

<p style="text-align: center;">STATE OF COLORADO BOARD OF EDUCATION 201 East Colfax Avenue, #506 Denver, Colorado 80203</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">↑ BOARD USE ONLY ↑</p>
<p>In Re: Accountability Recommendations Concerning Adams 14 School District and Adams City High School</p>	<p>CASE NUMBER: 17-AR-10</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">AFFIDAVIT OF MARIA ZUBIA</p>	

I, Maria Zubia, being duly sworn under the penalty of perjury, state and declare as follows:

- 1) My name is Maria Zubia. I am over the age of 18 and I have personal knowledge of the matters set forth in this Affidavit. This Affidavit is being submitted for the record via public comment, and to create a record for a reviewing court.
- 2) I am the Secretary of the Adams County School District #14 Board of Education ("Adams 14 Board").
- 3) I was appointed to the Adams 14 Board in February 2020 due to a vacancy. In November 2021, I was voted in by acclamation to the Adams 14 Board.
- 4) During my tenure as an Adams 14 board member, I have been consistently vocal about the mistreatment the Adams 14 Board, the District, and our community have received at the hand of the Colorado State Board of Education ("SBE").
- 5) On February 12, 2021, I submitted a letter as an official complaint with the SBE involving discrimination and racism exhibited by SBE members toward the Adams 14 community.
- 6) It was a big step for me to file the complaint, as I explained in the letter, for fear of retaliation from the SBE.
- 7) I have attached my letter and evidence of its submission to this affidavit.

- 8) For over one year, the SBE and the Colorado Department of Education has failed to investigate my complaints.
- 9) I had conversations with only two SBE board members to discuss my complaint of discrimination and racism.
- 10) Those two discussions also did not result in any investigation of my formal complaint.
- 11) This lack of investigation, and sweeping community concerns of racism and discrimination are typical of the SBE and CDE.
- 12) For example, SBE Board Member Steve Durham has consistently berated the Adams 14 Board, which is 80 percent women and 80 percent Latino. He has accused the Adams 14 Board of "going rogue" and has used statements such as "shame on them" for actions we have taken against an external manager or because we have submitted a rebuttal statement to an State Review Panel ("SRP") report, as we were required to do by SRP policies.
- 13) Board Member Durham has sought the complete removal of the Adams 14 Board's authority and has sought a quasi-judicial outcome that will result in the Adams 14 Board's "disempowerment".
- 14) When the Adams 14 Board has sought Board Member Durham's recusal from cases involving Adams 14 due to his public bias, the other White board members have rallied to his side claiming he has a right to express his "opinion."
- 15) At no point is racism or discrimination acceptably couched as "opinion" particularly when that person has quasi-judicial authority to make determinations adversely affecting communities of color.
- 16) This attitude demonstrates exactly how little SBE and CDE think of the Adams 14 community, which is 90 percent students of color with the majority being Latino/a students.
- 17) The chronic systemic racism that permeates the accountability and standardized testing processes are reinforced through the attitude of SBE board members.
- 18) This affidavit is being submitted more for the benefit of any reviewing state district court, as I do not anticipate a fair and objective hearing from the SBE. The SBE accountability process is a sham, and a real objective review will only come through Colorado courts.

FURTHER Affiant sayeth naught.

Maria P. Zubia
Maria Zubia

STATE OF COLORADO

)
) ss.
)

COUNTY OF Adams

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 1st day of April, 2022, by Maria Zubia.

MARISOL MARQUEZ
NOTARY PUBLIC
STATE OF COLORADO
NOTARY ID 20214013175
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES 04/05/2025

Marisol Marquez
Notary public

4/7/2022

Dear State of Colorado School Board Members,

I am writing to you as a concerned resident, mother of a student in Adams 14, alumnus, and a proud current school-board member. I have lived in core Commerce City my entire life. I graduated from Adams City High School, in 1989. As a mother of three children, I have been an involved parent of Adams 14 for over 21 years even before my children were in school. I was also involved with Community Leadership Academy (CLA) when it first started. I was one of their first board members in 2006. I left the CLA board as I had an opportunity to be on a committee with a state-wide foundation. My children attended CLA until the new director decided that my eldest child with an IEP was no longer able to attend, as they couldn't provide for the needs on his IEP. I was told to enroll him at KMS. Later after a few years, I was told that I could not enter CLA and VPA schools per their director as he felt I was overly involved as a parent in Adams 14. In fact, he wrote a letter to my boss stating this much. My other two children had to be pulled out and enrolled in Adams 14. My son was in 8th grade and my daughter was in 5th grade. My eldest was already attending Lester Arnold High School at that time. Having my children at the CLA and VPA charter schools was the biggest mistake I made as a parent. Once my children were in Adams 14, I became an even more involved parent and was part of countless committees. In fact, I attended all the DAC meetings until I became a board member.

