; school quality isn't that already done; don't we have a state card? [Garbled] on schools on improving or applying for making that accessible...internet... [garble].

[Opening facilitator:] Her question was: do not we have a broader array of variables to consider about quality of schools called the school report card. And the answer is yes but it's a singular focus on achievement of the CSAP, it's not necessarily progress over time and year to year growth over time.

[4th member:] School report cards, I thought there were other factors taken into account on the school report cards.

[1st or opening facilitator:] There are.

[4th member:] It measures whether there is progress being made or maintained or failing. Is that not correct?

[Opening facilitator:] What we've got in the district is the average capacity through the weighted or what we call the weighted index. The weighted index is a unit of measure for us to be able to show how much growth is made by a school over time not

whether you're making a year's worth of growth but who's making the most growth, the most progress.

[4th member:] And how do you determine that and who gets to decide?

[Opening facilitator:] Well we've got the district will determine that we've got the statistics we've got the research it and an analysis of department who will set that forward to do that and you do that all the time. We've been working with the Camera for a couple of years to try to get them to report...that's actually the weighted index is our accountability measure that we use with the state in our presentation contract. It's a prominent measure that we use that we'd like to get further out into the community.

[5th member question:] How much time are we talking; are we looking at all these charts and is all this from the beginning of open enrollment? What is the time frame?

[Opening facilitator:] That's a snapshot of what this year would be.

[5th member:] So that's just this year and we're not looking at, so when you talked about the difference of diversity within the schools what are you comparing from?

[Opening facilitator:] Taking a school where it is at present, where native attendance enrollment at present would be. Who are the kids in your attendance area and what do they look like, what's the distribution SES and race with ethnic and then what's it like after open enrollment and what does that do for me. That's a series of documents and charts that we can review...

[5th or 6th member:] Does it also take into account home school children and how do you know who all the kids are in the area?

[Opening Facilitator:] Those are children who have registered in the school district and are in our database.

[6th member:] In the Howe...another one of the factors was poor communication between other non-English speaking parents in the district, has BVSD done anything to communicate with non-English speaking parents and what their options are?

[Opening facilitator:] Yes, we do. We send to all homes and....

[7th member:] Do you have any data that people with these schools that are higher you know lower income people are currently dissatisfied, do you have any hard data that these people are currently dissatisfied with the quality of their education? And two, does the state law that set up the charter school allow the district to impose these restrictions based on income?

[Opening facilitator:] The answer to your second question is probably yes, we don't have a series of recommendations to actually test and once we do that we'll take that to the legal council and see if there is an issue. The answer to your first question is that the answer would be no. Parents are reasonably satisfied at every school they go to.

Side Two

[Opening facilitator:] That would be a part of the recommendation of what we desperately want to hear is the comment, and we want to hear those comments review you say does that apply to and are you advocating for...those are the things we want to get to here.

[8th member:] Has there been any discussion of restricting open enrollment options based on where people live? In other words, what I'm saying is trying to keep these county students in East County or Boulder students in Boulder?

[Opening facilitator:] Well, we've got a small test case that we're currently doing right now with community Montessori, and then community Montessori we or the kids, Baseline, children south of Baseline and east of 75th will have people outside of that boundary what we call south Boulder have a higher preference of getting into community Montessori than those, so in some sense we've adjusted the location preference so we've talked about that as an option.

[9th member:] So, are all the schools that are designated ESL schools do they all experience this demographic shift towards more low SES population?

[Opening facilitator:] Well, if they're a center-based school then the answer to your question is yes they would experience greater diversity particularly SES and race and ethnic because that population second language learners for the most part have fewer means and they are largely eligible for free and reduced lunch.

[9th member:] I have a question, are second language learners, are parents of those children still required to sign a waiver if they opt out of that school that has ESL?

[Facilitator:] Yes, yes, yes, yes.

[9th member:] It seems to suggest high negativity towards having a more integrated system to me.

[Facilitator:] One thing that we have learned there are a million and one different reasons why people make decisions and our job as a task force really isn't to second guess people's reason's for doing that but just trying to look at what the trends themselves are.

[9th member:] Say a parent from Columbine wanted to enroll their child in Flatirons they would have to sign the waiver saying I understand this decision is best for my child...

[Facilitator:] Correct, correct.

[9th member] Would that child then be still counted as a second language learner in the school that they went to?

[Facilitator:] They do not; as long as they qualify in terms of the language assessments they do not lose that designation that just means that they're a waived student. And we have some programmatic options but they're not as extensive as they are in the program-specific schools.

[10th member:] On the chart that shows, well it shows the economic and enrollment by race, there is obviously five schools that have lower than, or maybe six, I guess that have kind of lower than the average number of white students in their neighborhood is the way I'm reading that thing. Do we know how much of that percentage has changed, were they drawn so that they were more similar to...that's changed that dramatically for example that first dot on the left has gone down to the twenty five percent, was there another one found around the eighty percent at all these other schools request or not [garbled]?

[Facilitator:]There's been a change in the demographic in the neighborhood area but that demographic in the neighborhood area is closer to fifty-fifty and what that presently shows...

[10th member:] But you say that the attendance area is twenty five percent.

[Lopez:] These numbers don't say anything about time, this is just a snapshot compared to demographics...school area demographics to what's actually in school, right, it's just a snapshot there's no time...they usually stay in the schools for a few years

[10th member:] But if I'm reading that right now, that school on the far left for example, has seventy five percent of its attendance children that are supposed to go there are not white and compared to what is the district average of about eighty percent...no twenty percent. The way it's gone, am I reading that right?

[Facilitator:] If I may, I want to invite some comments on the list of possibilities why do you think that something that stinks you think something that's got some merit to it or something you want us to think about—we'll be happy to take those and listen to what your comments are.

[Lopez:] So we're going to get started and if you could speak up and we're going to try and keep it to two minutes on the first go around and give everyone a chance...comments? You have another question, okay. Question or comment?

[11th member:] I have a question about the use of the word diversity. It sounded to me like when you were using the word diversity you meant minority peoples. I think of diversity as a school that has a balanced mix of people of different cultures people of different socio-economic...but, when you use the word diversity it sounded more like...

[Facilitator:] We've been thinking we've been talking about diversity both from racial-ethnic and SES.

