

**Transcript of the November 2, 2022, Orange County Board of Education Meeting**

**SPARKS:** Okay. In terms of adopting the regular meeting of November 2, 2022.

**WILLIAMS:** I make a motion to adopt.

**BARKE:** Second.

**SPARKS:** All in favor?

**BARKE, WILLIAMS, SPARKS, SHAW, VALDES:** Aye.

**SPARKS:** Okay, 5-0. And the Minutes, approving the regular meeting of October 5, 2022.

**WILLIAMS:** So moved.

**BARKE:** Second.

**SPARKS:** All in favor?

**BARKE, WILLIAMS, SHAW, VALDES:** Aye.

**SPARKS:** Aye, 5-0. Okay. Nina, do we have any public comments related to closed session?

**BOYD:** We do not.

**SPARKS:** All right, so now we are going to take a break, go into closed session to conduct an appeal hearing, followed by the closed session items. Thank you.

[The Orange County Board of Education held a closed session and returned to open session.]

**SPARKS:** Okay, we will call the meeting back to order. Welcome, everybody. We are going to continue closed session after the meeting, so we won't have a report out at this time. We will start with our invocation, Reverend Sarah Averett-Phillips, welcome.

**PHILLIPS:** Thank you for the kind invitation to be with you today. I'm Reverend Sarah Averette-Phillips, Pastor at Brea Congregational United Church of Christ in Brea, California. I invite us all to move into a spirit of prayer or a quiet contemplation that suits you and your tradition. Spirit of life and love, God known by many names, and yet fully known by none. We are reminded today of the seasons of life that surround us.

As the days grow shorter, as temperatures get colder, as our earth welcomes precipitation soaking into the dry ground. Reminders of summer falling away as the fall welcomes us in. We strive to use this time as a time of harvest. The fall and winter seasons may feel like a time of death as we see leaves change and darkness return. But instead, we seek to use this season as a way to look at what we have done, harvesting what we can, letting the things that don't serve

your call of inclusion and community wither and die, and ultimately, tilling the earth for what may come again. Your promise that no matter how long fall and winter may feel, spring always comes back around again.

So often we get stuck in the way things have always been. But in these colder, slower seasons, life's ever-changing realities that are reflected in your very creation remind us that in order to move into what we will be, we must let go of what was. It is your ever expanding sense of welcome that encourages us to let go of our bigotries, to let go of our commitments to other people who are different than us, and to truly envision a world where all are welcome and celebrated for exactly who they are.

Today in this small part of your big world, oh, God, we ask that your presence serve as a constant reminder that we might work for an education system that affirms all students, that allows them to explore books and stories and lessons that expand their ways of thinking; that challenge them and create in them global citizens who too will be agents of change in a hurting world. We ask that those who have been entrusted to make these decisions fill themselves called into harvesting what is good and preparing the ground for what will be, even if it seems painful along the way.

We give abundant thanks for the calls of justice, for celebrating the diversity of your creation and for envisioning a world where our children are safe and healthy, free from violence and where all may be one, as you envisioned. In your holy name we pray, amen.

**SHAW:** Amen.

**SPARKS:** Amen. Thank you, Reverend. Okay. Now I would like to bring up our dedicated member of the public, Linda Cone to lead our Pledge of Allegiance. Everyone can stand.

**CONE:** Thank you for standing. As a previous speaker said, we are entering I think a time of gratitude. I think to be grateful for what we have, including this great nation, is probably the most important thing. Consider that as you salute our flag. Repeat after me. I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

**SPARKS:** Thank you, Linda. Okay. Nina, are there any introductions?

**BOYD:** We have one introduction. We have Destiny Ho who is a student at Huntington Beach Union High School District and she is a senior at Fountain Valley High School. She is here to take notes and watch the board activity in terms of the board meeting.

**SPARKS:** Okay. Welcome. Is she in the audience somewhere?

**BOYD:** She is. Destiny.

**SPARKS:** You want to stand up so we can?

**BOYD:** Destiny?

**VALDES:** Who is she?

**BOYD:** She is going to stand.

**SPARKS:** Say hi.

**BARKE, SPARKS:** Welcome.

**SPARKS:** Okay, thank you. Are there any comment cards received?

**SHAW:** A whole bunch of them.

**BOYD:** Before you bring them up—

**SPARKS:** Okay.

**BOYD:** If you give us just one minute?

**SPARKS:** Sure.

**BOYD:** It seems we have more audience to be seated, so the guys are going to open the side rooms.

**SPARKS:** Okay, great.

**BOYD:** Just didn't want the noise to interfere.

**SPARKS:** Okay, no worries. So should we wait then? Okay.

**BOYD:** Maybe Tim can tell you how many.

**SHAW:** Yeah,

**BOYD:** I think there is numbers on the back, Tim, on the last one, so you can say how many there are.

**SHAW:** Okay.

**SPARKS:** It looks like about 30.

**SHAW:** Thirty one, thirty one.

**WILLIAMS:** We going to limit the time?

**SPARKS:** Yeah. Do we want to—?

**WILLIAMS:** That is an hour right there.

**SPARKS:** Do we want to limit the time to 90 seconds or to two minutes?

**SHAW:** Two minutes maybe.

**WILLIAMS:** Yeah, that is an hour already.

**SPARKS:** Two minutes.

**SHAW:** Right.

**SPARKS:** That is an hour.

**WILLIAMS:** Yeah, but, yeah.

**SPARKS:** Okay.

**WILLIAMS:** That is what I think is reasonable.

**SPARKS:** Two minutes or less, is that okay?

**WILLIAMS:** That would be your executive pleasure.

**SHAW:** Want me to say it?

**SPARKS:** Sure, two minutes or less.

**SHAW:** Okay.

**BARKE:** Well that was pretty quick. I didn't expect all those chairs to be set up.

**SPARKS:** I know.

**BARKE:** I guess there were some anticipation.

**SPARKS:** Ooh.

**BOYD:** We set it up just in case.

**BARKE:** Oh do you? Oh, okay. I was like, wow. That is very impressive.

**SHAW:** That is Andy Horowitz, right?

**SPARKS:** Yeah.

**SHAW:** (Inaudible).

**SPARKS:** Because I asked him to come.

**SHAW:** Okay.

**BOYD:** We weren't expecting all these people.

**SPARKS:** Well, I just want to give a quick shout out to our staff. You guys don't even need to go to the gym because you are working out right here right now. Thank you for your help.

**SHAW:** We do have over 30 comment cards, so what we think we are going to ask you to do is if we could maybe limit our comments to two minutes each so we could try to get through everybody in our time. Okay? Darou will set the time for two minutes. I will call a name, and then I will call who is on deck, so you can be ready, so we can kind of move through our speakers in an expeditious manner. We are going to start with Lynne, followed by Nancy.

**LYNNE:** Before I start, Madam President, may I be heard on the issue of the timing?

**SPARKS:** Two minutes or less.

**LYNNE:** Yes. May I address that?

**SPARKS:** Yeah.

**LYNNE:** Thank you. Hopefully this is not my time. But I do think, as you know I have been here for a number of meetings and it is often permitted when there is going to be a shorter calendar or agenda, that we can allow more time for the comments. I do appreciate that there are a number of them, and yet there are a lot of people who have come here tonight and have prepared and who want to address you with the issues that they think are important, underscore. And since they haven't been here before, I simply ask you to reconsider in light of what I have just said, that there are many people here who have prepared, who have come, who would like to address you. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you. Okay. I think we will go ahead and continue. Two minutes.

**LYNNE:** Like a lightning bolt, something that I recently read stuck me when the protagonist said of a scheming clergyman, "He masks his bigotry with benevolence." I advise the immediate and permanent rejection of Policy 400-4. If not, then I suggest that should any of you share 400-4's screaming phobias, you remove it from consideration until after you have appointed a materials and curriculum committee with two board members, two or three Superintendent appointed, department professionals tasked to determine whether there is any substantial evidence of real, soul or systemic transgressions by our teachers, suspected or caught

indoctrinating students to embrace racism, anti-law enforcement-ism, Stalinism, make every kid trans-ism, gender-ism, rumor-ism, et cetera, et cetera.

I ask you directly, is there any evidence this policy addresses an actual, but unaddressed issue within the school's 400-4 specifically target? It can escape mindful readers that the proposer of this policy intends it to be a public indictment. A list of condemnations of charges against public schools, administrators, counselors, librarians, most directly, against our noble and precious classroom teachers. That is wholly unconscionable. There is zero evidence, not a scintilla, not even a whiff that 400-4's enumerated conduct has ever occurred in our Orange County schools. Our County Board of Education simply must unfailingly demonstrate education's highest goal: critical thinking. There is no evidence of critical thinking here. Please do not mask bigotry with benevolence. I'm Lynne Riddle and I support these comments.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Thank you. Nancy, followed by Frank.

**NANCY:** Good evening. Policy 400-4 has been moved to a discussion item tonight. I think that this resolution should not move forward in any form. Please consider the following during your discussion this evening. The resolution is poorly written, value laden and does not refer to any specific example or resource. This is written as a ban on academic topics and it illustrates a lack of educational knowledge. For example, the resolution specifically bans isms, Marxism, communism, Stalinism, but it leaves out fascism, jingoism, tribalism, nationalism and many other isms.

These concepts are taught in county schools in accordance with the state standards and at the appropriate grade levels. I would ask the Orange County Board of Education to provide a clear rationale for why this resolution is needed based on truth and facts, and to explain how this resolution is not promoting a political agenda, but is based on reality of education in the county. The community, students and teachers should clearly understand why the Board believes this resolution is necessary and how it will impact teaching and learning in the county.

This resolution is not brave, it's not useful or helpful. It's politicized propaganda that demonstrates a complete lack of understanding about education in general and the meaning of quality education for all students in Orange County. This resolution should not move forward in any form. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** We are going to go with Frank, followed by Dr. Scott.

**BARKE:** I think you give it to them.

**FRANK:** Oh, yeah. Do I just start? My name is Frank, Frank Rodriguez. I'm a citizen here in Orange County. I'm actually a gay man as well. I want to hit you with some compassion, that we teach the truth to children. Things are happening under the LGBTQIA community, my

community, that is unacceptable. Parents have approached me and provided me a list of some of the horrid things that are happening in our schools under this umbrella.

My community didn't fight for these types of things. I will go over them in a second. My community fought for acceptance. We fought to be able to love one another, to be able to have compassion for people that are a little bit different. Not to teach children that they can go under any sort of medication, question their identity, question their gender, all without their parents knowing. That is not okay. That is not acceptable. Gays Against Groomers is a coalition of millions of gay people to fight this exact thing.

Having students call in and text in to chat rooms where they are able to talk about their genitalia with adults, with predators, with people that are unvetted by this board. All under my name, all under our community, it is disgusting. They are not transphobic. They are not homophobic. They are pro-wanting their kids to grow up in a world where they are not influenced by the horrid community that we like to call pride, infested with drugs, mental health issues and overall horrid things that happen within the community.

Any of the gay people that stand here and say that the community is built on anything less is a liar. This community is not built or appropriate to be influencing our education system. And anyone that vows for that, anyone that supports that, is a predator and should never be allowed around children. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Dr. Scott, followed by Andrei.

**SCOTT:** Good evening, Board of Education, Dr. Mijares, Administration. I have come just to thank you. You have fulfilled an obligation in education to help charter schools show new ways of education and approaches. You asked, that when we were passed, that we would make you proud. I think we have. According to the 2021-22 CAASPP scores that just came out, IIA is astonishing. Irvine International Academy is the top science elementary school, not only in Irvine at 84.6%, but also Orange County, L.A. County and Riverside County. It would have been San Diego County, but La Jolla Elementary beat us by a point. I gave you a sheet of paper, at the bottom are the top 10 recognized schools, not all of them, but many of them, with their recognized scores. We are right up there.

In addition, we also exceeded Irvine Unified School District with our 82.72% to their 68%. The chart is our blue, showing how far we have excelled. We are, as far as I can tell, in the top 10 schools, an elite science school in California. Here is why it was important that you gave us a chance. Dr. Benjamin Bloom, who did a Bloom's test on me, did a study called the 2 sigma problem, finding methods of group instruction as effective as one-to-one tutoring. I discovered how to make my classroom one-to-one in San Bernardino inner city schools. You gave an opportunity for Irvine to prove that again, our top scores have to be remembered that half the instruction was in Mandarin. It is the same basis as Irvine, and yet half of our instruction is Mandarin and we exceeded them in science and math. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Thank you, Dr. Scott. We will have Andrei, followed by Guy.