I have the honor of working for the first school-based health center in the state of Colorado. The school-based health center concept/model was developed by Adams 14 in 1978 and it became a separate non-profit. There are four school-based health centers in Adams 14 and for over 40 years these clinics have been providing health care in the schools to students. For over 21 years I have had the privilege to work with the families and students that live in this community, and I know firsthand the challenges that they face and the success they celebrate. I have worked with and assisted thousands of individuals over these past 21 years, from accessing basic services to advocating for their children's health care and educational needs. I have attended many celebrations of birth as well as of life. I share this as background for you to try and understand why I am asking that you take into consideration more than just test scores and one-sided narratives.

I realize that the school district has had its share of issues in the past, however, that doesn't justify penalizing the current students and their families. Unfortunately, up until February of 2020, we didn't have a board member that truly represented the majority of our Latino community, our Spanish-speaking Mexican Latinos. I am proud to say that I represent this part of my community. I see myself in these children because I am linguistically gifted, and I too interpreted and translated for my family members when I learned English in elementary school.

I have been discriminated against by individuals who assume I don't know English and my family, and I have been disrespected on many occasions for speaking two languages. This happens more often due to the messages in our society of viewing multilingualism as a deficit instead of an asset. Fortunately, the racism and discrimination I have personally experienced over my lifetime have helped me become a more empathetic advocate for others.

In 2019, after witnessing the horror of having our local school board be set up and put between a rock and a hard place by CDE. I decided that if I wanted to help, I needed to learn what was going on behind the scenes, so I applied to be a school board member. I was also tired of seeing the fleecing of our school district by people who swore they had the magic to save us, and, in the end, they came and got what they were after and left. I was tired of our community being used and abused for a few dollars. In my opinion, we didn't need saving what we needed was guidance and tools that were culturally relevant to our community. As you know, we have one of the highest percentages of linguistically gifted students, if assessed differently they could outshine anyone, as there is no better way to showcase "critical thinking" than an elementary-age child that interprets/translates for their parents' daily.

In February 2020 I was appointed to the school board and immediately realized that much of my suspicions were correct. One, there were fundamental processes missing which came from the fact that every time there was a new administration, the previous work would end and disappear.

Two, that our bilingual students were being overlooked as the emphasis continued to be on test scores of monolingual Spanish and monolingual English speakers. I learned that the Access testing was only for those students that had another language spoken in the home. I also learned that the standardized testing was being given to the same students that were learning English and the unrealistic expectation was for them to pass it in the same manner as monolingual English speakers. In other words, the standardized test was adding an extra burden to our most vulnerable students, and no one was advocating for them.

Three, the for-profit management company that was imposed upon the school district by CDE, had hired individuals with impressive credentials that unfortunately had never worked in a community like ours. I often had conversations with these individuals about the reasons things were the way they were in our community. I spent many personal hours helping them to get to know our community. I felt as if they were truly looking out for us, and I tried not to take it personally every time they reminded us that if we didn't agree with their recommendations that we needed to explain to you our reasons and run the risk of losing our districts accreditation. I had high hopes that everything they were doing was for the well-being of our children and this community. When they told me that it was a bad idea for us to meet with you, I believed them, when they wouldn't allow me to have meetings in Spanish with families, I figured they had a good reason when they wouldn't give me a bulleted list of what they were responsible for and what we could do, I assumed they were too busy. On the day I mentioned that instead of an assessment we do a mid-point evaluation of their work, I was still confident that there was nothing to worry about. I felt I could trust them as I was under the impression that they were doing everything they said they were doing, and that they were doing it for the right reasons, for the benefit of our community. I also considered them friends. So, you can imagine my shock when I found out that this wasn't the case. You have no idea the hurt I felt when I found out that all along it had been about the money and that I had allowed them to manipulate and gaslight me and my community. I felt personally responsible for having welcomed them into our community. The feeling of betrayal, broken promises, and trust is one more trauma I need to personally work on for years to come.