[11th member:] Right, but when you were using the word diversity it sounded like you weren't...okay, I just wanted to clarify...what is the diversity that you're looking for?

[Lopez:] We're looking at SES right now and it also happens to coincide with ethnic diversity too, there's a strong correlation between the two.

[11th m:] So when you're talking about school and...diversity it sounds like you were talking about a school that had a high percentage of low economic/low socio-economic status children—I don't consider that a diverse school, any more than I'd consider a school with ninety percent...

[Facilitator:] We've got issue on both ends of the continuum.

[11th member:] Right, that's what I'm saying...it's confusing the way that...

[12th member:] I have a comment and a comment about the comments, now in terms of what you guys are thinking about I was happy to see some of these things on the list as apparent at Columbine. And, just a comment about the enrollment caps in that genre...is there a possibility of considering, our biggest problem at Columbine in terms of people enrolling out isn't people enrolling to charter schools or choice schools it's people enrolling from one neighborhood school, Columbine, to another neighborhood school be it Whittier, Crest View, Foothill—those are the three that really draw from our area...you can't take away choice from people but kind of the way we talk about it when we're talking about this subject is that you're going to lose people to the Montessori programs the charter schools regardless of what's going on. It's the losing people to other neighborhood schools where essentially the curriculum would be the same...that hurts, and that is what I consider...I know that people wonder whether it's white flight or not but come spend a week at Columbine and you'll find out what we're talking about because we are the school where five people came to visit and forty five people enrolled out. And so, I like those ideas of having people at least come in and take a look so that maybe they will consider, due diligence, on researching whether or not a school is good for you or not.

[Lopez:] Good comment. Next?

[13th member:] I'm glad the task force isn't recommending the suspension of choice over enrollment because that would be against the law, because Colorado is very, very popular in open enrollment so I'm glad that was the first comment because that is very important. My question is some of the biggest...I think the task force is going to need to consult with Earnest and Kaplan on a lot of this because a lot of these recommendations on what we are thinking about is currently not under state law. Since...maybe you want to write this one down, it's CRS22-30.5-109 paragraph six: "A school district shall not discriminate against a charter school and publicizing the district educational option through advertising, direct mail, mailing list, or other activities." So, some of these would not be in compliance with state law as far as requiring the name for school visitations...if you did that you would, to comply with the law you need to require visitations to a charter school. Consequences of a marketing program with emphasis on schools which are not having fund resources; according to law you would have to do the same thing for a charter school, so you need to check the law with some of these things. The law delimits to five reasons ability of the school district to decide student's permission to enroll in school, five reasons. Many of these, all these recommendations, are not in compliance with that law, so you're going to have to get legal council in order to do some of these things and maybe change the laws because the [garble] views are not reasons. Enrollment counts are not a reason, program reintegration is not a reason so I think there needs to be a lot of work with Earnest and Kaplan on what legally you can do or if you want to change the laws because federal regulations right now do not permit charter schools to discriminate on race, SES, or where students live, that's against the law right now. There are state laws and federal regulations that pertain specifically to charter schools that a lot of these proposals would violate, so I'm suggesting that there needs to be a lot more work.

[Simultaneous comments and chuckling from everyone.]

[Facilitator:] That same law does say that school districts can regulate choice and open enrollment, so I think that's why attorneys are here...

[14th member comment:] As far as visiting your neighborhood school, I did, I visited Whittier three times and I loved the building, I did not like some of the things I saw but it wasn't so much that as it was it wasn't going to challenge my child and this was before it became an IB school so I'm kind of sad that it became that after the fact, although I love where I go now. I would like the district to consider the program of a school, why are people open enrolling in charter and focus schools? Core knowledge, IB, whatever the program, I think there is clamoring for that and that should be respected.

[15th member comment:] My comment is similar, other cities and urban environments actually put magnet schools into communities that are having challenges bringing in a higher socio-economic group...students come into that neighborhood, and they attract them in. It seems to me that that's not what the district has been doing and I'd like to see that be considered as an option.

[Lopez:] That's one of the things that we've been hearing, attracting, sort of a push or pull situation.

[15th member:] Busing children in to a school is very different than attracting students in because the program is so great.

[16th member:] I have a couple comments. It's kind of the glass is half full or the glass is half empty, my children go to focus and charter schools. We would love to

increase the enrollment of a diverse population as you define them. We have a very diverse population of children from other countries that don't fit your classification of diverse, but in the past when we have tried to attract diverse populations by developing literature in Spanish; specifically, passing it out in the neighborhood that surrounds our school which is an Aurora seven. There are Hispanic families in the neighborhood and we have been asked by the district to discontinue that because of its affect on the neighborhood school. So, in our attempt two years ago to increase diversity in our neighborhood so that the kids could walk to our school, that was discontinued at the request of the district but it's not one of the things here to kind of balance the other side of the equation by increasing the diversity. Not just decreasing the white flight from those schools, you want to change that, but increasing the diversity at these other great schools as well. So that's one of my comments. My second comment is on the visiting your neighborhood school. What we hear at High Peaks from parents who come to High Peaks on visits, we have parents who walk in our door say, "This is nothing like my neighborhood school told me what it was going to be like." They get a lot of misinformation, they get a lot of inaccurate information, and we have a pub-listing problem as it is with that. So if they have to go to a neighborhood school, I would like to encourage a policy that requires even no information about other schools or accurate information about other schools being presented.

[Lopez:] That's a really good point. I was doing some looking on a ReMax sight yesterday looking for a house and they had a side bar that had a school report with school information and sure enough you put them up there. According to them, Mapleton and Washington are still open. Changing information is really important.