**ANDREI:** Hello. My name is Andrei Jagoden. I will be commenting on the agenda item about COVID vaccination advisement. The entire COVID-19 propaganda campaign fell apart. All narratives were heard since the beginning of the pandemic turned out to be lies. Science based on lies is called pseudoscience. My kids will be denied education by power absorbers who got ahold of public education system if vaccine mandates are established. I found out that my charter school praised World Economic Forum and gene editing in their board meeting document. Coincidence or not, but the same person who attempted to bring in CRT training vendor is also in charge of COVID contract tracing. Parents support this resolution to oppose mandating experimental medical treatments for school attendance. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Thank you. Sir, before you begin, I want to apologize if it got a little out of order. I was sorting those who wanted to speak on 400-4 and then those who were giving general comment. So if it is a little bit out of order, that is why. But please sir, go ahead. We will have Guy, followed by Charles. We are just going to take all the public comments up front so no one has to wait until the end of the meeting.

**GUY:** Okay.

**BOYD:** This one is going to need translation, so they have extra minutes.

**SHAW:** Oh.

**SPARKS:** Okay.

**SHAW:** Understood. Okay.

**GUY:** Yeah. My name is Guy. I have an audio of Mario, and he is representing Gays Against Groomers. I'm praying that it will be loud enough to hear. He is in Spanish, but I gave it to George and it is translated into English, so here we go. [Audio is played in Spanish].

**BOYD:** That would be the time. That would be the time.

**GUY:** That is it? Okay.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**GUY:** Okay. The translation for this audio is: Greeting Orange County Education Leaders. My name is Mario and I am the West Coast leader of Gays Against Groomers. When an adult speaks to a child, parents should have confidence with that adult. People like teachers, counselors and caretakers should never poison the well of innocence. Schools who are teaching children how to

have a secret, that it is normal to have secret conversations with adults who are not family, friends or educators.

How are they doing this? Using a crisis help-like that is posted all over the school. We have evidence of school leaders, correspondence confirming that the schools have no obligation to notify parents. That is called grooming. As someone who identifies as gay, I cannot stay silent while our schools deliberately confuse children with pronouns and conversations that they are born in the wrong body.

Feminine boys are not girls and masculine girls are not boys. Hormones and surgery are superficial changes and you will never alter your DNA. If you want to better the next generation, we must start by supporting kids as they are, instead of trying to change their body. Innocence lost can never be recovered and advancing the sexualization of these children is advancing the goals of pedophiles. Dr. Mijares, Boyd, Hendrick and West, please mandate all Orange County school districts, follow priority three of the local control funding formula, which is to involve parent input and participation in all students' resources. Increase district accountability to inform parents, especially non-English speaking parents of what is going on behind their backs with these crisis hotlines in their schools and with CHOC Hospital having a gender clinic, especially since they are partnering with many of our schools.

Take the lead and be an example by informing parents in the juvenile justice system about these Trevor Space crisis lines and online surveys. Education Code 51513 says parent consent is required when surveying minors, so please Dr. Mijares, an elected official and Hispanic brother, follow the law, protect our students and respect parents.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Thank you. Charles, followed by Brianna

**CHARLES:** Evening. My name is Charles Evans, supervising attorney at Asian Americans Advancing Justice Southern California. Here commenting on the fourth information item, proposed policy 400-4. We are the nation's largest legal and civil rights organization for Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, and our Orange County office has been serving the Asian American community here for over 20 years. We strongly urge the Board to reject proposed policy 400-4. Not only is it premised on false and discriminatory suppositions about what students are taught, but it represents both a failure of the Board to provide for all the county students in an infringement upon local teachers choosing curriculum based on the established scholarship, but that this proposal paints is unproven.

For API communities in particular, the consequences of systemic oppression, which includes events such as Japanese internment, the red lining of families to undesirable neighborhoods, limiting citizenship despite being born in the U.S., the last law of which being repealed only in 1952. Inadequate access to public resources because of limited English proficiency are still felt today by many families across the state.

More recently, anti-Asian hate has skyrocketed to record highs heightening fears of many of being in public and fueling record gun purchases. Similar or worse stories can be told for the experiences of other people of color and those of the LGBT+ communities. We would be fooling ourselves if we ignore these facts, and more, as well as the scholarly research showing over and over again that past and present bigotry continue to affect people today.

This board has a responsibility to provide educational opportunities to the entire diverse student body of Orange County. It would be a failure of that responsibility if the Board uses its limited power over curriculum to misinform parents about school subjects, inhibit fruitful discussion among students of actual events, interfere with teachers and educators in managing their curriculum, and greatly overstep that limited authority granted to the Board by its constituents, all while attempting to silence discussion of the very real experiences that have affected many thousands of Orange County students and their families.

In this time when hostilities against Asian Americans are high, the kind of subject matter that would be blacklisted by this policy is indispensable as a tool for bridging differences in experiences and building compassion. And for that reason, we ask that proposal 400-4 be rejected and not be considered any further.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**GUY:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** So we have Brianna, followed by Brenda.

**BRIANNA:** Good evening, Orange County Board members. My name is Brianna Cota. I'm a middle school teacher, a parent and a pastor in a local church. When I found out what was going on behind these crisis hotlines given to students, I found it hard to believe. I had to see it with my own eyes. So my husband checked it out by easily creating a profile in Trevor Space through the Trevor Project. It was worse than I imagined. Trevor Space openly admits their international chat rooms are for ages 13 to 24, so they are already mixing kids with adult strangers to discuss sexual subjects. My husband is older than 24 and he was able to get in, having full access with no problem. The posters you saw in the lobby today show actual screenshots from [trevorspace.org](http://trevorspace.org).

We saw a chat club titled, Gay Men Club, that said, "let's talk about boys." We saw a polyamorous club, meaning you can have multiple romantic partners at one time, and the bi and m-spec folks, a club for people attracted to multiple genders. A trusted friend tested out the OC crisis text line, where apparently teens counsel teens. She was given the advice to share her cell number on Trevor Space chats after building trust. This is insane advice. These Trevor Chats are a hunting ground for sexual predators.

The crisis advisor also affirmed a four spirit gender with four fluctuating pronouns. These mental health hotlines are actually feeding into delusional mindsets, which is the definition of psychosis. Parents need to know the type of advice kids are being given on these hotlines that are being given out throughout our schools. As a middle school teacher, I do not think teachers are aware

of what is going on through these crisis hotlines. Teachers, it is time we take a stand for our kids. We did not go into this profession to enable sexual exploitation or indoctrination. We became teachers to nurture growth and to protect kids from harm. We are mandated reporters. We cannot allow our kids to be thrown to the wolves. The teachers union must stop this madness and advocate for total transparency to teachers, parents, the media and to law enforcement. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Brenda, followed by Victor.

**BRENDA:** Greetings. I'm Brenda, an elementary PE teacher in Santa Ana Unified teaching in seven schools. I come to you as a private citizen with a public concern about deceiving parents. Last school year, I noticed books in our school libraries teaching K through fifth graders that their gender changes like the weather based on their feelings and that there are infinite pronouns. The books are here. You can look at them. At a Santa Ana elementary school, which is designated a community school, I noticed new mental health workers on campus from outside agencies.

I asked a mental health worker from Neutral Ground, "How are you trained to define gender identity?" She said, that it is a choice. I asked, if a kindergarten comes to you saying he thinks he is both genders and wants to go by the pronoun of tree, how are you trained to respond? She said, to affirm it. I said, what if the kindergartner says don't tell my parents they won't like it, what are you trained to do? She said, I can't tell the parents until the kindergartner gives me permission.

I went to the principal and told him the conversation. He simply said, yes, because our school needs to be a safe place for all students. I said, so the definition of a safe place is to deceive parents. Before COVID hit, I noticed posters going into all our student bathrooms, grades K through 12. These posters are titled, We Care, with the red heart at the top and a rainbow heart at the bottom. The crisis hotlines include National Suicide Hotline and the Trevor Project.

The crisis hotlines—okay—because the Q in LGBTQ stands for questioning. I tested out these crisis text lines and said, "I'm unsure of my gender and scared about puberty. What should I do?" The National Suicide Hotline surveyed me giving me 11 genders to choose from or I could make up my own. The Trevor Space is a chat space for 13 to 24 year olds. However, I was able to also get in there as a 56-year old, because I simply made up my own date of birth. I saw many chats that said I'm lonely and I need a friend, and someone would pop in and say, I will be your friend, hugs, hugs. Please, let's start telling parents what is going on.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** All right, Victor, followed by Michael.

**VICTOR:** This will need a translation as well. [Spoken in Spanish and translated into English]. Some words that was the song from Trevor Project: "Cocaine and drinking with your friends I want to feel yo \*\*\* in Hawaii. I want that jet lag from \*\*\*\*\* and flying. Shoot a child in your

mouth while I'm writing. Never want the \*\*\*\*\* that is in my league. I want to \*\*\*\* the ones that I envy.”

**SPARKS:** Gracias.

**TRANSLATOR FOR VICTOR:** Greetings Orange County leaders. Orange County educational leaders, my name is Pastor Victor Cota. I'm a graduate from Santa Ana Unified and was a DACA student. I am now a parent, youth pastor and community leader. I sent an email to all SAUSD principals, board members and the superintendent on September 24 and spoke at their board meeting on October 11. My email provided the screenshots from the National Suicide Hotline, which surveys kids, giving them 11 or more genders to choose from. Surveying kids without parent permission violates Ed. Code 51513. I emailed them screenshots of the crisis hotline, Trevor Project and Trevor Space with evidence that kids are being mixed with random adults to explore their genders and sexualities. Anyone can chat with kids in these spaces. I checked it out myself. I was shocked at the types of chat groups I found in this online source.

Why is SAUSD opening the door for pedophiles to groom our kids online? Why are these numbers in Santa Ana's K-12 student restrooms? This is a crime. Trevor Project's 2021 theme song was, “Call Me by Your Name.”

**TRANSLATOR:** He already read the lyrics.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**TRANSLATOR:** I personally, I'm not comfortable repeating them, so if that is okay with everyone?

**BOYD:** Yes.

**TRANSLATOR:** Thank you.

**TRANSLATOR FOR VICTOR:** Is this how schools help kids in crisis? Is this the advice they get? Cocaine, sex with elites including children, this sounds like recruitment for human trafficking. Immigrant children of non-English speaking parents are easy targets. We are not naive. Dr. Mijares, Dr. Boyd and Dr. Hendrick, please remove these corrupt crisis hotlines out of, not only SAUSD schools, but all Orange County schools and inform Orange County parents what their kids have been exposed to through these crises hotlines. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Thank you. Okay. Michael, Michael Ann, followed by Jack.

**MICHAEL ANN:** Hello, my name is Michael Ann Herring. I am a retired teacher and a longtime resident of Orange County. When I read your proposed policy 400-4, I was both shocked and saddened. As a longtime teacher in California schools, I find it punitive and in search of a problem which does not now exist and has never existed in my long teaching years. I

had a wonderful education in California schools and an equally wonderful experience in being a part of teaching at several schools in Northern California and Southern California.

California teachers are dedicated to teaching our students how to read, write and think critically about the world around them. We work often for long hours and do not need or deserve this type of regulation. We are already committed to higher principles and standards for us and our students. You do teachers in Orange County a great disservice in suggesting these rules. I urge you to remember the teachers who taught you and support those teaching now without the negativity that I see in document. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Jack, followed by Hector.

**HECTOR:** Hello everyone. My name is Hector Villa-Nieves. I'm a community member, a service provider and a former student of the Garden Grove Unified School District. I want to address an inappropriate, misuse and misinterpretation of the Dr. King speech. He would not endorse this proposal or this policy. It reminds me of the Stop-Woke Act that was challenged and held in the Florida Supreme Court this summer. This policy does not uphold freedom of speech, it hinders it. It does not encourage the K-12 education experience, it hurts it. This policy is unconstitutional and uses vague concepts like discomfort, communism and Stalinism. This brings up trigger words that were used in the Cold War, fearmongering words to push your own personal agenda.

Growing up a queer student in high school from 2011-2015 when it was very taboo and weird to be out, seeing these pride flags in classrooms, having open discussions with teachers, having all these different curriculums and different clubs in order to fully express myself, made me feel seen and welcome. You doing this is taking it away from all these children. Being a former Los Amigos High School student from Fountain Valley and the Garden Grove Unified School District, I ask you members to get rid of this policy and not discuss it any further. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Now, I had called Jack Ashworth. Are you here? Okay. Jack, followed by Priscilla.

**JACK:** Hello. I'm a retired teacher from King/Drew Magnet High School after 20 years. I have just a couple brief comments about Title III. Title III states that LEA is to use funding to strengthen parent, family and community engagement in programs that serve English learners. However—too loud? Too soft? However, our Orange County school district including our Juvenile Hall alternative schools under OCDE and all of them are not in compliance. The U.S. Department of Ed says schools and community organizations are to listen to parents, support them and ensure that they have tools to be active partners in their children's school experience.

If this is the case, then why aren't immigrant parents being told about many of the issues that have been presented here tonight? So Dr. Mijares, please comply with Title III and stop this deception, especially with our high immigrant community. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Priscilla, followed by Lucy.