The fourth thing I learned is that the process that Adams 14 was enduring had **never been done before** and it was new to you as well. Since it was a new process, I was expecting that CDE was investing the best of the best staff members and that a thorough evaluation with checks and balances had been set up. After all, it was the first time that this was happening in our state. If for anything else, the ongoing learning opportunity of a private for-profit company managing a government non-profit entity. Especially as eight million of taxpayer dollars were being invested into something new that no one really knew what it would look like. I doubt that just "winging it" or "building the plane as it was flying" would be a good justification to use 8 million dollars.

The fifth thing I learned is that a global pandemic was also something new that no one had lived through before and that instead of being concerned for the health, safety & well-being of our students, their families, and our staff, you were more concerned with the lack of increase in test scores. During the pandemic, the Adams 14 area was one of the communities highly impacted by COVID in the state of Colorado. It had one of the highest numbers of transmissions. During this time, we had families that were in daily survival mode. Yet, your main concern was still test scores. Instead of humanizing the COVID data in this area, you did the opposite. You dehumanized our children as you refer more to their test scores than you do them personally. You dehumanized them when you were told that some of our high schoolers left school to work to support their families, and your response was to ask what we were going to do to get them to graduate as you didn't want them to get GEDs. You dehumanized us when you insisted that the reprieve the legislature put in place for all Colorado school districts did not apply to Adams 14. You dehumanized us when we came to you with serious issues with the management company and instead of listening to us with the intent to understand us, you scolded us and coerced us into another contract with the same company. You dehumanized us when you accepted the one-sided narrative and failed to be impartial and fair. You dehumanized us when you publicly disrespected and ridiculed this local board by blaming us for the crashing and burning of the plane you were building as it was flying.

I am currently learning that politics and money are the driving force and the motivation in public education at the state level. According to you, the local board is made up of "adults behaving badly" and is a "rogue" board.

However, the local board is made up of all new members that were not on in 2017-2018 when the state order was created. If you were really looking out for the educational needs of our students, you would have made it a point to meet with the local board as soon as the new members were sworn in. Yet not once have you met with, included, or acknowledged the members of the Adams 14 board. I am proud to be a member of the local board that is made up of responsible adults that are driven by a child-centered, student-focused mission of providing what is needed to lead to more equitable outcomes for all children attending Adams 14 schools. If according to you this makes us "adults behaving badly" and a "rogue" board, then so be it. I for one will not stop advocating for my child and the rest of the children, families, and staff of my school district.

As a mother of a smart teenage girl that is witty, empathetic, and has a strong sense of justice, I have to say that I get personally offended anytime you mention that our children in Adams 14 are not learning. As my daughter is 16 and will be doing concurrent enrollment. She is a member of the city of Commerce City's youth commission. She has been involved in the community since she was in elementary school and ran for class president as a new student and has advocated for her peers and others since then. Just like my daughter, there are many other children in Adams 14 that are similar. I suggest that you refrain from expressing your dislike for my child and her test scores. It's insulting to me but mostly it's hurtful to her as you do not know our story and you fail to recognize and acknowledge her as a person, not just a test score.

After my mother's death in October of 2019, I realized that my mission to help others was what I needed to continue doing as there is nothing more important than life itself. My mother's death reinforced this for me on a very personal level, as she would tell me, "we take nothing with us when we die", therefore nothing should be above the health and wellbeing of individuals. Any decision besides innovative status will be causing detrimental harm to the students in Adams 14. Please humanize my community as we are not just test scores. I hope you can reconsider the options and take into consideration the trauma many of our children have had and how any adverse decision will retraumatize them.

Respectfully,


Maria D. Zubia

February 12, 2021

Dear State Board of Education Members,

My name is Maria D. Zubia, I reside at 6295 East 66th Avenue, Commerce City, CO 80022. I am a lifelong resident of Commerce City. I am an alumna of Adams 14 School District. I am a parent that has an Adams 14 graduate and the youngest of my three children is 15 and a sophomore at Lester Arnold High School. My daughter is a member of the City Council's Youth Commission and has been on the school's student council. I share this information so you will understand how as a parent, I try my best to set a good example for my children.