[17th member:] Another comment about the requirement to visit the neighborhood school, I too felt like in fairness that I should visit the neighborhood school before I discredit it and in addition to that attempt I made several, several calls to the administration at that school and they refused to call me back which put a huge negative connotation on me as a parent that if I can't get any attention...if I'm interested in your school and you have no interest in me or my child, what does that say to me? It says that not only do I not get any attention when I'm seriously considering this school, but what's the attention with me and my child for their education. That's a serious concern and it was not positive so I think that administrators...I never had the impression that the administrators or the teachers were less competent there than at any other school but it send a bad message that I think the administrators need to be encouraged to market themselves to respective parents. It was a huge black mark as far as I was concerned. My other comment is as far as financial resources...I think, and granted you guys have studied this a whole lot more than I have, that it seems to me that a reasonable expectation might be that one reason that children from lower socio-economic status don't take advantage of charter schools or open enrollment in general is because of the transportation issue. So, I think that that was a good comment and good recognition. But the concern that I have with that is the funding of that, busing as we know is very expensive and my impression is that already schools are under funded. Otherwise, every school I know has fundraisers to enhance the financial resources that are given to that school. So that's the concern that I have, that busing might solve a problem but it also adds greater expense to that. The other thing about spreading out special services such as ESL when you have a central location for special services whether it's ESL or special ed

or what have you, when you spread those out it just means that cost per child is going to increase. So, I think some considerations for that on an already tight budget should already be seriously considered.

[Lopez side comment:] People get the big bucks to make those decisions...

[18th member comment:] In terms of the Hispanic population at Columbine, having sat in on a number of PTA meetings there's a lot of Spanish-speakers there and talked about what they're happy about and what they're not. People are very, very happy with the education there, Columbine is a very, very good school; I'm not sure that it's so much an issue of the Latina's wanting to move out somewhere else. They're happy with Columbine, anyway that's what I can see as much of I can or the interpretations that have gone on in those meetings. So, it's not about that, it's about that there are so few Caucasians left in the school and it's about the reputation that Columbine has from parents who have never even stepped foot in the door and the bad rep of "Oh it's got a...problem or this problem or that problem" and it stems from nothing except, in my mind, prejudice. So that....

Tape Ends.

BHS-Tape 2

[19th audience member comment:] If every child attended their own neighborhood school, we would still find schools that have little or no diversity the way you're measuring diversity. So, clearly that's not an answer that works for everything and I think to focus in on that is to miss some bigger picture issues. Secondly, I think it's important that BVSD look deep and hard at institutional choices BVSD had made in the past and in the very recent past times that have created some of the very problems that you have been working with this year. For example, when the Aurora seven elementary school was closed a decision was made by BVSD to take kids from the Fraser Meadows neighborhood which is relatively more affluent and have them districted into Eisenhower and take kids from the Aurora Seven neighborhood which is relatively less affluent, bus them past Fraser Meadows and over to what was then Mountain Park and then became Creekside. I have to wonder at why we would then be shocked, shocked, shocked that Creekside has a higher percentage of students of low socio-economic status than it used to have and why a decision that was jerry-maunders at its best happen within the school district. We see this problem with the concentration of the ESL programs, we've also seen it with the strange boundaries that we've inherited for our high schools around the district, but again in the fairly recent past we built a brand new high school at Monarch where we put in beautiful facilities. Then we took the principle of Centaurus and the Athletic Director of Centaurus H.S., both of whom were hugely popular, and put them in these brand new facilities and were then shocked, shocked, shocked that we had a huge number of students open enroll out of Lafayette into the new H.S. and I have to say, hello, what were we thinking was going to happen with that. Before we begin to try and register [garble] on families who are trying to make good choices for their individual children; we would really need to look long and hard at the choices we're making as a school district institutionally because I think a lot of them have been deeply flawed and have led us to the very situation that we're concerned about today.

[20th member comment:] I want to thank you for looking at this, I think it is a disservice when diversity isn't spread around but I do think that there are reasons for that and what I would like to see is more proactive looking at ways to provide information and things like that other than restrictions. I think people when they're looking for open enrollment are doing so for the best interests of their child and are not looking at whether or what the person sitting next to them looks like they're looking at what's good for their child. I do realize that busing is very expensive and I don't have enough information to know but I'm hoping you're looking at are there some creative models out there that look different than your traditional model that may cost about the same...buses are available to all programs because that would certainly help. I want to also repeat the same thing I've heard from several people today, I would just love to see ESL in all the schools. I think it does such a disservice to centralize it in one school because the kids that speak English don't have any diversity in their schools and the kids that are speaking one language they're speaking it on recess and they're speaking it after school and they're not learning English and that's not helpful for anyone. Also additional information about open enrollment, one observation, open enrollment there wasn't even a hyperlink on your website this year, which was the first time that happened. People would have to know and go search for it in order to find it during the open enrollment process; so a better way to access information would be helpful. Finally, I know this piece of information so I'll give it statistics. I had some contract work for Peak to Peak charter schools so here's some of the statistics from there I can't tell you what they look like at other schools. Peak to peak has enrolled a higher percentage of minority students than approximately sixty percent of other BVSD schools, it has a higher percentage of Hispanic students than half of the other BVSD schools and even those students who choose to go to Peak to Peak have to waive their rights to ESL. Peak to Peak has fifty five percent higher percentage ESL students than other BVSD schools.

[21st quick side comment:] Did give you some idea I don't think it's quite what people think.

[22nd member:] I have lots of comments but I'm going to just focus mine on transportation. For me I live on Floral Drive right by Columbine. I taught French in BVSD for a few years; obviously I'm a minority, I don't have any kids so I can't refer to that. My thing is transportation. I am for open enrollment because I understand all the benefits okay, but you have to address the transportation issue. Our transportation master plan in Boulder County says that we're not going to...we're going to decrease our single occupancy vehicles from the nineteen ninety...below the nineteen ninety six level so it just, anything you want to do—anything with open enrollment you got to start, people have to put their kids on buses or if the car pool, or the school district has to provide small busses or something like that because I mean environmentally it's bad, economically it's bad the roads and the things like that, it's bad for so many reasons and it's kind of against the ethos of Boulder and our philosophy here...getting out of our cars...and just being out in our community, and we have all these bike systems. When I taught in the Boulder Valley I'd ride my bike to every single school so I don't understand why there's not more discussion. I don't care if people want to open enroll, to some degree; I think that's fine, I understand that, but the transportation issue is huge. It is tremendous and maybe that's why there isn't more Hispanic open enrollment out of their neighborhoods, maybe, I don't know. What I do know is that it is a nightmare for people

going to elementary schools and as far as I know elementary kids still don't get driver's licenses. This should be on the top of the list and if everyone wants to open enroll that's fine but you can't drive your kid there and then how do you do it. We're not building any more roads in Boulder according to our transportation master plan. Our transit dollars are not growing because BVSD, for one, has not made an additional commitment to help fund that. We have to find more balance for transportation and I think that you can't force people to do things and you can't take away choice, but, you can say this is our community and this is the charter and goals for our community and for us to get there together, we individually have to help make that happen. You can't get in your car...you can go anywhere (to school) you want...but you can't get in the car.