**PRISCILLA:** Good evening. I am a parent of two elementary school boys going to school here in Orange County and I am here to oppose proposed policy 400-4 in its entirety. I also oppose any discussion of it. The proposed policy states that, "Evidence-based educational materials or curricula, freedom of speech, First Amendment rights of academic freedom and free moral agency are considered to be core foundational values in education." Yet this policy does none of those things. Evidence-based materials, a September 2021 study from Stanford University found that a ninth grade ethnic studies class had a remarkably prolonged and strong positive impact on students increasing their overall engagement in school, probability of graduating and likelihood of enrolling in college. These findings were consistent with other studies and research on the impact of ethnic studies and culturally relevant pedagogy, freedom of speech and First Amendment rights of academic freedom.

The policy we propose accuses teachers of a host of outrageous claims that have no basis whatsoever. How dare you accuse our teachers of indoctrination. The California Education Code already prohibits teachers to advocate for communism. How dare you try to limit their ability to put their years of training and classroom experience towards engaging students in critical conversations about what is happening in our country. This policy is nothing short of fear mongering.

Lastly, the policy references free moral agency. I find it immoral for this board of education, an elected body of trustees to cast unfounded accusations against our schools. Policy proposals like this one is just another form of red-baiting, an ugly political tactic that only serves to scapegoat marginalized communities. Asian American communities have seen enough red-baiting in this election cycle, and so I ask that you not consider this proposal.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Lucy, followed by Joseph.

**LUCY:** Hi, my name is Lucy and I'm speaking on behalf of Ari. I'm asking you to get rid of proposal 400-4. I'm concerned about this erasure of history because how dare you quote Martin Luther King Jr and try to erase the history that led to the racial movement. It is ignorant and it is not appropriate to project your own belief and your own virility onto young children. They deserve better than that. This colorblind policy would limit education and is inherently racist by trying to deny the experience of people, reject their heritage and validate their unique experiences. We should be acknowledging these different perspectives, not trying to pretend they don't exist. I am asking to get rid of this ridiculous policy. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Joseph, followed by Stephanie.

**JOSEPH:** Hello, Orange County Board of Educators. My name is Joseph Navales, managing attorney at Asian Americans Advancing Justice Southern California and I'm against proposed Policy 400-4. This proposal will damage the education of Orange County students. I have been a resident of Orange County for almost 10 years, both working and volunteering in the community. In my capacity as an attorney with AJ SoCal, I have had countless clients who bring along their young school age children into our office to receive legal aid. Even though we have bilingual staff, our clients still bring along their children because they are used to the government having inadequate translation services. These students have a right to learn our history and understand why they have to step up to fill the gaps where the government fails.

During my time volunteering, I was part of the Lakas Mentorship Program, which provided education to Filipino American youth in Orange County and surrounding counties. One of the pillars was to teach Filipino American history and how they fit into that story. We did this because public schools did not provide this education. After the program, students found themselves more confident, sure of themselves and better at understanding the struggles they faced. This is the power that ethnic studies has for students and the future leaders of our country. I demand that this board do the right thing and not consider this proposal further. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Stephanie, followed by Justin.

**STEPHANIE:** Good evening. My name is Stephanie Camacho-Van Dyke and I'm the director of Advocacy and Education at the LGBTQ Center OC. Incorporated in 1971, the LGBTQ Center OC remains one of the longstanding LGBTQ specific service organizations located in Orange County. Our organization strongly opposes and denounces proposed Board Policy 400-4. We believe that every student matters, that teachers matter, that inclusive and equitable school policies and education matters. And that each school district has the utmost responsibility in ensuring that their schools provide equal protection and quality of instruction for all students.

If passed, proposed Board Policy 400-4 would negatively impact our students, especially LGBTQ+ students who are most impacted by marginalization. We must do our part to work together to uplift best practices and serve the best interests of our students, their families and their wellbeing. Please reach out to our organization as well as our colleagues, who are here on the right hand side, for more guidance and support and how we can work together to solve this. Please reconsider this proposed policy. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Justin, followed by Valerie.

**JUSTIN:** Hello everyone. My name is Justin Amigo. I was a former student of the Garden Grove Unified School District, and currently a doctorate of psychology student and a part of Orange County community-based organizations since 2013. To hear conversations about diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and LGBTQ+ populations to be erased in the K-12 environment is aggravating. I'm an openly gay man of Filipino descent and those identities intersect in ways that

clash. Coming out wasn't easy for me and many of my peers, and the house I shared with my family of origin wasn't a safe space for me to affirm parts of my identity that didn't align with my culture.

If they knew, it would result in physical abuse. So I'm glad my parents weren't being told what was going on, because not all parents are safe parents. Statistically, traditional-aged youth, ages 16 to 24 who are LGBTQ+ identifying and people of color are more likely to commit suicide and the prevalence rate is much higher when they experience homelessness. They are more likely to engage in high-risk behavior around sex and substance abuse, which are mechanisms to numb pains of feeling like they don't belong. If there is no space for conversation, I mean safe space for conversation, there is no space for belonging.

When I was in high school, there was a shift in media. We saw more gay representation on mainstream media and we saw more entertainers and public figures come out openly. At this time I was closeted, but I would hear my classmates talk about it. I would see my openly gay peers feel a sense of pride and a new found resilience. That made it easier for me when I came out. Representation matters. Silencing a historically oppressed community is not anti-discrimination, it is discrimination. And to everyone, if we want to change the world and our communities, we have to change our education system and not revert. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Valerie, followed by Ronna.

**VALERIE:** Hi, Orange County Board of Education. My name is Valerie and I'm a senior in Santa Ana. I know our school leaders want to make school a safe place for all students. However, I'm here to tell you that students of faith are being harassed, shamed, bullied, cussed out, ridiculed and socially ostracized. Faith and religion is supposed to be protected in the Constitution, but it is not being protected in our schools. I'm a Christian student. I'm not speaking for myself, I'm speaking for my friends of faith who are fearful or don't have the confidence to speak about their experience.

My friends have shared with me that they don't feel that they can be themselves at school. I have had to stay quiet while people talk about Christianity and other religions is horrible in class when they know I'm not a person of hate towards them. One of my friends bravely spoke out during a class discussion and said she believed in God and Jesus is her savior. Because of her comment, she was called a racist, transphobic, hater and even a Nazi.

School is not about tolerance and kindness anymore. We are told to be quiet about our beliefs because it's controversial when it's made clear when we grow up that we can share our cultures and beliefs. But that is not true. We are told to believe what they tell us about gender or sexuality and to be quiet or we will be hated or threatened. How does this make school safe? We can't be students who are proud of their practices of faith. Don't we live in America?

You say you want to hear student voices, yet it's really only the voices that match what you believe. You say diversity matters, but it's only the diversity you like. You say you respect our

community and culture, yet if we don't fit in your chosen beliefs system, we are rejected. I want school to be a safe place for all students and from each diverse view point to be encouraged and celebrated rather than persecuted. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Ronna, followed by Jordan.

**RONNA:** Hello, my name is Ronna Sarvis Weltman. I'm here about 400-4. I'm a volunteer who has helped students with their college admissions essays for the past 13 years. It's my responsibility to understand what colleges are looking for. Sure, they look at grades and test scores, but they are also looking for students who are thoughtful, and considerate and who demonstrate a healthy comfort with analyzing and debating different ideas. It's a joy to work with students who have been taught in schools that encourage inquisitiveness. I can see a difference when I'm helping them. They have learned how to go deeper.

I'm also a writer, so freedom of expression is dear to my heart; 400-4 is a chilling restriction of freedom of expression. The invigorating debates I remember from high school that absolutely helped develop my moral fiber would be curtailed or banned under this proposal. What a sad thought. Every person on the dias means well, so I want to share my experience of growing up in Los Alamitos in the '60s and '70s. I was the Jewish girl. I learned very young how to be careful. I wasn't fearful, but I had to be vigilant. Probably that makes you wince when I say that, because you don't want any child to experience that. But, this policy will have the unintended consequence of making children of religious, or ethnic or gender minority feel safe. I'm glad I experienced it. It made me more sensitive to others' pain, but I don't want kids to experience what I did, not under my watch.

The Board references Reverend King's hope that one day people will be judged by the content of their character, but read the whole speech. The message of the speech was that we are not there yet. Under this policy, some teachers would be very reluctant to allow kids to read the whole speech in case someone's interpretation of 400-4 conflicts with it. Don't let that sad irony become a reality in Orange County.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** We are going to have Jordan, and I'm struggling on this name, I'm sorry; but I will go with Trevino. That is the last name.

**JORDAN:** I'm speaking again in opposition to proposed Board Policy 400-4. I have struggled to decide how to address in only three minutes, now two minutes, the expansion of an existing two sentence, extremely reasonable policy which is proposed to be blown up into a three page screed, which at the last meeting I called outrageous and embarrassing. Perhaps the most cogent comments are found in a recent *Voice of OC* article. There, Alison Dover, a professor of secondary education at Cal State Fullerton, said the proposal is nothing more than a political stunt and a scare tactic. They quote Professor Dover, who I do not know, that the OC Board of Education is a megaphone for political propaganda and this is one more attempt by the OCBE to

scare teachers into compliance with their view of the world. By denying teachers the opportunities to engage in critical conversations about the history of this country, the way race and racism has impacted this country, and how it continues to impact us, it denies students the ability to be part of the society we all live in.

There is elements of this policy that suggest book bans. It is very vaguely worded. We do not want our schools to be spaces where schools are policed and things are banned outright. I agree with Professor Dover. The Placentia-Yorba Linda School District is losing its student teachers from Cal State Fullerton over this type of censorship. Florida is in a fight with Disney over language, which is echoed in item 14 of this proposed policy. Everything now is CRT or Marxism. I heard Trustee Williams say at your last meeting, “Don't we want to talk about that Marxism that we are seeing being promoted? Not on the classic Marxism like they did in Russia where it was all based upon class, but now it is based upon gender and color of your skin. That is what is happening there.” I have no idea what that means. Hopefully Trustee Williams can explain.

There are very many failures in this proposed policy, which unfortunately I do not have time to address. I pointed some out last month and I urge the Board to reject this proposal. And with the time left I would like to say that if the Board intends to adopt the COVID vaccine resolution, please grant the Governor the respect of spelling his name correctly. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** We have Trevino, followed by Joyce. Okay, Joyce will be on deck.

**TREVINO:** Hi, I'm Trevino and I'm going to play this audio from a teenager. [Audio is played].

**VOICE 1:** My name is Chloe Cole and I am a 17-year-old detransitioner from the Central Valley. I was medically transitioned from ages 13 to 16. My parents took me to a therapist who affirmed my male identity, and the therapist did not care about causality or encourage me to learn to be comfortable with my body. He brushed off my parents' concerns about the efficacy of hormones, puberty blockers and surgeries. My parents were given a threat of suicide as a reason to move me forward in my transition.

My endocrinologist, after two or three appointments, put me on puberty blockers and injectable testosterone. At age 15, I asked to remove my breasts. My therapist continued to affirm my transition. I attended a top surgery class that was filled with around 12 girls that thought they were men. Most were my age or younger. None of us were going to be men. We were fleeing from the uncomfortable feeling of becoming women. I was unknowingly physically cutting off my true self from my body, irreversible and painfully.

Our trans identities were not questioned. I went through with surgery. Despite having therapists and attending the top surgery class, I really didn't understand all the ramifications of any of the medical decisions I was making. I was incapable of understanding and it was downplayed consistently. My parents, on the other hand, were pressured to continue my so-called gender journey with a suicide threat. I will never be able to breastfeed a child. I have blood clots in my

urine. I am unable to fully empty my bladder. I do not yet know if I am capable of carrying a child to full term. In fact, even the doctors who put me on puberty blockers and testosterone do not know. SB 107 is circumventing state's laws. I have needed safeguards in place so my story is not repeated. Children cannot consent. Vote no on SB 107.

**SHAW:** Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Joyce, followed by Lorrie. Joyce? Okay, Lorrie? Oh, there is Joyce.

**AUDIENCE:** (Inaudible).

**SHAW:** Lorrie, with an L, yeah.

**JOYCE:** I'm Grandma Joyce from Costa Mesa. Thank you once again for listening to me share some thoughts, this time on proposed Board Policy 400-4. In my own experience and what I know of the school experiences of my children and grandchildren, there has never been a hint of any attempt by a teacher, a school administrator, a school counselor or librarian to warrant this proposal. It's the reference to school librarians that is especially troubling. Librarians I have known have been to me a touchstone of all that is best in humanity. But teachers too, I regard as the best among us. Some of them are in this room. To see their professional integrity questioned in this way breaks my heart.

I have not heard from any teachers an attempt to advocate for communism, or to indoctrinate students with certain religious doctrines, or to discriminate on the basis of any student's perception of their place on their gender spectrum. Although after hearing some of the things I have heard tonight, I'm not sure I can think straight, nor discriminate on the basis of ethnicity, skin, color, race or sex. One thing the proposal doesn't specify is this, will it lead to any kind of financial incentive or reward for informants? I wonder.