It will be 20 years in April that I have worked for Kids First Health Care, a non-profit pediatric and adolescent health clinic. This organization was the first school-based health center in Colorado, and it was initially created by Adams 14. We now have eight clinic sites in four school districts. Our focus has been, and continues to be, to provide high-quality health care services to children in underserved areas. We do this by truly being patient focused, patient-centered, and providing wrap-around services to our patients regardless of the parent's ability to pay. I am the Director of Community Outreach and my work usually consist of being out in the community and fostering our partnerships with school districts and other community-based organizations. I also facilitate a clinic community advisory committee which includes parents, youth, and community partners. In 2009, I developed a youth advisory board called VOIHCE (Voicing Our Imperative Health Concerns Every day). Most recently we had a committee in three high schools and at one time we also had one in two middle schools. Part of my job consists of finding community resources for families in need. Anything from health insurance to clothing, food, plus much more. Please note that I am not writing this letter in my capacity as an employee of Kids First Health Care.

Since the age of six I have been translating, interpreting, and advocating, not only for my family but for anyone in need of help. My parents instilled values in us based on integrity, that focused on giving and sharing the little we had, which included my time and talent of being bilingual. We believe that you do not need to have money or a title to be a philanthropist. A philanthropist can be anyone who freely gives of their valuable resources that include time, talent, treasure, and testimony. All of which I do in one way or another. I consider myself a well-versed community navigator/promotora. I assist families from all over, even out-of-state, that require assistance in obtaining services for their basic needs.

For many years, I have facilitated a resource-sharing network boasting over 800 members representing different community organizations. Our goal is to better understand the services and resources that are available in our communities so we can better serve the families we work with. This network is called the Community Resource Network (CRN). I have a Facebook group where we all share resource announcements and updates. The CRN work is part of my philanthropy work as I volunteer to run this program.

I am providing this information to give you context as to what I do and why I am passionate about advocating for my community.

My other volunteer work has been extensive as I have been volunteering my time since 2001 for Adams 14 in one way or another. From attending DAC and other committees for almost 20 years to providing presentations to school staff to providing car seat safety presentations to the preschools, plus much more. Most recently, I volunteer my time as a proud Adams 14 Board Member.

First, I want to acknowledge that your job is not an easy one, and I thank you for the time you dedicate to serve on the State Board of Education. I am writing this letter to bring to your attention to a sensitive matter.

As a Mexican American US citizen, a bilingual alumna, a mother, a youth mentor, a community resident, a community leader, a philanthropist, and as a school board member, I found some of the comments made during the February State Board meeting offensive. In fact, the comments were derogatory and came across as racist. I must say that it is not the first time I have felt this way about comments made during State Board meetings. I had not said anything before for fear of retaliation since some of you appear to have a personal dislike for our school district/community and the last thing I wanted is for you to take it out on our school district. However, there comes a point when enough is enough and I am to that point. It seems that no matter what we do or what we say some of you seem to believe that it is ok to continuously look down on us and treat us if we are less worthy of empathy and understanding than anyone else. I doubt that I need to remind you that as elected officials you represent all of us not just a privileged few.

I ask that you take time to self-reflect on some of the comments made, especially at this last meeting. I suggest you watch this previous meeting from my perspective and my daughter's perspective and ask yourselves what kind of role model you want to be for all the students in our state. Watch the part where MGT presented and observe the offensive and accusatory undertone comments. There were a few that made me come to tears.

Your lack of understanding and empathy for the sacrifices our students, families, and staff have had to make is appalling, as many of them are in primary survival mode. Especially now, when the focus on equality is of utmost importance as we are all striving for equitable outcomes for everyone in all areas from health care to education during this most difficult time in history. The pandemic is like a wave at the beach that rolls in, and once it retreats, it leaves behind the hidden items you would not otherwise see. You know they are there, but you can't see them until the wave retreats back into the ocean. During this pandemic, the inequalities of the system showed. It exposed that those in poverty were in most need and are being most impacted. It revealed a high percentage of hunger, and it continues to tell of a lack of equitable resources. It also showed that government systems, including education were not set up for people of color and much less for bilingual and multilingual children. I happen to be one of these people as I went through more than any human being should have to go through as a child and in my youth. These systems were not much help then and are not much help now.