[Lopez]: Are you on the transportation advisory committee?

[22nd member]; Well ya, but I came here because I just think it's important.

[Lopez] Well you are very well versed in that...that was great.

[23rd member] Well my children started elementary school in the early 90's and my husband and I were very clear; we wanted them to go to a focus school as we wanted them to be a part of bilingual education. At that point, there were two programs, Washington and Uni-Hill. We looked at both schools and they were very, very different and I wanted my children to participate in experiential bilingual education which is why I chose Uni-Hill. It was hard to get in...we had to write why our child would be a good fit for that model back before the new open enrollment rules. It was very hard, very difficult to get into Uni-Hill and I am still grieving about the fact that the district has taken these very opposite models and smashed them together and really, to me, ruined bilingual education in Boulder County. I think that's what the problem is...we need to undo what was done a number of years ago...so that there's more choice, particularly for the Spanish speaking population in this community and then perhaps we wouldn't see the segregation that's starting to happen. If people had the choice that they had 5, 6 or 8 years ago, I think people would self select in a way that would make all of us a lot happier.

[24th member] I just have a couple of things; when I open enrolled my child, I open enrolled her to a school that was more diverse and I heard someone else saying something about choosing a bilingual school, but the school that we came from that is probably way up high on here (referring to the charts) and there is a lot more diversity at the school she is in now and she does have 2nd language learners in her classroom and ESL is not provided. But there are a lot of 2nd language learners in her classroom and I think there's a lot of assumption on the part of people that when you open enroll you are trying to avoid diversity; I was looking for diversity. The other thing is; I hear others keep saying that Columbine is at 85% low socio-economic status and if I'm reading the chart right it looks like they would be 70% low socio-economic status without open enrollment. Is that true? Is that correct?

[Mack] 66 percent, I think. What's your comment?

[24th member] It's just that, clearly it's not just OE that's going on here (referring again to the charts); there is this line across the district anyway. This line of dots is going to go on anyway, it's not just OE; there are other things at work here.

[Lopez] Okay, thanks. – Right here.

[25th audience member] I would like to continue on your comment there; for the presentation, I see the underlying message from the presentation is that open enrollment

is the major source for stratification and segregation and I think first, that from the data presented that this is not supported by the data we see here and second, on the same direction here, neighborhood schools by themselves as we know, the cost of living is a form of segregation itself, so just looking at a neighborhood school doesn't solve any problems

[Mack] We are approaching 8:30 –we'll take a few more comments

[Lopez] Anyone else that hasn't spoken?

[26th member] I wanted to congratulate the task force. I think that they are helping to force the community to look at what I believe is an important problem that we need to address. I would support just about all of the things that have been suggested and I think that if people look at what has been suggested, I don't think you can get away with saying these are all soviet-style, top-down solutions. Some of them are, some are clearly free market solutions, some would cost more money but others are rather unique. There really are a bunch of different things that have been suggested here –some of them would impact OE, others would not; so I hope that; I know there are a lot of people here who are concerned about how OE might be affected; I hope you'll look at the actual things that have been proposed, accept that we really do have a situation and a trend in the district that is not good, and look at all the different things that have been proposed and see which ones you can stand and recognize that if we don't do anything, the trend will continue. Think about whether that's really where you want the district to go.

[Lopez] Thank you very much and thank you to each and every one of you for coming tonight and expressing yourselves. As you can hear, there is diversity of opinions in this room, there is a diversity of opinions among the task force, and there is a diversity of opinions probably on the school board too. The process and open discussion of this problem, the openness of listening to each other is really important. We are going to try and come forward with a set of recommendations, don't know what they are going to look like yet, but we wanted to hear from you about these topics and hopefully will put something together for the board and they too will grapple with it and they may too have some public hearings and will hear from parents once again. We all care about your kids.

[Clark] Rich and I participated in this task force with the idea that we would try to reach conclusion by June, for multiple reasons. Our target is to present to the board at their first meeting in June. My belief is that they'll ask us some questions for clarification. They may bring it up at the second board meeting in June. Our advice to them would be: any set of recommendations that we will give to them will not be fully flushed – it may be please think about and look at ways in which transportation can be expanded or provided. They are going to have to do follow up work. No set of recommendations are going to be implemented totally; all at once. My belief is that they'll spend a lot of time talking about this; they'll review it through the summer; they'll even review it through the fall – they will probably begin to talk about ways in which to phase all of this conversation in. So it will be rich and there will be lots of opportunity. We thank you for being here and sharing yourself with the task force this evening. You have given us some very rich observations to chat about with one another. Thank you very much.

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[Mack Clark, Rich Lopez] I think if you will stand up- please state your name – and please keep it to a couple of minutes

[1st Audience Member] I can speak from here? I'll make two quick comments. One is on the boundary review: in the political world – we do redistricting all the time. It's often heated, but the idea is to achieve parity. I'm hoping that if you do, if the board does go forward to the review idea, it's something that would appear on a scheduled basis, so that it would be pro-active as opposed to reactive. I was on the open enrollment oversight committee when they centralized things, um, that was fun (laughter), and it was a huge issue before it happened and it appears to be not such a big issue now. I'd speak to the requirement of a neighborhood school visitation. One of the things we thought about on that committee, and I think that was four years ago, people didn't visit the schools they wanted to open enroll to either; they applied to widely diverse schools – saying these are the needs of my child and they would list core knowledge, Community Montessori, and then something else. My thought was that can this all be for the same kid? How could all of these schools listed be the right format for your child, so I could suggest that if you are going to require a visit, that they should probably visit the school they want to open enroll to as well.

[2nd member] I'm a teacher at Angevine and it's a pretty exciting time for Angevine, making a lot of positive changes. I think it is part of the school's responsibility to see that the demographics fit the needs of the people in the neighborhood and to meet those needs. Those needs are usually pretty diverse; ranging from special education to ESL to TAG needs. The whole gamut – that's part of what Angevine's doing right now.