**SHAW:** Joyce, your time is up. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** So we will have Lorrie followed by Araceli.

**LORRIE:** Hello, I'm Lorrie. I'm a teacher. That 17-year-old testimony was heartbreaking. Most kids are more savvy in technology than their parents. It's wrong that these mental health crisis lines use technology to indoctrinate and sexualize children behind parents' backs. The Trevor Project which is the organization provided in student bathrooms on the We Care posters announced in 2019 that they affirm over 100 sexualities. As a community, we are asking SAUSD to disclose a list of these 100 sexualities they affirm. Do they celebrate pedophilia, (MAP) minor attracted persons? If so, our schools are no longer safe for children. Do they celebrate zoophilia or bestiality, a sexual attraction to animals? If so, let's notify the animal activist organizations as our pets are no longer safe either. Most parents do not want Sam Brenton, the person who

teaches erotic strangulation, bondage, SADO masochism and kink degradation as their children's online mentor; yet this is the person Trevor Project promotes to youth as the expert in sexual health and gender identity. Please remove these corrupt We Care hotlines from SAUSD schools and bathrooms ASAP. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Araceli, followed by Debra.

**ARACELI:** [Spoken in Spanish and translated into English by an interpreter.] Hello, my name is Araceli Justiniani. I am an immigrant from Mexico, retired from the Santa Ana School District and a community volunteer for over thirty years. We have many undocumented families represented in this county. They care about their children as much as U.S. born citizens. But it seems that Hispanic leaders are taking advantage of them because they think they are smarter and more sophisticated. Hispanic parents don't want their children told that gender is based on their feelings or even assigned by a doctor because that is not true.

Christians and Catholics do not believe that sex is assigned at birth. We believe that sex is ordained by God our creator, even before conception. We do not apologize for this belief because we live in a country that was founded on these principles. The Declaration of Independence says that. We request full transparency for all materials in school libraries, on school data forms, modified definitions, resources on line, crisis lines, counseling, that teach these controversial issues of gender or sexuality behind parents backs. Parents need to know about laws or policies that take away their rights.

As a retired employee of the Santa Ana Unified School District, I know that the program called Family and Community Engagement, says that family engagement is a full equal and equitable partnership between families, educators and community partners. Keeping parents aware of all these genders and sexualization that educators and community partners are promoting is not a full, equal or equitable partnership. Dr. Mijares, please make the districts of Orange County protect our children and take parents into account by informing them what is happening. Our children deserve to be respected and valued. Thank you very much.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Okay. Debora, followed by Alicia.

**DEBORA:** Hi, I'm Debora Kamm. I'm from Irvine and I'm actually running for the Irvine School Board. I'm actually here to talk about a different topic. I'm very concerned about transparency of government. As a special education advocate, I'm concerned that Irvine Unified is not being transparent with litigation against children with disabilities. I requested settlement agreements from Irvine Unified and they are public records. But the Superintendent's Office in Irvine refused to provide them stating that the County Superintendent's Legal Department had told them to withhold those public records. I think that knowing the settlement agreements is very important, not just the dollar amounts that are going to special ed parents, but also the terms

of those agreements. So I would like to know if that is true, if the County Superintendent's Legal Department is in fact advising the school districts to withhold those public records.

I was then told that all communication between anyone at Irvine Unified and the County Superintendent's Legal Department is confidential due to attorney-client privilege, so I requested the contract and I was told that there is none. So this seems to be some kind of underground communication where there are legal services being provided to the school districts without a contract, with no way to trace the dollars being spent on this and no way for the public to know about the communication that is being provided. Irvine Unified also does not provide any information on the board agendas about litigation against children with disabilities. I would like to know if the County Superintendent's Office has also advised Irvine not to provide that information, which would be a violation of the Brown Act, so thank you very much.

**SHAW:** Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** So Alicia, followed by Dominique.

**ALICIA:** Good evening, Madam President, Trustees and superintendent. My name is Alicia. I'm a mother of two young children, a licensed educational psychologist and board certified behavior analyst who has worked in the public schools for over a decade. I'm here in support of the many parents who have expressed concerns related to the chat spaces that our kids have access to. These parents created posters of the chat spaces that kids are invited into through the crisis hot hotlines. They were not permitted to be taken into this discussion tonight, so they are located in the lobby. I would encourage everyone to please look into what Trevor Space is providing access to. It is very concerning.

To bring to your attention the names of some of these chat groups, some of which were discussed earlier: witch craft, guilt and secrets, furies, regression space, gay men, let's talk about boys. I mean, some of these terms I have had to Google myself. I don't know some of these terms and references, but it is quite concerning. The public needs to be aware of what our children have access to in the guise of inclusivity and diversity, so please take a look and thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Okay. Dominique, followed by Patricia.

**DOMINIQUE:** Hi my name is Dominique Oei. I am a resident of Tustin as well as a community mental health worker. I am here to condemn and urge the Board to not push forward with the policy 400-4. First of all, as some of the other community members pointed out, it is very vaguely and poorly written. Specifically, the pedagogical practices 2, 4, 8, 9, 12, can all be disproven by sociological political science and educational research that proves that oppression is real, depending on what side you are reading it from. We can argue about those definitions, but the reality is that these are systems of power that every student should have the right and the ability to critique and analyze. Additionally, I am concerned about the regulations about what

student surveys and questionnaires can be put up as well as the inappropriate displays outlined by the policy. As many students that I have worked with in my career as a mental health professional have identified that some of these displays are reasons that they can feel safe, welcome and encouraged to be at schools. The banning of certain displays can actually lead to detrimental effects, low student performance and low engagement by students who do not feel welcome within spaces. And so I really do urge the Board to consider not moving forward with this policy, not even talking about this policy, and really analyze what you mean by putting forward this very one-sided, politically-charged agenda. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Patricia, is Patricia here?

**SPARKS:** Here she comes.

**PATRICIA:** Hi. I came to talk about fentanyl. But after listening to everyone here, sexuality seems to be a better topic to talk about. Why are the parents forced to have all of this LGBTQ stuff forced upon them? What about those parents? Because I have a lot of nieces and nephews that are Christians. We have our belief system. And why are those parents always criticized, or they have to keep their mouth quiet because then they are called homophobic or they are called all kinds of horrible names because they have their own values. Why are we not allowed to have our own values as well and have that accepted? It's not right that one group of people can turn around and say that this is right and we should only go down this way. But what about people that have their own values, traditional values?

There is a lot of Hispanic families that have those traditional values. Why aren't those being respected in the schools? I am sick and tired of having my nieces and nephews asking me all kinds of stupid questions because they are reading all kinds of garbage in the schools. I am tired of having to answer questions because they see all kinds of flags. They are so confused. They don't even know what they are anymore. There is a boy and there is a girl. If people want to throw all kinds of other names, they should do that in their own home. Why do we have to conform to what everybody else wants? That is not right for us.

Why does our voice have to be suppressed without having to be called some hateful name? That is not right, just because one group of people think that their point of view is better than ours. I'm tired of the word equity and equal because that is crap, because that is not true. Why are kids being told how to sodomize each other and all kinds of perverted things? That is not equal. Those are perversions. That stuff does not belong in schools and those things should be removed from schools.

**SHAW:** Okay, so the rest of the cards had indicated on there that they wanted to speak about 400-4, so I was kind of grouping them together. We have had a number of commenters already on 400-4, but I wanted to make it clear that our board is not voting this evening on 400-4. It was moved to just an information item, but it's not part of our agenda to be voted on tonight. But we will be happy to hear your comments and we are going to go ahead and move you up so you can

have your comments now, rather than wait until the end of the meeting. So I just wanted to clarify that. So we are going to go to Uyen followed by Destiny.

**UYEN:** Hello? Hello? Oh, hello. Is it? Okay, cool. Hi, my name is Uyen and I am the executive director of Viet Rainbow of Orange County, aka known as (VROC). We are a grassroots organization, an LGBTQ organization that strives to create a world where everyone has the resources and agency to thrive with dignity. I'm also an Orange High School alumni, class of 2010, woo woo, which resides in District 3, and my siblings also go to Villa Park High School, which also is in District 3. I have also taught at UCLA and UCI as a professor. And if it matters, I am queer, Vietnamese and Catholic.

I'm speaking to you today in regards of the proposed policy 400-4, which is a disgraceful and abhorrent policy. It denies the humanity and existence of many communities that call Orange County home, and it breeds hate and promotes bigoted thinking in our students. At my organization, VROC, we believe that everyone should have access to inclusive and meaningful classrooms. Diversity isn't something to be limited or scrubbed from classroom walls and textbooks. It is to be celebrated, honored and respected. Erasure doesn't belong in classrooms, education does. So please do not consider or entertain this racist and backwards policy. It needs to be stopped in its tracks. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** So we will have Destiny followed by Megan.

**DESTINY:** Hello. Greetings, board members. My name is Destiny and I'm an opponent of the 400-4 policy. As a high school student, I think it's important that we are taught CRT. I would like to start with a basic definition of what the theory is. This theory began in the 1970s as an attempt to understand why racism prevailed despite the efforts of the Civil Rights Movement. It suggests that racism is not only perpetuated by individual prejudice, but embedded in social structures like the criminal justice system. It does not blame a certain race or individual. Racial injustice happened across the country constantly and consistently. And the first thought to stopping it is by understanding why. Teaching kids about minority oppression raises awareness to the causes and could potentially be a preventative measure to those injustices.

I understand that parents don't want their kids to feel bad for their race, but that is not the fault of CRT. The blame lies on the people, generations before them who oppressed others. And the best way for kids to not feel guilty isn't to remove mentions of it at all. That isn't going to solve anything except make them more sheltered. And it's interesting how parents dislike CRT because it's supposedly problematic, but still allow books where white characters use the N-word such as "To Kill a Mockingbird" which exposes kids to racial ideologies anyways. Racism will always be a part of our curriculum no matter how hard you try to oppress it.

Being opposed to the teaching of CRT only protects institutional racism in places of power. Opponents of CRT wrongly use Martin Luther King Jr. as a reason why CRT shouldn't exist in school systems. Quoting the famous "I Have a Dream" speech does not absolve us from needing to talk about racial inequality, especially not when he went on television to amend that his

speech was an aspiration, not current reality. He published a book where he said, “the majority of White Americans consider themselves sincerely committed to justice for Black people. They believe that American society is essentially hospitable to steady growth toward a middle class utopia embodying racial harmony. This is a fantasy of self-deception and uncomfortable vanity.” He understood that we cannot reach equality unless we actively do something to change the system and people alike. You cannot claim that this is what MLK wanted while doing exactly the opposite.

**SHAW:** Megan, followed by Ravi.

**MEGAN:** Hello, my name is Megan Tran. I am a senior of Fountain Valley High School. I am Asian American and I am also the president of Fountain Valley High School GSA, which stands for Gender Sexuality Alliance if you don't know already.

**SHAW:** Get right up into the mic there.

**MEGAN:** Thank you. As an Asian American woman and president of Fountain Valley GSA, I have experienced homophobia and harassment at my school for my identity, which is why I oppose proposed Board Policy 400-4, which would essentially restrict the discussion of race and sexuality at school. This would only bring detriment to our already discriminated against minority groups at school. Please get rid of it. Thank you.

**SHAW:** Ravi, Followed by Dorie.

**RAVI:** Testing. My name is Ravi Seng and I'm a community organizer with the Cambodian Family Community Center in Santa Ana. If it doesn't become incredibly obvious, I'm against 400-4. For four decades, my agency has been serving the immigrant and refugee communities of Orange County and we are currently assisting in the development of a curriculum on the Southeast Asian experience to finally teach others what we have known for so long about the Cambodian genocide and the damage it did to millions of Cambodians. Now, do I really have to explain to you why this is important? For decades community based organizations like mine have been doing damage control. Trying our best to help our immigrant and refugee communities heal from their PTSD and trauma from the war and the genocide that still impacts us today. These issues deserve discussion. Do you understand how something like substance use disorder impacts a community like ours?

How would you understand that history without the education of the war on drugs? And how would that education even matter without an intimate knowledge of anti-blackness and carceral punishment, which is crucial to contextualize the adjacent histories of Southeast Asian refugee communities with Black and Brown communities. Addressing substance use disorder like so many other social issues is impossible without addressing race. Now we finally get the chance to educate others about our history. And as part of this community, I'm part of your community. Our history deserves to be known. And again, I ask that the Board reject 400-4 and vote even against its further consideration.

**SHAW:** Okay, Dorie, followed by Angelica.

**DORIE:** Good evening trustees and members of the audience. Thank you for allowing me to speak this evening. My name is Dorie Krepton and I'm a resident of Huntington Beach. I'm here to speak against the proposed policy 400-4, that seeks to limit what teachers say in the classrooms and post on their bulletin boards. It's an assault on teachers and their good works. This policy is an insult to teachers, especially because it is ill-founded and it's based on personal opinion. It's nothing more than censorship, and it's really in violation of the First Amendment.