Although we all value education, unfortunately for most of us in Colorado's less privileged areas have many more competing priorities. I am happy to share my personal story with you someday and some of the most emotional and heartbreaking stories I have of families in my community. Please note there is no other community like ours that has had to persevere for decades on our own. We deal with, what I call pre-existing environmental conditions that have harmed our community. We continue to be surrounded by industry, highways, the Suncor refinery, railroads, the US Arsenal, etc. that have been polluting our air and water for decades. We have some of the oldest school buildings that are not

conducive to modern learning. We have doubled up and tripled up families living together because of the high cost of living. We have students that have been through trauma that would break any adult.

Yes, we do have a resilient community and I am proud of my community. I invite you to come spend time in core Commerce City. Don't come just once as a public official; go as yourself and visit our community multiple times. Go shopping for groceries at Save A Lot, Mi Pueblo Market, La Pradera Carniceria, or Walmart. Take the number 48 RTD bus from downtown Denver to Commerce City and observe everything you see. I am sure you will learn more and may even empathize and appreciate how difficult it is for some of our families in this community.

If my letter comes as a shock to you, imagine how difficult it has been for me over the years. I am genuinely bilingual which means I can fluently read, write, and speak in Spanish and English. I advocate for culture relevancy when we speak with other cultures because of my personal lived experiences. My first job was in the fields when I was 11 years old. I have been working for a paycheck since I was 14. Ever since I was young, I have heard racist comments and have been discriminated against and publicly embarrassed for being brown and speaking Spanish. Over the years, not once did the people who felt the need to make me feel like a second-class citizen take the time to know me, the woman, the mother, the community leader, the navigator, the advocate, the helper, the philanthropist, the volunteer...not once. To hear passive aggression coming from other community leaders is disappointing and hurtful.

I realize that you may not even know that this is how some of your comments came across, which is another reason I felt it was necessary to bring it to your attention. Everyone else that feels the same way fear saying anything. Unfortunately, therefore, our society does not improve equality as people continue to do the same thing because they don't know any different. I hope that this feedback helps you start a conversation to start on a learning journey of what equality, cultural sensitivity, and culturally centered means.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Maria D. Zubia

(Spanish Version – versión en español)

12 de febrero de 2021

Estimados miembros del Consejo Estatal de Educación,

Mi nombre es Maria D. Zubia, y resido en 6295 East 66th Avenue, Commerce City, CO 80022. Soy residente de toda la vida de Commerce City. Soy una ex alumna del distrito escolar Adams 14. Soy una madre que tiene un graduado del distrito escolar Adams 14 y la menor de mis hijos tiene 15 años y está en el grado 10 de la escuela Lester Arnold High School. Mi hija es miembro de la comisión juvenil del consejo de la ciudad y ha estado en el consejo estudiantil de la escuela. Comparto esta información para que puedan comprender que, como madre, me esfuerzo por darles un buen ejemplo a mis hijos.

En abril se cumplirán 20 años que trabajo con Kids First Health Care, una clínica de salud pediátrica y de adolescentes sin ánimo de lucro. Esta organización fue el primer centro de salud basado en la escuela en Colorado, y fue creado inicialmente por Adams 14. Ahora tenemos ocho centros clínicos en cuatro distritos escolares. Nuestro objetivo ha sido y sigue siendo proporcionar servicios de atención de salud de alta calidad a los niños de las áreas más necesitadas. Lo hacemos enfocándonos realmente en el paciente, centrándonos en el paciente y proporcionando servicios integrales a nuestros pacientes independientemente de la capacidad de pago de los padres. Soy el Director de Extensión Comunitaria y mi trabajo regularmente consiste en estar en la comunidad y fomentar nuestras asociaciones con distritos escolares y otras organizaciones comunitarias. También facilito un comité asesor de la comunidad de la clínica formado por padres, jóvenes y socios de la comunidad. En 2009 creé una junta consultiva de jóvenes llamada VOIHCE. Mas reciente teníamos un comité en tres escuelas secundarias y, en un momento dado, también teníamos uno en dos escuelas intermedias. Parte de mi trabajo consiste en encontrar recursos comunitarios para las familias necesitadas, desde seguros de salud hasta ropa, alimentos y mucho más. Por favor, tenga en cuenta que no estoy escribiendo esta carta en mi posición de empleada de Kids First Health Care.