[Lopez] Okay, thank you. Anyone else? Over here (gestures);

[3rd member] My name is Jeff and I live in the Columbine district and I have been there for 10 years now. We have a young daughter who is three who may or may not go to Columbine...the whole neighborhood has been turning over in the last five years, just tons of young kids and I think what I've heard recently was – 356 (roughly; that's the last I heard) kids open enroll out of Columbine. I think it is about 85% Latino right now and I just know from our discussion with people in our neighborhood who have kids, that their primary concern is looking at the overall quality of education. What are the kids going to be learning and what's the (garbled) going to be like as far as the level the kids are going to be pushed to? I think that is the number one concern for everybody we've talked to - just so you are aware of that. Also, as I've looked through all the different ideas of what you are thinking about doing and looking at it from the Columbine perspective, I'm not sure about other issues, I think one of the main reasons people are open enrolling out is because of the grades, the test scores and overall 'perceived' quality of the school. It seems like a reason why the scores are so low is because it is an ESL school and it is one of only two ESL elementary schools in Boulder and I think a huge difference could be made if you could add other ESL programs and diversify it amongst the schools – then the kids who need to go there (ESL) can go to their own neighborhood school and it will add more diversity to those schools because they are the schools who may need that; and then the parents who don't feel their kids need special literacy, or at

least special literacy like in the report, that's going to (garbled) their child's ability and it would be more attractive to a school like Columbine. The other one I had checked off was the boundary review, because I'm sure...those two, to me; seem to have the most impact immediately. School visits are great, people don't visit schools and I think part of the reason is that they are lazy or already have in mind what they want to do and the other reason is; a one-day visit to a school may not be as informative as talking to people who have gone there and talking to neighbors and that could be a reason why, for me I think I have actually learned more talking to the neighbors, than going to the school and we have gone to the school too. More marketing, changing measures are all relevant for sure, I just don't think those will really impact, have a direct impact, like changing the ESL programs and changing the boundaries would. Obviously adding more transportation for our students who cannot afford it would be really helpful. The 2 number one things that I see here are program reconfiguration for adding ESL schools and the boundaries.

[Lopez] Okay - thanks John. Yes sir...

[4th audience member] My name is Jorge and I would just like to say that if the task force is going to recommend changing ESL program schools that they really look carefully at how many students are actually coming into a school (say Columbine) from outside that attendance area. I'd hate to see a group of students, or a group of families, or a community torn apart (that live in that attendance area); be forcibly separated to bring diversity to other schools. So I would ask that those numbers be looked at very carefully; and as for Lafayette, that is strictly a Boulder solution because in Lafayette, there is an ESL program in each elementary and middle school which means that transferring in has happened, right.

[Lopez] good point.

[5th member] Can I just add something; I think it's a great point – what is happening right now is neighborhoods ARE being torn apart, at least in the Columbine area – people are leaving. I think adding more ESL schools would allow it to be less torn apart.

[6th member] I just want to address the Columbine concern. I happen to be on the on-sight review this year for Columbine and it's a really fantastic school – the things that those children are learning in that school; the rate at which they are learning and the quality and dedication of the teachers in that school is unbelievable. Really; just go in, look at the school, spend two days in the school, take different blocks of time during the day – go in the morning, see what's happening in the first grade in the morning and go in the afternoon on another day; just fit it into your schedule to do it because it...fantastic things are happening in that school, but people aren't aware of it because they really don't go in and look at it.

[Lopez] Okay.

[7th audience member] I'm also a parent in the Columbine neighborhood district and, in fact, my husband and I and other neighbors have been to the school and are well aware of what's going on there. Our main concern, at least for my husband and I, is that despite the progress being made at Columbine, it is still not sufficient to serve our students. Aside from the academic issues, which continue to be a problem for non-ESL students, we also are concerned about the lack of diversity in the sense that the school is predominantly Hispanic and that's not a problem; except for that it is not a diverse environment. I think they are pushing 85 or 90% now and as much as that is a problem in

a school where the 90% is White students, it is similarly a problem where 90% of the students are Hispanic and we don't feel that Columbine is a neighborhood school in a sense that, I don't know if it was you or Mr. Clark, that mentioned that a school in a neighborhood should serve it's attendance area and as parents in that attendance area; we don't feel that Columbine, as it is currently, is sufficient to serve our student's needs.

[Lopez] Thank you.

[8th audience member] I have a couple kids at Pioneer, here in Lafayette, which is a focus school. I think we ought to...I have all these thoughts; I didn't understand why we had open enrollment, I fought for a year to keep our school (garbled) from ...choice. So I say keep the charters; keep the focus schools – I'm sure there will be more. So why are we going from one 'great' Boulder county neighborhood school to another neighborhood school; because we 'think' it's better – see we all have ideas on what different schools are like and I don't have a clue what they're like but I can tell you that's a good school, but that one's not such a good school- and I really don't have a clue, but I would say that and consider myself fairly intelligent. So I say, "Why are we competing against each other? Why would you throw any marketing dollars at trying to get more people to a certain school? We don't have money to fund schools that need basic funding. Why are we chasing after this thing that's been created, that's destroyed our county? So I say, "Get rid of it. You know you're going to have people screaming from the mountain tops, but you had people screaming at you two years ago when you closed schools. So for good or bad, you have to make some decisions. Maybe I'm a hypocrite because I go to a focus school, but had it not been for our incredible Pioneer, I'd be going to my local school and you know our school is great at Pioneer because of a lot of things; and one of the things is because we have a lot of parents that support it in a huge way and there are schools that are not getting support from parents because the parents are choosing other schools. It just doesn't make any sense, and if you guys start spending more money to market schools to compete with other schools it would make me even crazier and if I were a teacher, I would really be upset about it.

[Lopez] Okay – we'll go to this side for a little bit.