I have been fortunate to be part of a very noble and honorable profession for over 40 years. I love how teachers seek to help and encourage students, all students, students who come in different sizes, shapes and all colors. It's what makes teaching so special. It's inclusive and it doesn't discriminate. The good teaching that goes on in our public schools provides equal access of opportunities and resources for all students who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized, such as those who have physical or intellectual disabilities or of people of a minority group.

So why are you considering this policy? What is it based on? Gossip, idle chatter, hearsay. There is nothing positive about this proposal. It only fuels doubt, distrust, worry, suspicion, anxiety and stress to the daily lives of teachers who are already struggling with low pay, burnout, large class sizes and the security and safety concerns on their school campuses, so let's turn this around. Begin by showing teachers how much you value them. Ask how you can support rather than manage. This censorship will ultimately do more harm than good by damaging the learning environment. Start by creating safe spaces in our schools, places that foster positive learning for teachers and their students. Let's replace censorship with trust and let it begin with you, the trustees. Thank you.

**SHAW:** Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Angelica.

**ANGELICA:** Good evening. I'm Angelica Padilla. I am part of the community of Santa Ana, Born and raised. I have been in that school system since I was in pre-K, so before K. And reading this, I have nieces and nephews, cousins. My family dates back for three generations here in Santa Ana. As a member of this community, I am so, so sad that this is even being discussed because I see this as, yes, how my kids pointed out there is censorship. School is supposed to be a good space for everybody. It's supposed to feel safe and encouraging and this does not feel like that. It feels like you are trying to take away our history and our voices and a space for us to speak up when we have these issues.

I know that you are looking out for the children, that is like the most important thing. But what you are actually doing is making their lives a little bit harder and just making their education worse because these things that happen in history, they are not going to go away. They are still going to be there, and they are real and they have affected us now. And for you to try to limit that, for you to try to take that history away from us, to censor it is just so disheartening. And for my community especially, I know we are struggling a lot, and I hate to see us keep struggling because our education isn't as good as others.

So I really am opposed to this. And I think, yeah, it's been horrible. And for my nieces and nephews, my cousins, my whole family, this is just very disheartening and I feel like you are going to hurt a lot of children in the process, instead of really helping them and letting them grow and find their own voices. Just let them be their own people, individuals not always having to take the word of their parents. Because, not all parents do care about their wellbeing. If they do care, maybe it's misguided because of their beliefs. And beliefs are just beliefs. There is facts and there is like, real stuff. I know this is a crazy topic to be talking about. But coming from a student here who has been hurt in life, I just hope you take into consideration and please think about it more.

**SHAW:** Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** That was all the cards I had. I want to thank everybody for coming out, and giving us your comments and for being respectful. So appreciate that. I think we are going to go ahead and take a seven minute break. Is that okay?

**SPARKS:** We will see you all in seven minutes.

**SHAW:** Seven minutes, exactly.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

[OCBE exercises a break and returns.]

**SPARKS:** Okay. You guys are so good. Pretty prompt. I'm impressed. Not 100% prompt, but pretty prompt. Okay, so moving on with the meeting. First of all we will go to the consent calendar.

**WILLIAMS:** Motion.

**BARKE:** Second.

**SPARKS:** I think I would like to pull out each item separately though.

**BARKE:** Okay. Okay.

**SPARKS:** If you don't mind.

**BARKE:** No. No.

**SPARKS:** So let's go to item number two first. Do I have a motion?

**BARKE:** So moved.

**SHAW:** I will move a second.

**SPARKS:** Okay. All in favor?

**WILLIAMS, BARKE, SHAW, VALDES:** Aye.

**SPARKS:** Aye, 5-0. And item number three.

**BARKE:** So moved.

**SPARKS:** Do I have a second?

**SHAW:** Second.

**SPARKS:** All in favor?

**WILLIAMS, BARKE, SPARKS, SHAW, VALDES:** Aye.

**SPARKS:** Item number four.

**BARKE:** Can I table that until maybe next meeting or table it?

**SPARKS:** Sure, and I will second that.

**BARKE:** Okay.

**SPARKS:** Okay.

**BARKE:** All those in favor?

**SPARKS:** All in favor?

**BARKE, SPARKS, SHAW, VALDES:** Aye.

**BARKE:** Okay.

**SPARKS:** Ken, did you?

**WILLIAMS:** I have no idea. There was no discussion, so I will abstain.

**SPARKS:** Oh, okay.

**BARKE:** Okay. Yeah. All right, well it passes 4-1.

**SPARKS:** Okay.

**BARKE:** Or, 4-0, or something.

**SPARKS:** Okay, we will move on then to charter schools. Nina, do we have any charter submissions?

**BOYD:** We do not.

**SPARKS:** Okay. Then I will call Aracely Chastain to the podium to facilitate the charter update.

**CHASTAIN:** Good evening, President Sparks, Trustee and Superintendent Mijares. The Board requested that representatives from Unity Middle College High School attend today to provide an operational update. I will also provide an update on the status of issues that fall under our oversight and accountability functions since the October board meeting. The school was issued, as you know, this was part of the October board meeting. The school was issued a notice of concern on May 2nd, addressing seven areas requiring corrective actions. Regarding that notice of concern the school was supposed to address the appointment of ICON School Management, a for-profit corporation and current vendor of Unity, to be the school's interim executive director.

The school provided a corrective action plan by the stated due date with the following actions. They revised the ICON school management contract to change the role of Roy Kim to provide support to the school's administrator, and not as a management position and we have received copies of that contract. They are going to hire a part-time or full-time administrator who is an employee of Unity to serve as the administrator for the 22-23 school year. The school has not hired an employee of the school, but instead they have contracted with Vista Charter Public Schools for an interim executive director, that would be Dr. Don Wilson for the remainder of the 22-23 school year. The school will engage in discussions regarding a merger or partnership with an existing charter school non-profit or a charter management organization. And by November 2nd, the school will be drafting an MOU merger agreement and material revision to the charter regarding changes to the governance structure, organization employee qualifications. They are going to revise their charter and a possible corporate dissolution. We have not received a copy of the MOU, merger agreement or material revision at this point and have no further information on the status of this plan. We expect the school will provide you with an update this evening.

The school remains in poor fiscal condition and has not been able to meet enrollment projections. The school has submitted a fiscal stabilization plan and a revised budget. They are aware. A lot of the issues have to do with the low enrollment and not being able to meet those over optimistic enrollment projections. They have revised those down. But without at least 125 students enrolled consistently year-over-year, it's unclear that they will be able to meet their obligations moving forward.

A notice of concern was issued on October 19. On October 7, Orange County Department of Education staff conducted an oversight visit at Unity. This is our annual oversight visit that we do for all of our charter schools. A notice of concern was issued as a result of that visit and the school was asked to provide corrective action plans for a number of identified issues. I will go over some of those issues with you now. Students at Unity do not currently have access to an A-G curriculum and are unable to meet Unity graduation requirements that are in the charter

because the school is not offering a world language. We were informed during the visit that the Spanish language teacher had resigned in September. We learned that the school has not informed parents or guardians about the transferability and eligibility of courses to meet college entrance requirements, in violation of the school's approved charter and education code 47605. Unity has 22 enrolled students identified as English language learners. The school is not currently meeting legally mandated obligations for these students by failing to provide them with a comprehensive English language development instruction that includes designated and integrated English language development. There is no curriculum in place to support language development and the school is not monitoring or reclassifying affected students.

Unity provides services to 27 students with special education needs. The school has contracted with a vendor to provide up to 25 hours of special education services per week. Student records were out of date, lacked organization and were missing updated IEPs, so we are unable to determine at this time whether students are receiving all required service hours. This one is particularly concerning, as you know, a due process complaint could bankrupt the school. All it takes is one typically for a school that is suffering like this. While we have asked for a corrective action plan, we also anticipate needing to do a second visit, specifically focused on special education and English language development in the coming months. The school does not maintain complete or accurate personnel files and continues to have issues with teacher credentialing, with staff members teaching outside of their authorized field. You need single subject credentialed teachers at a high school level and I think that is where they are struggling a little bit.

Employee files contain inaccurate employment agreements, are missing a variety of items, for example, Form I-9s to verify identity and employment authorization, as required by federal law, tuberculosis risk assessments, verification of criminal background clearance from the Department of Justice. And there is no employee file at all for Executive Director Dr. Erin Craig who is currently on medical leave. And finally, the bylaws of Unity SoCal require that there be no less than five directors on the school board. The nonprofit has been conducting business with only four directors since July 1st. We understand the difficulty some schools have with recruiting qualified board members and we continue to monitor that the school has quorum for their board meetings with their four members.

I now invite representatives from Unity Middle College High School to the podium.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**LOPEZ:** Good afternoon Trustees, board members. My name is Soraya Lopez and I am the board president of Unity Middle College High School. We also have Roy Kim from ICON, and Dr. Don Wilson from Vista and Janelle Ruley with me. We are just here to give an update for Unity, as you requested on our last board meeting. As Aracely has mentioned about the revised ICON contract addendum that we did on our board meeting, so we have taken care of that. We also approved Vista's contract to hire Dr. Wilson on October 20, so we have done that as well. He will explain a little bit more about his role and how he will be helping Unity, either transition with Vista or take care of it to be able to get all the requirements and all the items that were requested to take care of.

I know that some of our students were not taking our Spanish class that Aracely mentioned. We have been able to work with some of the students to have them enroll in a college course so they will be able to do that and they will be able to get those requirements to graduate on time. We are working on also hiring a new special education teacher as requested. We have posted on our website to be able to find someone to take care of that as well. And then with our board members, we posted as well on our website for anyone that was interested to join. And fortunately, I asked one of the other parents that I know from the school and he has said that he is happy to join the board, so we will be getting that approved on our next board meeting, which is November 17, I believe. During the meeting, he will be there and then all the other members can ask any questions so we can go ahead and get him into our board so that will be taken care of as well.

And then in regards to our employment employee files, I know that there were some discrepancies there and that we were missing some items. Roy Kim will be able to share more a little bit about that, but we are working as well with that. If I can invite you guys to come here and share a little bit or any answer any questions?

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**LOPEZ:** Thank you.

**WILSON:** Good evening, Board. It's always good to be here. And I just want to thank you for your service. I work in multiple counties and I'm just impressed every time I'm here with the civic engagement of Orange County. It makes me proud to be part of what is going on and just to see that engagement. I'm feeling a bit of déjà vu tonight. Six years ago, a little over six years ago, I was asked to become the superintendent for Vista Charter Public Schools, which was just a little school at the time, about ready to go under for a variety of problems and issues. And my mom, she said, "What is going on?" I told her, and this is after 30 something years with LAUSD, and she said, "Well, are you thinking about it?" I said, "Yeah." And she said, "Did you do a pro and con list?" And I said, she always asks me that, that is my mother. And I said, "Yes, I did, of course." And she said, "Well, what is on the con list?" And I said, "About 14, 15, 20 things." And she said, "What is on the pro list?" And I had about one thing. And she said, "Well, you are not going to take it then, right?" And I said, "No, I'm going to take it." And she said, "Why?" I said, "Because I woke up at 3 in the morning and that little voice said, it's the right thing to do," so déjà vu.

Roy Kim and I, we have worked together now for quite a while with ICON. ICON has done an amazing job for us working with our financial back office. And Roy called me up and he said, "Hey Don, Dr. Wilson," he said, "Don," he told me what was going on with Unity. He said, "We are really struggling." He says, "Do you know anybody that might be interested in this position?" And the thing about Unity is that I have been following Unity for six years as well. I have been here at the board meetings. I have watched Erin work through these issues. Unity, when I wrote, I actually rewrote the Vista Charter based on my doctorate, but it was Unity's charter that I used as a model to really help me understand what makes a strong charter, what makes something work. And I worked with Erin with Charters OC. We met every month with Charters OC for years until the pandemic. So I actually have quite a bit of knowledge about Unity. So when Roy

asked me, I did what I typically do is I go to bed and I wait for that voice to tell me what is right to do. But I didn't have to do that this time because, and there is no secret here, ICON could not be the governing factor for Unity. It would be shut down. It just wasn't legal. And so the one thing, the main compelling reason, so answering, how did this happen? Well, that is how this came to be. The why, there is a lot of why's and I'm going to go through them, but the first why, and the main why and the most important why is when I see 80 kids that have given their hopes and their desires to this school to get them to the finish line, to know that they could have to be looking for another school in October or in November, it's just not an option. My board, when I presented that to them, because they have to amend my contract to be able to do this, for them, it wasn't an option either. That is why we are in this. We are going to be here to make sure that Unity can get to that finish line and those kids this year can get to the finish line so that is the first reason. Me being here takes care of that. We are going to be here until the end of the year.