Desde la edad de seis años, yo he estado traduciendo, interpretando y abogando, no sólo por mi familia, sino por quien necesitaba ayuda. Mis padres nos inculcaron valores basados en integridad que se enfocaban en dar y compartir lo poco que teníamos, incluyendo mi tiempo y talento de ser bilingüe. Creemos que no es necesario tener dinero o un título para ser filántropo. Un filántropo puede ser cualquiera que dé libremente sus valiosos recursos que incluyen tiempo, talento, tesoro y testimonio, todo lo cual yo hago de una manera u otra. Me considero una navegante/promotora de la comunidad muy versada. Asisto a familias de todas partes, incluso fuera del estado, que requieren ayuda en obtener servicios para sus necesidades básicas.

Durante muchos años, he facilitado una red de intercambio de recursos con más de 800 miembros que representan a diferentes organizaciones comunitarias. Nuestro objetivo es conocer mejor los servicios y recursos disponibles en nuestras comunidades para servir mejor a las familias con las que trabajamos. Esta red se llama Red de Recursos Comunitarios (CRN). Tengo un grupo de Facebook en el que todos compartimos anuncios y recursos. El trabajo de la CRN forma parte de mi labor filantrópica, ya que trabajo como voluntaria para dirigir este programa.

Proporciono esta información para darles un contexto sobre lo que hago y el por qué me apasiona abogar por mi comunidad.

Mi otro trabajo voluntario ha sido extenso ya que he estado ofreciendo mi tiempo desde 2001 para Adams 14 de una manera u otra. Desde asistir a DAC y otros comités durante casi 20 años a proporcionar presentaciones al personal de la escuela a proporcionar presentaciones de seguridad del asiento del coche a los preescolares, y mucho más. Más recientemente, ofrezco mi tiempo como un orgulloso miembro de la junta directiva del distrito escolar Adams 14.

Primero, quiero reconocer que el trabajo de ustedes no es fácil, y les agradezco el tiempo que dedican a servir en la junta estatal de educación. Les escribo esta carta para llamar su atención sobre un asunto delicado.

Como ciudadana estadounidense de origen mexicano, exalumna bilingüe, madre, mentora de jóvenes, residente de la comunidad, líder de la comunidad, filántropa y miembro de la junta escolar, encontré ofensivos algunos de los comentarios expresados en su reunión de febrero de la junta estatal de educación. Es más, los comentarios fueron de forma derogatoria y que parecían racistas. Debo decir que no es la primera vez que me siento así por comentarios expresados durante las juntas estatal de educación. No había dicho nada antes por miedo a las represalias, ya que algunos de ustedes parecen tener una antipatía personal por nuestro distrito escolar/comunidad y lo último que quería es que la tomaran en contra de nuestro distrito escolar. Sin embargo, llega un punto en el que ya es suficiente, y yo ya llegué a ese punto. Pareciera que no importa lo que hagamos o lo que digamos, algunos de ustedes parecen creer que está bien mirarnos continuamente por debajo de nivel y tratarnos como si fuéramos menos dignos de empatía y comprensión que los demás. Dudo que tenga que recordarles que, como funcionarios electos, nos representan a todos, no sólo a unos pocos privilegiados.

Les pido que se tomen un tiempo para auto reflexionar sobre algunos de los comentarios dichos, especialmente en esta última reunión. Les sugiero que vean su reunión anterior desde mi perspectiva y la de mi hija y que se pregunten qué tipo de ejemplo quieren ser para todos los estudiantes de nuestro estado. Vean la parte en la que presentó MGT y observen los comentarios ofensivos y casi acusadores. Hubo algunos que me hicieron llorar.