[9th member] I'm going to go to the podium, I want to make sure they hear what I've got to say, since it is going to be recorded and not everyone's here. I'm a lawyer - you might have guessed. I wanted to say certain things; first of all with this gentleman here (gestures) I certainly agree entirely, and by the way I'm from Mississippi – you guys would probably never would have guessed – so everything I say is going to be suspect from the beginning, but I have a perspective on this whole issue that probably most of you don't. First thing I'd like to say is; if you look at this chart here that the professor went out and said – you've really got only four dots here (gestures to chart) that are outside the 95 degree competence level. All of these other dots, I would hazard a guess and I hadn't done the stats on it, but we've got a pretty good handle on it, are probably within the 5% competence level of where they should be; that is, as what you'd expect and by the random population assignments. So, what am I trying to say? I'm trying to say that by national standards; this is a very good record, okay. It's not a problem that even compares to where I came from in Mississippi. In Mississippi, you would have a dot right here at the 60 percent point that would show zero White kids in a district where the population was 60 % White. See what I'm saying – that's a huge problem! That's one of the reasons we moved up here, because there is no reconciling. You know you go

to enroll, by the way I have two kids, both enrolled in High Peaks; we open enrolled from Fireside, and we're down there (in Mississippi) and a lot of our friends would say – you need to sign your kids up for private school - you're not going to have a place now. We responded that we didn't want to go to the school, just because it's all White. 'Well, you're not going to have a place' was the warning we received. We said okay, fine! Then we had the choice of going to public school; which diversity-wise was where we wanted to be, but educationally, there were some big problems! The kids there are there because they have to be there. So you have a much bigger problem than you have here. Okay, that's the first thing I want to say. So you are talking about basically four schools and I'd like to say – secondly, you've got to do something about this problem before it gets worse. I think realistically the district is on the right track, has to do something about this problem, even though it is only four schools. Now is the time to act! You must do it in a way that doesn't destroy what's already here. Why do you have to do something? I feel this is a point that needs to be made, this is why I'm at the microphone; you have to do something because if you let this continue; the law is going to tell you that they are going to do something about it. These guys here (gestures to 4 schools on chart); and I think we need to make a big distinction between socio-economic stratification and racial stratification; one is arguably legal and the other one is patently illegal; under our laws. So again, something has to be done about this because these four schools that fall beyond that 95% competence level are able to hire lawyers and force changes upon the district that none of us, including parents in their group, would want. So the question is – how best to do it? It can be done, just ask the people in Mississippi. A case called NAACP vs. Starnel Municipal School District in which the White kids were all going to the city schools and crossing the boundary and the NAACP said that wasn't right and prevailed in federal court and many of the blacks didn't like it – both sides hated the decision, but they were stuck with it because that was the law. Again, I'm saying you've got to do something about it; I think the gentleman's idea on the ESL is a great idea – I think you need more ESL. As far as changing the boundaries – I really don't think that is a particularly good solution, however, it is not one that you should rule out. But I believe that it should be done only very, very carefully because right now you've got four dots here (refers to chart again) out of twenty or thirty. You know what you've got. You change all of these boundaries up and you may have to start over. You are going to have to quantify this all over again. Right now you can tweak the system and you might be able to change it. The idea of adjustment of open enrollment guidelines when a school is significantly above or below district averages, I think that's a good idea. That's just my opinion, but I think that would get to the core of the problem quicker, before it got out of hand and that would be the most equitable way of doing it. School visitations; great idea, but I don't think it will make much difference. We open enrolled from an arguably great school (Fireside) to High Peaks. Why – because we knew our kid was gifted in math and at that time HP had synchronized math classes and she could go at her own level and Fireside did not. People open enroll for multiple reasons and I don't believe a simple visitation requirement will make much difference. Again, that's just my opinion, but that's why we're here; to give you our opinions.

[Lopez] Okay – any other non-attorneys out there? (laughter)

[10th member] My name is Kim and I'm a parent here at Angevine and there are a lot of us here tonight, which is nice to see. Boy, we have a lot of opinions on this and I

wish you'd given us the money that you paid for this because we could have told you everything that's in here already. Beyond that, I think what you came up with is very good. I have to agree about the marketing. What the school district is doing for us now is giving us quality people. I look at Centaurus, I look at Angevine and I'm speaking of Isobel Stevenson and Deirdre Pilch and you're giving us new principals at our elementary schools and instead of marketing; keep giving us the quality people. We will make it happen, we will make it go on, because we're quality people too and we have excellence. So, that's why I like the idea of requiring neighborhood school visitation, because I live in Lafayette and pretty much all the people I know open enroll out of my neighborhood and when I asked them if they even set foot in the school, they didn't. When I asked them why; they'll tell me rumors they heard; I heard these same rumors as a kid 25 years ago- they are not true, they simply are not true! We've got to get people physically in our schools, when we get them in our door; when we, as parents, push our neighbor to come visit – they always thank us and say they are so glad we did and a lot of them enroll here. A lot of things are happening and unfortunately are not reported in the papers. Our CSAP report gets reported in the paper, but not all the great things, the awards we're getting – you know; we've been recognized here at Angevine twice this year by the middle schools and the superintendent. So great things are happening at these schools, but it is a wave of change, and so I really do like the visitation idea, but I wish you'd just keep giving us more money to market ourselves. I get nervous when I hear the district is marketing us...because I'm afraid some shiny suit is going to show up with some marketing plan that doesn't fit. That's what I have to say – thanks!

[Mack] Got to watch out for those shiny suits!

[11th audience member] I would like to just add to what you had to say. I have a daughter and son who attend Lafayette Elementary and I have found that the staff is very mission driven. They are a set of teachers who have tools in their tool kit...beyond belief! They have to because there is diversity...so they have to be well trained and they have to be mission driven, because they know they cannot give up on kids. My daughter has had tremendous support because of that. She's had small reading group instruction, a very individualized and customized learning because they know that it is 'one kid at a time' that will get them there. I honestly think that the people in my neighborhood have totally missed the boat because they have not stepped in the door...to listen to the teachers and to understand that mission-driven, heart felt calling that those teachers have and so we are going to bring her from Lafayette to Angevine and hopefully on to Centaurus and I am very confident, regardless of all the scare tactics and rumors that are happening in my neighborhood, that she is going to get a terrific education and she is going to be so prepared for a number of experiences...even beyond CSAP testing! It is going to make her a bright person, so I just want to give my support to the neighborhood school concept and I want to say "kudos to the teachers who continue to teach in these settings, because your hearts are in the right places".