Some of the other reasons is that it is also going to give us an opportunity at Vista to explore a possible merger. This is not something we take lightly. It's not something that we want to jump into. There are, as my mother would say, do your pro and con list. But at the end of the day, this is going to give us enough time to really look at the issues and to really look at the fit and make sure that if we do this, that it is good for both parties. So this gives us the time to really take a look at that. So that is the how and why.

The what will I be doing? A couple of things, how do I make this work? Because my board asked me the same thing. And one easy thing is that because of the pandemic, offices have become very fluid. And where I work ceases to really be important, because a lot is done online. And a lot of my work is just visiting schools, so I will just be making my office multiple days during the week, at Unity. So that is easy. That will give me a presence at Unity. It will give them continuity. Roy will be working the other days there, so there will be somebody on campus that they can go to, that teachers can go to, parents can go to. Today, I was already in a parent meeting with them, so that is sort of how we are going to make this work for the rest of the year. But just what are we going to be doing? What can we do in the next year I think is really important. And so just a brief glimpse of what I see in the future is this community needs to see themselves as a community if it's going to work.

It is not the work of one person. Erin was very charismatic and she had a beautiful vision, but you can't be the only person. You have to have a whole team. It's the board who has always been behind them, but it's also got to be the teachers who take part, it's got to be the parents who see themselves in the school. So I will be working with all of these groups. I will be meeting with parents, meeting with teachers, meeting with the students and really getting them to rally behind the idea of Unity and to keep it going. I don't think that the issues with enrollment are insurmountable. It has been. It seems like it. But Vista has shown that even though there is declining enrollment all over the state, Vista keeps growing in enrollment, so I don't think that is an insurmountable issue. I think we can do that.

Unity is not based on a 900 student model. It's based on 250 students, maximum. This is something that I think is doable very much so. Those are some of the things that we will be doing. We are going to also be working with ICON closely to ensure that there is solvency, the financial solvency issue is there. And then also, whether or not Vista ultimately merges or we

have some other ideas that might work. But whether or not that is the ultimate solution, I will be working to find a permanent leader that is charismatic, that loves kids, is passionate about education and will be passionate about the mission that Unity has. And then also I need to, the last thing I really do, because Aracely, she really made clear at some of the issues. I'm very aware of those issues. I have read the findings and they are already on a whiteboard in the office. We will be just looking at those one at a time and making sure that we can address those. So hopefully each month we will be able to have an update for the Board that says that we have made progress on all those issues. So thank you for your trust in me as always. And I hope that once again, that little voice leads me the right way.

**LOPEZ:** It will. It will.

**WILSON:** Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you. That is amazing.

**BARKE:** Can I make a comment?

**SPARKS:** Mm-hmm.

**WILSON:** Yeah.

**BARKE:** Well first of all, Dr. Wilson, you never cease to amaze me. You are an amazing individual, an amazing human being. I mean, I'm just blown away.

**SPARKS:** Yeah.

**BARKE:** But I'm not surprised, you are just amazing. So thank you for all you do. Thank you for taking on this such an important mission. It's unbelievable that you are stepping up and I'm so grateful. I don't take our oversight lightly. I think it's super important. I don't think we have to drag you out every month. I think if we get reports, I think that will be great, just letting us know the progress.

**SPARKS:** Yeah.

**BARKE:** I have immense trust in you. I know the rest of the Board does, so thank you for what you are doing. It's amazing.

**WILSON:** Thank you. I appreciate that.

**SPARKS:** Absolutely. And it's the team, you all, Mr. Kim, I mean, you guys and Janelle, you guys have done just an amazing job coming together, listening to the concerns last month, coming up with amazing solutions and thank you for stepping up. This just sounds like music to our ears.

**WILSON:** Well, thank you.

**SPARKS:** So this is wonderful. I'm very hopeful.

**VALDES:** I can say, Dr. Wilson, that you have dramatically changed the tenor of the questions that I would ask tonight. I'm somewhat relieved. I was very concerned about 80 kids not being able to get to the June 30 finish line and somehow having to find another school midyear, which I thought was just worst case scenario. So thank you for stepping up and thank you for your service in doing this.

**WILSON:** Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Anybody else have any comments? Trustee Shaw or Trustee Williams? Would you all like to say anything additional?

**AUDIENCE:** (Inaudible).

**SPARKS:** It is. Right that way.

**VALDES:** Aracely.

**SPARKS:** Aracely?

**VALDES:** Do you have any recommendations after hearing this tonight? Where do you want to go with this?

**BARKE:** Right.

**CHASTAIN:** Once we send a notice of concern out, we ask the school to provide us with their plan for how they are going to correct. We understand that some issues take longer and we anticipate that their plan will have those steps that may take a little bit longer to correct. We feel that all of the issues are correctable and hopefully their enrollment and attendance issues are as well, kind of not just the enrollment, but also getting their actual school attendance numbers up will be what helps that budget. If they can get to that 125 number, our administrator of fiscal oversight, she estimates that it might be two to three years before they can be flush. But that of course isn't taking into account what they owe. They do need to start either chipping away at that 400,000 or figuring out ways to make that a little bit more manageable for the school. Because until that goes away, we don't want to see the school continuing to borrow money.

I don't know that they are even able to borrow money at this point because of the amount that they owe. But what we are always trying not to see is that this affects the classroom, so I think they have cut in as many places as they can. They can't cut janitorial services any further than they have. There is just certain things that just can't be cut anymore and they actually need to increase probably some costs. Like they are saying they need to hire someone who oversees the special education program. They need to provide instructional materials for their English learners. All of these are cost to that bottom line. And so we have faith that the school can get a plan to us that we can just help monitor and hopefully support them in whatever they need in order to be able to do that.

**SPARKS:** Okay.

**VALDES:** Okay.

**SPARKS:** Thank you. And just to support Trustee Barke's statement, I think that I would also be fine with a memo being presented, an update every month, rather than you coming every month unless we see another emergency situation.

**WILSON:** Yeah, we are happy to do that. Yeah.

**SPARKS:** And then we won't have to see you in person again.

**WILSON:** We can do that. That is not a problem.

**VALDES:** I am fine with a monthly update. I don't want Dr. Wilson to come.

**SPARKS:** Right. Right. Exactly.

**BARKE:** No. No. He is a busy guy.

**SPARKS:** Exactly.

**BARKE:** And I didn't want to discount Roy, and Janelle and the board. You guys too. I know it takes a team. But just to see Dr. Wilson step up is just really heartwarming.

**WILSON:** Thank you, Trustee Barke.

**SPARKS:** Thank you and just continue to keep us posted.

**BARKE:** Mari. Mari.

**SORAYA:** Thank you.

**SPARKS:** All right, wonderful. Okay, so now we will move to our board recommendation section item number seven, approving the board date change in December from December 7 to December 14.

**BARKE:** I will make a motion.

**SPARKS:** Yeah.

**SHAW:** Second.

**SPARKS:** All in favor?

**WILLIAMS, BARKE, SPARKS, SHAW, VALDES:** Aye.

**SPARKS:** Okay, so we are going to move our December meeting to December 14 due to some other conflicts. That moves us to item number eight, board action on a professional development resolution. Do we have any discussion or motion?

**WILLIAMS:** You need a motion first before you can discuss it.

**BARKE:** I will make a motion.

**SPARKS:** Okay. Do we have a second?

**WILLIAMS:** I will second.

**SPARKS:** Okay, now we can discuss.

**VALDES:** So this is a budget for—who is this budget for? When I looked at the packet—is this for us? Is this a budget for board members?

**BARKE:** I believe it is.

**SPARKS:** Yeah. Yeah. It's a budget for professional development that we would choose to attend rather than—

**VALDES:** So this is like a conference that we would go to and some type of reimbursement issued?

**SPARKS:** It could be a conference, it could be continuing education.

**VALDES:** Is there anything wrong with us—I mean, if we did do that, just submitting a reimbursement request later? Is this necessary?

**SPARKS:** Apparently, we need to have this kind of thing in order to have the ability to do that.

**WILLIAMS:** Greg has—

**SPARKS:** Oh, yeah, our counsel.

**ROLEN:** Trustee Valdes, there was a lot of discussions about this before you joined the Board. Essentially, the notion behind the resolution is that the Board take ownership of its own professional development. Prior, the CSBA and other organizations were providing professional development and we cut those budgets to, in small part, make room for a board professional development policy; whereby the Board individually or collectively can choose the professional development they want as long as it's attendant to boardmanship and attendant to governance. So the budget that is in the subsequent item should be related to the amount of money we cut with regard to CSBA and the other organizations but will be available to board members individually and collectively to seek professional development opportunities.

**VALDES:** Greg, did you just say we have to cut from one budget to feed this one?

**SPARKS:** We already did. We already did.

**SPARKS:** We already did. Yeah. I think it was around \$25 or \$26,000.

**ROLEN:** \$26, Trustee Barke has it in her immediate memory, but it was \$26,000, something like that.

**VALDES:** Is that annual?

**SPARKS:** Yes

**ROLEN:** That was annual, yeah.

**BOYD:** But that was just one conference.

**ROLEN:** Right. Well, that was the CSBA.

**BOYD:** One association.

**ROLEN:** One association, correct.

**BOYD:** The Board still has memberships and other associations. If I could just add to this, the conversation that started around the professional development was not really centered around conferences. It was really centered around professional development opportunities that board members might identify that would further experiences or educational opportunities that would help them in their service and their position on the Board. We did not have a mechanism previously for that. So annually, the Board identified different associations they wanted to participate in. If conferences or professional development opportunities were in any of those, it was an automatic.

Board members, we would send out information related to those. Just as I believe today, we sent out something on charter school association conferences coming up in the spring. Since you are a member of that, we are forwarding information so that if you want to participate, you can. But this was really focused on, and I believe it was Vice President Shaw, who introduced the concept to the Board that there wasn't another mechanism. He and I had had some previous conversation outside of the board meeting with regards to some trainings and some professional development that he was interested in, but there was not a mechanism because there is not anything related.

**VALDES:** I see. Okay.

**BOYD:** So that is how the resolution was developed.

**VALDES:** So Trustee Shaw did this?

**SHAW:** No.

**SPARKS:** We discussed it together as the Executive Committee.

**BOYD:** Yeah.

**SPARKS:** And I think we all—so that is why we have item number eight and nine separately. Number eight being board action on the resolution and then number nine would be board action on a budget for that.

**ROLEN:** The resolution calls for discussion about the budget in action, so that is why they are in that particular order.

**WILLIAMS:** I have a question.

**SPARKS:** Question, yes, Trustee Williams.

**WILLIAMS:** It says draft at the top of the document here. Is this the final draft?

**ROLEN:** It should be the final draft.

**WILLIAMS:** Oh, okay.

**ROLEN:** It shouldn't say draft at the top. It is my error.

**WILLIAMS:** Oh, okay, so it is the final draft. Is this better as a board policy or as a resolution?

**ROLEN:** The idea was to pass a resolution. If the Board wants a policy, we can convert it into a policy like we have done other things. We can put it in the policy book. As you recall, we had resolutions regarding grants and contracts. We turned that into a policy, so we can do both.

**WILLIAMS:** I think a policy has more longer lasting effect and is more meaningful. Resolutions are resolutions that come and go, so I think perhaps in the future it should be made into more succinct form as a policy. I'm for the concept that Trustee Shaw discussed about professional development. On that point, may I ask a question? I know item nine is establishing a budget. Are we prepared to talk about that tonight?

**SPARKS:** Yeah.

**WILLIAMS:** You are. Okay, then I will hold that question for number nine.

**SPARKS:** Okay. So am I hearing an amendment to a motion to approve?

**WILLIAMS:** No.

**SPARKS:** No.

**ROLEN:** Or the board can simply direct me to draft a policy if that is the will of the Board.

**SPARKS:** Okay.

**WILLIAMS:** From this resolution.

**SPARKS:** From this resolution, okay.

**BARKE:** I would direct you to draft a policy.

**ROLEN:** Consider myself directed.

**BARKE:** Okay.

**ROLEN:** Okay.

**SPARKS:** So my additional question is, is that something that we want to do at the next board meeting or is that something that we want to do here, changing it from a resolution to a policy?

**ROLEN:** We are going to pass the resolution here.

**SPARKS:** Okay.

**ROLEN:** And then we can bring a policy forward.

**SPARKS:** Got it.

**ROLEN:** At a later board meeting.

**SPARKS:** Okay.

**ROLEN:** Okay.

**SPARKS:** All right. So do we need—?

**BARKE:** So I have made a motion, right?

**SPARKS:** Yes.

**BARKE:** The motion is already out. Did somebody second it?

**SPARKS:** Yeah, I think Ken did.

**BARKE:** Okay, so are we ready to vote?

**SPARKS:** Yeah.

**BARKE:** Okay.

**SPARKS:** Ready to vote? Take it to a vote. All in favor?

**WILLIAMS, BARKE, SPARKS, SHAW, VALDES:** Aye.

**BARKE:** Okay, the ayes have it.

**SPARKS:** Okay 5-0, I think. Ken, did I hear your vote?

**WILLIAMS:** Oh yeah, yeah.

**SPARKS:** Oh, okay. Sorry.

**WILLIAMS:** That was positive.

**SPARKS:** You were soft. Okay, then that moves us to number nine, which is the board action on the budget for professional development.