Su falta de comprensión y empatía por los sacrificios de nuestros estudiantes, familias y personal que han tenido que hacer es alarmante, ya que muchos de ellos están en modo de supervivencia primaria. Especialmente ahora, cuando el enfoque en la igualdad es de suma importancia, ya que todos nos estamos esforzamos por obtener resultados equitativos para todos en todas las áreas, desde la atención medica hasta la educación, durante este momento tan difícil de la historia. La pandemia es como una ola en la playa que llega, y una vez que se retira, deja atrás los elementos ocultos que de otro modo no verían. Saben que están ahí, pero no pueden verlos hasta que la ola se retira al océano. Durante esta pandemia, se mostraron las desigualdades del sistema. Expuso que los pobres eran los más necesitados y los más afectados. Expuso un porcentaje alto de hambre, y sigue hablando de la falta de recursos equitativos. También reveló que los sistemas gubernamentales, incluida la educación, no estaban creados para la gente de color y mucho menos para los niños bilingües y multilingües. Resulta que yo soy una de esas personas, ya que pasé por más de lo que cualquier ser humano debería pasar cuando era niña y en mi juventud. Estos sistemas no fueron de mucha ayuda entonces y no lo son ahora.

Aunque todos valoramos la educación, por desgracia, la mayoría de los habitantes de las áreas menos privilegiadas de Colorado tenemos muchas más prioridades que compiten entre sí. Algún día me gustaría compartir mi historia personal con ustedes y algunas historias más emotivas y desgarradoras que tengo de las familias de mi comunidad. Tengan en cuenta que no hay ninguna otra comunidad como la nuestra que haya tenido que perseverar durante décadas por sí sola. Nos enfrentamos a lo que yo llamo condiciones ambientales preexistentes que han perjudicado a nuestra comunidad. Seguimos estando rodeados por la industria, las autopistas, la refinería Suncor, los ferrocarriles, el arsenal federal,

etc., que llevan décadas contaminando nuestro aire y nuestra agua. Tenemos algunos de los edificios escolares más antiguos que no son propicios para el aprendizaje moderno. Tenemos familias duplicadas y triplicadas que viven juntas debido al alto coste de la vivienda. Tenemos estudiantes que han pasado por traumas que romperían a cualquier adulto.

Sí, tenemos una comunidad resistente, y estoy orgullosa de mi comunidad. Les invito a que vengan a pasar tiempo en el centro de Commerce City. No vengan sólo una vez como funcionarios públicos; vayan como ustedes mismos y visiten nuestra comunidad varias veces. Vayan a comprar alimentos a Save A Lot, Mi Pueblo Market, La Pradera Carnicería o Walmart. Tomen el autobús RTD número 48 desde el centro de la ciudad de Denver hasta Commerce City y observen todo lo que ven. Estoy segura de que aprenderán más y pueden incluso empatizar y apreciar lo difícil que es para algunas familias en esta comunidad.

Si mi carta les resulta muy sorprendente, imaginen lo difícil que ha sido para mí a lo largo de los años. Soy auténticamente bilingüe, lo que significa que puedo leer, escribir y hablar en español y inglés. Abogo por la relevancia cultural cuando hablamos con otras culturas debido a mis experiencias vividas personales. Mi primer trabajo fue en el campo cuando tenía 11 años. Llevo trabajando por un sueldo desde los 14 años. Desde joven he escuchado comentarios racistas y he sido discriminada y avergonzada públicamente por ser morena y hablar español. Durante los años ni una sola vez, las personas que sintieron la necesidad de hacerme sentir como una ciudadana de segunda clase, se tomaron el tiempo de conocerme a mí, la mujer, la madre, la líder comunitaria, la navegante, la defensora, la ayudante, la filántropa, la voluntaria...ni una sola vez. Escuchar la agresión pasiva de otros líderes comunitarios es decepcionante e hiriente.

Me doy cuenta de que tal vez ni siquiera sepan que así es como se percibieron algunos de sus comentarios, lo cual es otra de las razones por las que consideré necesario hacérselo saber. Todos los que sienten lo mismo temen decir algo. Por lo tanto, desgraciadamente, nuestra sociedad no mejora la igualdad, ya que la gente sigue haciendo lo mismo porque no sabe lo contrario. Espero que estos comentarios sirvan para iniciar una conversación para empezar a aprender lo que significa la igualdad, la sensibilidad y enfoques culturales.

Gracias por su tiempo.

Sinceramente,

Maria D. Zubia

Respectfully,
Maria D. Zubia
Adams 14 BOE Secretary

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Maria Zubia <mdzubia.boe@adams14.org>
Date: Tue, Mar 9, 2021 at 1:06 PM
Subject: Re: Thank you
To: Scheffel, Debora <dscheffel@ccu.edu>

Good Afternoon,

I left you a phone message stating that I would reply via email.