[12th audience member] To this woman's point, I think the only thing I would say is that...it is about being mission driven and we have fabulous schools across this county, but many of which have terribly dynamically diverse missions that drive what they do, drive what they design, drive their curriculums, drive all of those things which are meeting needs across the county in lots of ways - whether it is a neighborhood school or a school of choice and this school district – ten, twelve, fifteen years ago – we were

commending this district for how open minded they were to create that choice across the district, across the market, and to provide those differences and to provide those freedoms for those different missions to be developed and delivered across the district. So, my desire would be to have the district continue to recognize that as the over-arching goal that they would want for the district as a whole, and in order to reach your goals of some of these diversity concerns, as this gentleman indicated according to the data, we're acting early...we want to address them early. Keep in mind that the mission differences might drive some of the difference, but also lets look at what we think are some of the artificial barriers to having that choice open to people that are maybe creating some of that diversity. I think the things you have on the list are exactly right, ESL, transportation...I would love to see us have resources available to students such that if they chose to go to a school that has a very distinct mission, a very different mission that meets the student's needs...and this gentleman is right, any kid in this district could go to any of these schools and get an outstanding education...we are very, very fortunate. So, it's how you balance the servicing, the desired differences and choices with the balance of...we don't want that to go so far or we don't want artificial barriers preventing people from participating in those choices. How do we support the participation in choices that the district has been wonderful to allow to develop and to be delivered in this district? That's what I'd really like you to focus on and expand those programs that you know are drawing kids to certain schools – certain mission-specific things. Is there a way or an interest in expanding those programs to other parts of the district so that we can have a broader representation of those missions or those specific choices that we know have an interest or a need?

[Lopez] Thank you.

[12th member] I'd like to say also that this is a very strong district. I've been involved in the assessment/accreditation process for most of the schools for the last four or five years and every school has improved tremendously in that time. They have gotten to the point where they are exceptionally good schools. I have a couple of comments-one is that I noticed that you weren't asked to determine whether stratification was affecting the ability of the students to achieve. If I remember correctly, the learning gap is decreasing...every year for the last three years, at least. There is progress being made in terms of that, so even though stratification may be an issue, which is being blown out of proportion, we may be succeeding because of stratification and programs being located in different, specific areas...or there may be no correlation at all. The statistical analysis that goes with that, you can't just do one or two variables to determine what is happening. So I wonder if this is an effort to use a sledge hammer on something that you can use a tweezers to get an effective result. The curves that were shown – I question some of the conclusions that you get from those. In particular, the first conclusion that states schools with more White students tend toward great net gain. The data doesn't support that, the curves don't show that. When you bring this up to the Board, that can't be the statement, based on what is presented here...it is just not supported. The second statement where fewer White students in the attendance area tend toward moving out...that is supported, the first statement is not. Also, in curves like this, statistics where you use percentages, you have to know what the total numbers are. My initial look at that data showed that the curve would be matched if each of those dots represented equal numbers...equal number of students. Districts with an equal number of students, both White and non-White, then

I would say that the curve would be supported by having the same number of students move out in each district. So the statistical analysis that you are using to try to support these conclusions is pretty weak, really. Also I would like to find out, I think that a lot of the comments coming forward tonight are very good comments, but certainly when we get more than thirty minutes or so to think about these, we'll have additional thoughts. Is there somewhere where these can send them to be addressed?

[Lopez] Yes...send the comments to him (gestures to Mack...much laughter), mack.clark@bvsd.org. I would like to send a personal invitation to my counselor friend here; whom I had to cut off, because I know you probably had more to say. Please do send comments to Mack.

[13th member] My name is Alfredo and I have 4 boys in the Lafayette area. My two oldest are in tenth and eighth grades and went to Lafayette Elementary, which was our neighborhood school. The older boy started here at Angevine, he had some problems and we open enrolled him in Peak to Peak. We tried to correct the problem but it seems our voices are really not heard. It's very easy for an Anglo, I believe, to go to a principal or someone and talk to them, but when a person of color goes, I think you are treated very different...that's from experience. I open enrolled my two older boys in Peak to Peak and my eighth grade son has never stepped foot in Angevine and I have two more little boys at Lafayette Elementary which we had an early choice to open enroll them into Peak to Peak, but I opted not to because we are very happy with Lafayette Elementary, the teachers are great and they really do put out an effort. The principal, Jesse Esparza's retirement -that's a huge loss for the school and the community. That's a big issue there. My older boys were at Lafayette - we had Monday meetings with Dr. Lamb and neighborhood people there at the school. We talked about open enrollment and everyone was open enrolling into Boulder and I find it very funny that the school board didn't see it as a problem then, but now that it's out here...I don't know if it's a little too late, but that's kind of ...I mean, the real problem I see is I 25, where they're building out there - where they can afford to live. So I don't know if we can do anything about this, but to me, I'm happy with where my kids are right now, both at Lafayette Elementary and Peak to Peak - let the teachers teach, they are doing a great job. Let the administrators; administrate right- forget the consultant who go in and feed them a line saying we can do this, this and this with this amount of money. Let's focus on the kids, make sure they each have the best possible education and they graduate.

[Lopez] Thank You.

[14th member] I have several points. First of all, let me say I was very sorry to hear you had a bad experience at Angevine - not a very common thing. I feel a very strong component...is that the parent knows the right place to send their child. I experienced open enrollment quite a while back and I've been a parent here for seven years and I'm very involved and I'd like to feed off of that(garbled)...I don't think enough can be said. We thank the district for really focusing on hiring excellent leadership. That has really been the focus of what...the force...behind what has been changing the thrust and focus of Angevine. Things are changing here. The point of visitation - people who do not visit their schools are formulating their opinions on old information, bad information, and misinformation. I think that requiring visitation to their neighborhood school, as well as the school that they are thinking of attending is a great idea. What I would like our resident statistician, Dr. Dings, to work on statistics

that really describe our schools. The CSAP score does not describe what is going on in our schools. Teachers are making incredible growth with these students and if more students are starting at a lower base and growing considerably, but not into the advanced proficient and proficient range...that is a remarkable feat by any teacher, by any school. Somehow we need the district to develop indicators that show growth for all of our schools. If you've got a student body achieving at the high end and they are always achieving at the high end, then where is your growth, where is your change? Yes, if you want to have a really separate site and the message is you think your little Johnny is extremely bright and needs to be with all the high-achieving, bright students, then that's okay. But growth is also something that we have not addressed in this district, in terms of statistics – that needs to be addressed. I think providing transportation as an answer to mingling our kids and make them more homogenous is really the wrong approach. It's extremely expensive – I would hate to see our education dollars going to bus drivers, vehicles, maintenance and tires and all that goes along with it. If you look at how expensive it is to run transportation just for average school stuff. It's extremely expensive and the wrong answer. The answer is...getting quality leadership, quality teachers in the schools where you need to make an impact and watch that impact happen.