**WILLIAMS:** So I will make a motion for that so we can discuss it.

**BARKE:** I second it.

**SPARKS:** Okay. Perfect. All right. So let's discuss that then.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay.

**VALDES:** I think, my only thought is and I know I'm new to the Board and you guys are just getting used to the way I think. I'm always hesitant to spend taxpayer money, especially on something for myself, that kind of goes against the grain with me. But I do understand professional development, I do do that as an attorney. It is a valid issue. It happens all the time. So I would like to keep this somewhat nominal, but—

**SPARKS:** Yeah, no, I agree. And so my sort of thought along those same lines is connected to the decline in the budget for the CSBA, which was I think \$26,000 that we keep it around that ballpark.

**BARKE:** We also gave up NSBA a couple years ago.

**SPARKS:** Oh yeah.

**BARKE:** So that is another one.

**SPARKS:** Oh yeah, that is right.

**BARKE:** Yeah.

**SPARKS:** So I was thinking we would start with something like that that seems pretty nominal.

**BARKE:** What amount? I'm sorry I missed the amount.

**SPARKS:** \$26,000.

**BARKE:** Yeah, I mean—

**SPARKS:** Unless you have another idea.

**BARKE:** No, I mean I think you can round it to \$30 if you want. Whatever you want. I'm fine with it.

**SPARKS:** Okay. Any other discussion?

**VALDES:** Is that for all of us?

**SPARKS:** Yeah. Yeah.

**VALDES:** So as a group \$30?

**SPARKS:** Yeah, as a group.

**VALDES:** Okay. Okay.

**BARKE:** I remember between NSBA and CSBA it was \$33,000 or something. The two combined something, but—

**SPARKS:** Okay. Well, I think we could—

**BARKE:** And it doesn't mean we have to use it.

**SPARKS:** No, no. I think we just have a nominal level fund.

**VALDES:** So it is like this pot that is kind of just sitting there if we need to do something.

**SPARKS:** Hmm-hmm, yeah. If there is a professional development course that you might see that you wanted to engage in that is connected to our work on the Board—

**VALDES:** Okay.

**SPARKS:** —that helps your professional development in terms of maybe aligning strategic decisions with fiscal resources or some sort of courses like that.

**VALDES:** All right.

**SPARKS:** That connect to the work that we do, there would be a means to do that.

**WILLIAMS:** I have a question. Is there a list of professional development courses, workshops with a price or fee that we would be aware of?

**SPARKS:** Right. I mean, they vary.

**WILLIAMS:** Because I don't plan on going to these.

**SPARKS:** There are various universities that, for example, I have done some courses through Harvard University already. One of them was on aligning strategic planning with physical resources, which was actually quite helpful, but I already did that. But that is just an example. There are a lot of online courses. There is a lot of different professional development opportunities. There are conferences. A lot of times we will go to the CCSA because we are very interested in the charter school space.

**WILLIAMS:** So is the amount, which hasn't been formally introduced by the way, that has to be a subsidiary motion.

**SPARKS:** Right.

**WILLIAMS:** For parliamentary procedure for us to follow. But for the discussion, is that figure that was thrown out there, \$30,000, is that divided by five members or \$6,000 per member? For instance, what happens if a trustee uses all that amount for him or her?

**SPARKS:** Oh right, right. No, that is a good point. Yeah. Well that is up to us. Do we want just a general fund and we talk with ourselves about who might be interested in using it? Do we want an approval process? Do we want a certain amount to go divided to go amongst the five board members and then if a board member chose not to use, they could give it to the pool for someone else who might find a use for it? I don't know. It's up to you guys really.

**WILLIAMS:** Here is a couple thoughts because—

**SHAW:** Greg has a comment.

**ROLEN:** Go ahead.

**SPARKS:** Our trusted counsel has a comment.

**WILLIAMS:** Let me hear your comments.

**ROLEN:** I just wanted to agree with what you are about to say. The idea behind the resolution was to make some money available to the entire board, that board members could use as they wish. So if you don't want to go to a conference and somebody else does, that sort of thing. But to your point, that might be better fleshed out in a policy.

**SPARKS:** Yeah. Yeah.

**ROLEN:** So that we can make the intentions of the Board with regard to the expenditure of professional development funds excruciatingly clear.

**SPARKS:** Yeah.

**ROLEN:** You were about to say that, right? You were about to say that the policy is a good idea.

**WILLIAMS:** Yeah, I mean there has to be a process and a protocol. We don't want, at least I don't anticipate going to any of these conferences or workshops.

**ROLEN:** I do represent other public entities that kind of have a discussion among their selves and it is informal, but we don't do things that way.

**WILLIAMS:** So the other public entities that you represent, do they have this sort of thing?

**ROLEN:** Yeah. Cities, mostly.

**WILLIAMS:** They do. Okay.

**BARKE:** Well you have got 28 years' experience. The rest of us don't.

**SPARKS:** It's very typical.

**BOYD:** If I could just throw out something else for consideration. Currently, the Board has protocol that they follow the same Department process for reimbursement and so forth so that you are approving your travel or your requests in advance of doing things. Then you are reimbursed for it, as opposed to someone signing up and going to something and then coming back and presenting it. Then they may or may not, or the Board may have questions or concerns, so I just wanted to bring that up. If you are going to develop a policy then currently, in terms of their travel for other purposes, conferences and so forth, I would think that this would follow the same protocol.

**ROLEN:** I'm not going to let them go anywhere. No, but I understand. I understand.

**BOYD:** Yeah. And we can give you that information so that you can incorporate that.

**ROLEN:** Sure. Sure.

**SPARKS:** So any other discussion or questions?

**ROLEN:** As Dr. Williams said, we will need a subsidiary motion on an amount, whatever that amount may be.

**SPARKS:** Okay. So right now we voted on the resolution—

**ROLEN:** Correct.

**SPARKS:** —to pass. Now we are on number nine, which is an action on—

**ROLEN:** Right. So somebody make a motion on a number.

**BARKE:** I will make a motion to approve \$30,000 to be available to the board members.

**SPARKS:** I will second it.

**WILLIAMS:** Just for parliamentary correction, so we made the motion and the second, so this is a subsidiary motion that you are doing.

**ROLEN:** I may have misspoke. I think they are just—it's part of the action item to designate an amount.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. So you are taking back your original motion, and redoing it and putting a specific amount in there. Is that what you are doing?

**BOYD:** Well, the original motion was made by Dr. Williams, not by Trustee—

**WILLIAMS:** Okay.

**ROLEN:** And the original motion was what?

**WILLIAMS:** It was—

**BOYD:** Just for the purposes of discussion.

**ROLEN:** Discussion, perfect.

**WILLIAMS:** Discussion, right.

**ROLEN:** Okay, that's right.

**BOYD:** Either Dr. Williams would withdraw or he is correct that it's a subsidiary motion.

**ROLEN:** No, he is right. It's a subsidiary motion. My memory failed me. I have been on medication you see.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. So do you want to make the subsidiary motion?

**BARKE:** Yes. I will make a subsidiary motion to put \$30,000 into an account to be used by the board for continuing education.

**SPARKS:** And I will second that.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. So you vote on the subsidiary.

**BOYD:** Vote on it.

**WILLIAMS:** Then you come back to the main.

**SPARKS:** All right, so we vote on the subsidiary motion. All in favor?

**WILLIAMS, BARKE, SPARKS, SHAW, VALDES:** Aye.

**SPARKS:** Okay, 5-0.

**WILLIAMS:** And now you go to the main motion.

**SPARKS:** And now we go to the main motion?

**WILLIAMS:** Right.

**SPARKS:** And we kill it?

**WILLIAMS:** No, no, you have to vote on it. That was my motion.

**SPARKS:** We vote on it, too?

**WILLIAMS:** Yeah, you have to vote on that.

**SPARKS:** The one for discussion?

Speaker 8: Yes.

**WILLIAMS:** The main motion we vote on, yes.

**SPARKS:** Okay. All in favor?

**WILLIAMS, BARKE, SPARKS, SHAW, VALDES:** Aye.

**SPARKS:** 5-0. Okay. All right. So we got through those. Now we move on to our information items. Thank you all for your patience with that.

**WILLIAMS:** No, no, no. We have item number 10.

**SPARKS:** Oh, wait a minute. Oh yeah, sorry about that. I already had a check mark by it. So item number 10, board action on resolution regarding advisement of COVID vaccination.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. Since I'm the author of this, I will make the motion.

**BARKE:** I will second for discussion.

**WILLIAMS:** I will do the discussion initially.

**SPARKS:** Fantastic.

**WILLIAMS:** So the reason for this is because of the October 12th advisory from the CDC that the COVID vaccination be a part of childhood immunization for school attendance. And we have been through two plus years of COVID, going on three years. And there is a lot of concern regarding mandating a vaccine that is not officially approved, that has no long term trials associated with it, for a disease that has minimal impact upon children. It's an upper respiratory infection. The kids who have had problems with this are severely ill. And the kids who don't have any underlying medical problems, when they get it, do very well.

Natural immunity is far superior than vaccine related immunity. If you look at the titers, the vaccine group has lower titers of antibodies to fight COVID than those who are naturally exposed to it and get it and survive. There is long term data that the Danish Health Authority, they are recommending against COVID vaccine for their kids less than 18 years of age. We have been through this COVID for the last two years. The John Hopkins study that was published earlier this spring showed that for those states that had an absolute close in everything, blue states versus red states, there was no differences in mortality and morbidity.

There is only two states that have in consideration mandated a COVID vaccination; that is California and New Hampshire. In California, it has been put off to 2023. The decision, I'm not so sure of the politics and the mechanisms in delaying that. But as a physician, I don't think that this is necessary. We have just even today the call by the public health official here in Orange County for the respiratory syncytial virus, an outbreak that we have every single time of at this year. And of course they are trying to make a vaccine for that, as for every other virus that we have, rhino viruses, we have had coronaviruses for several decades. The problem that I have with this recommendation, because there is no long term use and safety profile, is that we are now going to be mandating this for kids in K-12 education. I think that is going to be the emphasis, or the impetus, for kids leaving public school and going to home schooling, so I don't think that is good from a public health perspective. But I think it's going to really ruin public education because parents just are not going to educate their kids. They will go to home schooling.

So that is kind of the background for this, and I'm hoping that we can talk about this as community. Certainly there are those children who may benefit from the vaccination and certainly there are many adults who may benefit from it also. We did of course, a public forum on this, on opening schools, in the summer of 2020 when we came out pretty strong that we should not close down our economies, our in-classroom learning. And we have learned in the last two years that the closures have dramatically and permanently erased education advances for many, many individuals and kids.

**VALDES:** Can I make a comment?

**SPARKS:** Yes, of course.

**VALDES:** So I have met a few people in my life, one of them happens to be a doctor who runs a lab who feeds data into the CDC. And I placed a phone call, because as I said, I'm being asked to sign onto this. And the message I got back from the doctor who feeds the data directly to the CDC is, the data is entirely contradictory and he thought us signing this was fine. So there is no basis for that advisory on October 12, is essentially the message I got back.

**WILLIAMS:** Are you going to give names?

**VALDES:** No, I am not.

**WILLIAMS:** That is pretty significant

**VALDES:** Because of his position within the government, I am not permitted to give a name. But I'm fine with the draft of this, except we need to change the Governor's name.

**BARKE:** Yeah. Get rid of the E.

**SPARKS:** I have a question for the good doctor. So is it true, from your medical expertise, is it true that if these are mandated for the childhood school vaccination schedule, that then the companies are not liable for—?

**WILLIAMS:** That is correct.

**SPARKS:** —damages.

**WILLIAMS:** That is right. They are going to make them immune.

**SPARKS:** Or injuries, or—

**WILLIAMS:** They are going to make them immune from any injuries, so Big Pharma wins.

**SPARKS:** Because I think most of the public does not know that.

**WILLIAMS:** Yeah.

**SPARKS:** And I wanted to confirm with a physician.

**WILLIAMS:** Yeah. Well that is more the political angle to it. But right now, all of these vaccines were for the initial-use, authorized under the EUA, which is emergency use authorization, which provides immunity from any liability to any of the pharmacies.

**SPARKS:** Okay, thank you. Any other comments? Yes?

**SHAW:** I just have the friendly amendment to fix the typo on Governor Newsom's name. And other than that, there is no other corrections.