Again, my condolences on the passing of your father. There are no words that help during this time of grief. I am keeping you and your family in my prayers.

Thank you for your patience as I have been working 12–13-hour days for the past few weeks and have had limited availability. I appreciate you kindly reaching out to me. It means more than you know as you were the first of two members that reached out.

I, unfortunately, have not had a chance to go back and review the recorded meeting due to lack of time. However, I can share with you the following few examples.

- Someone asked for an explanation of "Equity Centered Blah Blah Blah". As one of the main advocates in my community for cultural relevance, the way this question was phrased was beyond hurtful. It could have been asked without adding the "Blah" words.
- There was also a question regarding the following (paraphrased) - *You said you lost students that have to work to support their families...what are you doing for credit recovery as we want them to graduate and not get a GED?* Unfortunately, in my community this is part of our reality. As we have a high percentage of families that live paycheck to paycheck and if the parent/s can't find jobs, the eldest of their kids end up working to help support their parents and siblings. Most of them would prefer school, yet they are their families only income/support, one that is not taken lightly. These students and families value education, yet because their circumstances change it requires prioritizing and making difficult decisions, I too have been in similar situations and can relate to the difficulty. Which is why I was hoping that recognizing the survival mode these students are in was done first. As well as acknowledging how difficult it must be for them to be bearing a responsibility that does not belong to them but they happily do, for their parents and siblings.
- I understand that there must be a matrix of some kind for evaluating how students are doing, what I do not understand is how all students are lumped together as a whole considering the individual difference and social challenges. For example, we all agree that the pandemic impacted low-income families and immigrant families more than the average middle-class family in our state. Yet, the expectations are the same for all students regardless of circumstances and without taking into consideration the impact COVID has had on the exact same families that we all agreed were the most negatively impacted. As a school district we are in the COVID hot zone of Adams County and many families have been severely impacted by the pandemic, including mine as I lost two uncles in May. Yet the tone of the conversation came across as if there was to be absolutely no reason why our district had not accomplished more or even stayed on track. Another (paraphrased) comment was, *a lot of money for such little results.*

I have an analogy I have been sharing almost since the pandemic started:

"We may be in the same storm, but we are all on different boats. Some are on speed boats, house boats, yachts and others are on fishing boats, canoes, and rafts, yet if we work together, we can all weather the storm."

Hope this helps and again thank you for reaching out.

Respectfully,
Maria D. Zubia
Adams 14 BOE Director

On Sun, Feb 21, 2021 at 9:26 PM Scheffel, Debora <dscheffel@ccu.edu> wrote:

Dear Maria,

Thank you for your letter, sent to the State Board of Education, last week. My father passed away this past week, and I was very close to him, and grieving the loss deeply since.

I am so sorry any comments made by the Board last week were offensive. If I personally was offensive, I am devastated, because I would wish not to ever be so. If you want to visit, call my cell (303 638 4730). Thank you, again, for your letter. Debora

Debora L. Scheffel, PhD

Dean & Professor

School of Education

Colorado Christian University

O: 303.963.3147 E: dscheffel@ccu.edu

www.ccu.edu



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Titus 2:7-8, 11-13; II Tim. 2: 24-25

Respectfully,
Maria D. Zubia
Adams 14 BOE Secretary

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Colorado State Board of Education Relations <state.board@cde.state.co.us>
Date: Wed, Feb 17, 2021 at 7:05 AM
Subject: RE: Sensitive Matter Letter
To: Maria Zubia <mdzubia.boe@adams14.org>
Cc: Maramba, Angela <Maramba_A@cde.state.co.us>

Dear Ms. Zubia:

Thank you very much for your recent email. I wanted to let you know that it has been received and shared with all of the members of the State Board of Education.

Sincerely,

Carol Earle
Assistant to the Director of
State Board Relations

From: Maria Zubia <mdzubia.boe@adams14.org>
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:24 PM
To: Colorado State Board of Education Relations <state.board@cde.state.co.us>; Maramba, Angela <Maramba_A@cde.state.co.us>; commissioner <commissioner@cde.state.co.us>
Subject: Sensitive Matter Letter

Good Evening,

I ask that this letter be shared with the members of the State Board.

Thank you.

Respectfully,
Maria D. Zubia
Adams 14 BOE Director

Sent from Adams 14 Schools.

Sent from Adams 14 Schools.