[Lopez] Thank you.

[15th audience member] Yes, so I'm also a parent in the Columbine neighborhood and we've just seen Columbine, year after year...huge White flight from the school and I've thought a lot about these different options and I think one thing that is a really good idea is ESL programs in different schools, but I would also look at...what I think has been most successful is drawing a more equitable proportion of students is bilingual education, as in the old Washington Elementary model, where when you provide bilingual education, you are providing something for both demographics to really grasp onto and want to be drawn to. San Francisco school district has a big problem with stratification. Now their school district is like only twelve to fourteen percent White, so White is the minority in San Francisco and ESL is a big issue there. What they came up with a few years ago was a huge bilingual plan for the entire district...so that all students would become bilingual and it would be truly a multicultural district. I would really look at more bilingual programs to create real choice for all students. I also wanted to echo your (gestures) concern about the community...any changes that would happen, particularly around boundaries, should start to happen at the kindergarten level, rather than just split the school apart. It should happen incrementally at the lowest level so communities aren't torn apart...so it would be more like the kids coming into elementary follow the new boundary guidelines rather than...okay, this fall, here's the new boundaries...everyone's going to be split up or make choices. In terms of enrollment caps, I think bilingual education addresses enrollment caps more effectively because in a bilingual program you needed to have no more than 60% ESL and 40% English speaking. Enrollment caps, like at Columbine, do not matter because the school is like 50% under-enrolled by capacity, so you can't turn away kids from Columbine – not enough kids coming to Columbine. As far as marketing, Columbine needs help because of the rumor mill and most of the parents I talked to who've open enrolled out of Columbine have not set foot in the school and based their decision on the rumors and they have no idea what a great school it is. I only know what a great school it is because I've already had one child who's gone through there and is now in college. I want to echo this gentleman's

(gestures) concern about stratification of school performance. I think it is really important to look at that socio-economic/Latino/ESL student and the effect of stratification on their high school dropout rates. What happens to these students as they go through stratified experience? I think a lot of the English-speaking students are going to do okay through the stratification experience, they may not have the enriched experience they could have by being in a more culturally diverse school, but I think when you stratify this really ethnic group of students together who don't have the exposure, like at Columbine, to a lot of other kids...I don't know the effects, but I think it would be interesting to see...who's dropping out? What are the dropout rates, where are they and why are they happening? I think that is a much bigger concern for the district. Some of these things, boundary review is good, etc...are you just moving the problem around? Do you need more of a comprehensive solution for treating higher need and ESL students and maybe creating bilingual programs across the whole district?

[Lopez] Thank You

[16th member] I think we can do a better job of publicizing the good things that are happening in the schools. I'm thinking, when I look at high school kids that are graduating right now, so it's a real poignant time...I like looking back and seeing where those kids came from. It's not just about what happened in high school, it's about what happened in middle and elementary school and I think if we have more personal stories and testimony about the great things that happened in our schools...if you could follow them through for 12 years, many of them had many, many options...so rather than...I think it would have an effect on people who say...'oh gosh if my kid goes here – then they'll never get to there'. Some of us are interested in this year, but others are interested in where, what is the broader path and options down the line and if what we share is...'gosh, that was a bad experience in that particular environment, but yet the kid sailed after that'...so I would like to look at what happens to kids when they graduate; where did they come from, what is their story? Maybe it's marketing, although I don't personally like that approach very well, it's a business approach. I think it's more about testimony about what is happening in our schools. I think it will have an effect on the school and it will have an effect on the community in a broader sense. I'm looking toward the next election – we need more money for schools and if we're talking in a positive way, rather than adversarial...it will be more positive. I have another unrelated comment; I was a part-time, temporary secretary at an elementary school and I gave a lot of tours to people who came into look at our school. Many were really rude and it was just an odd experience. I think if you are requiring people to come in...I'm just a little concerned about a really negative, crappy attitude toward staff in an elementary school. I think you are going to have to put resources and support toward this effort. There are people coming in saying, "oh, I couldn't imagine being in this school" and just leave. It is a very odd situation and particularly if you are forcing people...I like drawing people, enticing them, rather than requiring them to visit.

[Lopez] Its 8:30 and we agreed to come to an end at this time. We invite you to send some...definitely email your comments to Mack. As you heard tonight, there are a lot of opinions, a lot of diversity in the room. I can assure you that there is a lot of diversity of opinion on the task force. We are going to be wrestling with this over the next few days and we're going to make some recommendations to the Board and they, in

turn, are going to be wrestling with this issue and will make some decisions down the road. Any final points you want to make Mack?

[Clark] Again, thank you for your thoughtfulness; as you can see there is a diversity of opinion in the room on any number of recommendations and many viewpoints about what are fixes. Choice and open enrollment is a complex set of issues and it has some very wonderfully intended outcomes. It has had some unintended outcomes, but it is a piece of public policy and we have active, wide lobbying on that continually about trying to tweak it one way or the other. I think that, bottom line, for the most part here in Boulder Valley, we have...we are blessed with great schools, great teachers, great administrators, great families, and great communities that all work together. We don't want to do anything to destroy that...in fact, we wish to enhance it. We still believe that it is a value to attend a school that reflects the richness of the larger community. We feel that it is a value about honoring and respecting diversity...that our kids attend a school where not everyone is as homogenous as they are. We think that there is an inherent good in that. Boulder Valley doesn't have a lot of diversity in itself. It doesn't have numbers of forty, fifty, or sixty percent...it has numbers of twenty or fifteen percent and that's a complexity that is added to this conversation within itself. It has been my experience, in the eight years that I have worked for you all, that with whatever set of recommendations that we come forward with, some of you are going to say, "Atta boy". Others of you are going to say it differently. Please know that we are trying to do the best set of work that we can do and it will not be an easy conversation for our Board of Education to finally make a decision on this. Thank you for coming out on this beautiful evening and being part of tonight's process.