**WILLIAMS:** Yeah, and I think the first paragraph speaks very much from a balanced perspective that we support the use of proven and reliable routine vaccinations to reduce childhood diseases. The use of MMR, the DPT, the oral Polio, those have significantly reduced childhood diseases. There are, certainly we get into the controversies of some of these vaccines for some of these sexually transmitted diseases whether they are effective or not, but Hepatitis B is certainly effective. We don't have one for Hepatitis C, we don't have one for many other diseases. I'm sure they will be ongoing.

**VALDES:** I thought they did have one for Hepatitis C.

**WILLIAMS:** B, no, they don't have one for Hepatitis C.

**VALDES:** No?

**SPARKS:** No.

**WILLIAMS:** They have immunotherapy for Hepatitis C, which has dramatically reduced morbidity and mortality, but not a vaccine.

**SPARKS:** And all of those have had randomized controlled trials.

**WILLIAMS:** Oh yeah, they are very established.

**SPARKS:** Established data.

**WILLIAMS, BARKE:** Right.

**SPARKS:** Whereas, I'm not sure that we have randomized controlled trials for the Covid vaccine.

**WILLIAMS:** Well, we did. So the controlled group, they had two groups, those that received and those that were the control who didn't receive. And it was made, the decision, after three months that those in the control group should get the vaccine, so we really have no control group. So it really has not been like the old fashioned way of doing research empirically, and randomize and—

**SPARKS:** The scientific method.

**WILLIAMS:** With good data, yeah. We just don't have it, so there is a lot of controversy about that. But again, I don't want us here, if you decide that you want to support this resolution, to give the impression that we are against childhood vaccinations.

**BARKE:** Right.

**WILLIAMS:** Because I'm for that.

**BARKE:** Right.

**WILLIAMS:** That is what I have done for my entire professional career. We have seen dramatic changes. In fact with Polio, that has been, even though it's still in the world, it is radically reduced.

**VALDES:** Having read this several times, I don't think even a casual read would indicate that we are against vaccinations in general.

**BARKE:** No, I think it's great and I think we should move on and vote.

**SPARKS:** All right. Is that a motion?

**BARKE:** That is a motion to vote.

**SPARKS:** All right, I will second it. All in favor?

**WILLIAMS, BARKE, SPARKS, VALDES, SHAW:** Aye.

**SPARKS:** All right. Thank you for putting that together. That passes 5-0. Do we have any staff recommendations before I move to information items? Any staff recommendations?

**BOYD:** No.

**SPARKS:** No? Okay. We will move on to information items. First off, we will call up Renee Hendrick to talk about the Rancho Soñada update, please.

**HENDRICK:** Thank you to all you members who gave us some information, or desires, for our ITO site. We have incorporated those. We have initial meetings with the architects starting next week. We are hoping by January, at the latest February, that you would actually be able to see some proposals. Also, to give us some scope of work of how many phases we may have based on cost estimates. I think our biggest concern is looking at the infrastructure piece. It looks like it's a little worse than we anticipated, also redesigning the property to be more of a science center and allowing public use at some point also. So that means restrooms and things like that, which we really didn't have before, so it will be improving on that space.

The architect firm is also going to help us with possibly looking for donations, so that will be something we will be bringing to you we get more information about that also. Okay.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**BARKE:** Yeah, thank you.

**SPARKS:** Okay. Well you may as well just stay up there because we have the next item, salary increases over \$10,000 in accordance with Education Code 1302 and Board Policy 100-10, referring us to Exhibit A. Where is exhibit A?

**BARKE:** In the back.

**HENDRICK:** In the back.

**BARKE:** It's under number, whatever the last one is. Information, I think.

**SPARKS:** Oh, okay.

**HENDRICK:** Yes. And so the Education Code in your board policy does require that when salaries increase by more than \$10,000 in one year, that we would report those to the Board. And so this has been an unusual year for salary settlements. I would say that we are on the low side of salary settlements for our county. In some districts we may be half of what they were receiving, so that is a concern maybe in the next year of how far apart we are. So we just wanted to give you that information.

We didn't list that, but I think it is important to note that we had 47 teachers that fell between the \$9,000 and \$9,099 range. They are not listed, but we did have quite a bit of staff in those next two tiers also. And so there is two different settlements, one for classified and one for certificated. And then the management team followed the classified settlement. Yes?

**WILLIAMS:** So our teachers did get a raise?

**HENDRICK:** Yes, they did.

**WILLIAMS:** Good. Another question, what was that raise percentage and how does it compare with other districts?

**HENDRICK:** So the teachers received a 6% ongoing salary increase which was different than the classified. We will pick up 50% of their health benefits. And then they also settled for next year. They did a two year settlement. And so next year I believe is three—I'm looking at Nina because she is the head negotiator, 3.25% on schedule.

**BOYD:** And 1% off schedule.

**HENDRICK:** And 1% off schedule. I would say that that is probably one of the lower amounts of settlements we have seen. Some of our districts are in double digits. Some of my colleagues in other counties are 12, 13, 14%. But we also, as part of that, do salary surveys and felt that that was a fair offer at that time.

**SPARKS:** You said something about the two different waves or something?

**HENDRICK:** So they are going to get a two year settlement.

**SPARKS:** Oh, okay.

**HENDRICK:** So for this year, it's the 6%. Next year, they already settled their negotiations for next year.

**SPARKS:** Oh, I see.

**HENDRICK:** Which is great for us.

**SPARKS:** Okay. Okay.

**HENDRICK:** We appreciate not negotiating every year.

**SPARKS:** Yeah, I can imagine. Okay, cool. Thank you. Any other questions or comments? Thank you. All right, perfect. So this brings us to Nina with the charter school—

**WILLIAMS:** No, no, no. We have the Board Policy 400-4.

**SPARKS:** First we have the charter school update from Nina.

**WILLIAMS:** Oh, oh, that is right.

**SPARKS:** Right? Okay. Go ahead.

**BOYD:** It's brief. It's in your folders. And there were some copies also on the back table. If you had questions on what was in the folder, then Aracely is here. If you don't have questions then that is the document that we provide to you twice a year. The information that is there is the beginning of the year and then we will provide an update in the spring related to charter schools.

**SPARKS:** I really like the way you organized the financial status and then operationalized what constitutes good, fair or poor. I really like the way you guys did that.

**BOYD:** We know you are interested in metrics, so the staff has listened.

**SPARKS:** Yeah.

**BOYD:** And we have adapted.

**SPARKS:** Yeah.

**BOYD:** And tried to make sure that it's a meaningful document.

**SPARKS:** Yeah, it's a really good.

**BOYD:** And it tells the story of where they are.

**SPARKS:** Great, thank you.

**BOYD:** Aracely?

**CHASTAIN:** Like Nina said, we provide this update twice a year. And just to let you know, some of the things that are on here are things that have been requested by prior board members. So for example, we had a board member who was very interested in WASC accreditation for the schools. So we have continued to keep that on here. As that has happened, that does tend to change every few years. Someone else wanted to know what area they were in because they wanted to know which fell into their trustee areas, and so we have maintained that information here. So you will see that over and over. The report looked a little different during the pandemic because we were looking at things like who was offering independent study, who had transitioned into that. We wanted to make sure the Board had that information, so we may switch some things depending on what is happening in the schools. But for the most part, what you see here is what, on a typical year, is what you would see; which is, the financial information for all of the schools, which we normally wouldn't just be updating you on as time goes by.

**SPARKS:** Right.

**CHASTAIN:** We want to make sure you have that a couple times a year. What their current enrollment is so that you get a little bit of an idea there and when schools started for the year for each of the schools. Our next report in the fall has a little bit more information as far as a written narrative. If you will recall from the last report, and that is typically done in the spring, that is because we at that point have done more of our oversight for the schools and have completed our oversight visits. What we try to give you there is just some information that might be of relevance to the Board; who may be bringing up a material revision, who wants to expand grade levels, any concerns that we have as we are headed towards the end of the school year that may then carry over into the next fiscal year. We want to make sure that we give you a little bit of a narrative on each of those schools.

**VALDES:** Aracely?

**CHASTAIN:** The schools are provided—I'm sorry. Yeah, go ahead.

**VALDES:** Do we have an issue then with Suncoast Prep Academy? I noticed they are kind of running in the negative on their reserves. Is that something that we need to concern ourselves with?

**CHASTAIN:** Right. So they are in poor fiscal condition. What happens when we have schools in poor fiscal condition? That is when we ask for a fiscal stabilization plan and updated budgets where they make additional cuts potentially. And then we monitor those fiscal stabilization plans and continue to monitor the school. A school like Suncoast Prep has been probably in poor fiscal condition now for a few years. It just has to do with their level of reserves, how much debt they might have. There is different things that we look at and this was created in order to be able to classify these schools a little bit more easily for you. This was based on the unaudited actuals for 21-22. These are just the reports that we get in. We try to use the most recent report that we got in order to provide this information for you. Are we concerned? Yes.

**VALDES:** Has a notice of concern been issued?

**CHASTAIN:** Yes. So anyone who has a poor fiscal condition gets a notice of concern issued asking for that fiscal stabilization plan and an updated budget. That then is monitored through our fiscal oversight group.

**VALDES:** So what is the timeline on that?

**CHASTAIN:** I believe that the schools have already submitted those. I would have to look individually for each school. I can get that information to you if you want it; but typically we give them about a month because we want it to be board approved for them.

**VALDES:** Is this something that you think we need an update on?

**CHASTAIN:** I don't know that there is a lot changing at this point. When you look at those that are kind of in poor fiscal condition, some of them we have reasons for. So for example, you will see EPIC is also listed there as being in poor fiscal condition; but, their enrollment is plenty high. But that had to do with their separation from their current CMO. They had owed some money that they needed to pay in order to separate from that CMO, so they are playing catch up with some of that, and building their reserves back up and doing things like that. And so we have the reasons there. It's not anything that is going to change in the next couple of months. We will probably continue to see that poor physical condition for a little while there.

A school like Unity or one like Suncoast Prep, the main issue there seems to be enrollment. They are not meeting their enrollment projections. Until those are met, and they have high debt a lot of the times. Until they can figure out how they are going to pay that off, or they get their enrollment up and their attendance numbers up, sometimes that attendance ratio is also what pushes their money down, we may continue to see that year over year. That is as far as we go.

**VALDES:** I mean if it gets to the point where you see something that you need to let us know, is that the next step?

**CHASTAIN:** Yes, yes, we do.

**VALDES:** Okay.

**CHASTAIN:** If we get to a point where we are concerned that a school may in essence shut down, or that their fiscal situation has made it so that aren't providing an appropriate educational program, or the facility is not appropriate anymore because they have just cut in so many places, that is definitely a concern that we would bring up to the Board.

**VALDES:** I think with respect to Unity, us getting involved, just putting a little bit of a spotlight on it seems to have created a good temporary outcome. So I'm not opposed to doing that again.

**SPARKS:** Yeah, I really like the way this is laid out. Thank you for your hard work on that.

**CHASTAIN:** Sure.

**SPARKS:** I wonder how many reports of poor would we see before we need to bring them in?

**CHASTAIN:** Right. And of course, as you see these, anytime you get something like this you can ask for a school to come in to talk to you about any of the things we see.

**SPARKS:** Yeah.

**CHASTAIN:** If you saw a school that isn't WASC accredited and you wanted them to come in to talk to you about why they haven't sought that accreditation.

**SPARKS:** Right.

**CHASTAIN:** You could absolutely do that at any point. It is up to the Board when they want a school to come in.

**BOYD:** What we do, as Aracely said, our team is trying to allow the administration and the governing boards for the charter schools to do their due diligence. We don't want to keep running to the Board to say this is a—and then next month it's fixed.

**VALDES:** Yeah.

**SPARKS:** Right.

**BOYD:** So what we are doing, and historically what we have done is when we see either the responses on the notices of concern that we are sending, or that the financial stabilization plan doesn't make sense, or there is some holes, or there is some things, then that is when we sit down—we dialogue. We say, okay, this is something that we want to dialogue with the Board. The Board will make the determination if they want them to come in and talk about it.

**SPARKS:** Okay.

**BOYD:** Or give us direction, continue to do what you are doing. So we are constantly having a conversation and we will continue to bring those up with the Executive Committee when we are setting agenda.

**SPARKS:** Right.

**BOYD:** If there is some that are of concern. And then if there are things that happen outside of board meetings, then I'm going to email you and send you a memo with regards to what staff is reporting. Because we don't want to wait if we know that clearly there is a legality that could impact them and/or this board. So we are trying to work that.

**BARKE:** And Jorge, I think a few months before you joined the Board, Suncoast was in here. So we are working with them.

**SPARKS:** Yeah.

**BARKE:** They are working on all of the issues.

**VALDES:** Okay.

**BARKE:** Just so you know, this isn't a surprise.

**VALDES:** Okay.

**BARKE:** We had them in here a few months back.

**VALDES:** Okay.

**BARKE:** