

## **Comments by Chris Wrather on behalf of LAPAC at April 1 hearing of County Board of Education**

Chairman Hill and Board members, my name is Chris Wrather. I am chair of the Los Alamos Planning Advisory Committee. Our job is to advise county decision makers as we update the Los Alamos Community Plan, and to review development proposals in and around our town.

In October Mrs. Read briefed our committee on this project. She fielded questions from the committee and the community. Her presentation was conceptual, so there was no action to be taken. But based on the comments from the community and questions asked by the committee members, the rough outlines of public opinion could be sensed.

Our community is a generous one. The opportunity to help disadvantaged children resonates. I believe the Children's Project School will have substantial community support provided that it turns out to be as advertised: innovative, college prep, selective in its admissions, financially viable and a part of the community.

We are also a community that can be wary of development proposals – we have had our share of proposals in the past which have made promises that could not be kept...one on the very same piece of land. We value our quiet, peaceful lifestyle. Some fear that the school will end up being an orphanage housing children with behavior problems, bringing law enforcement issues to our small town. Perhaps this might result from bureaucratic obstacles or lack of funding.

So I believe the path of public opinion will depend on how the story of the project unfolds. I can promise that our committee will be open-minded, and I believe that the community as a whole will approach it with a generosity of spirit.

Thanks for the opportunity to speak.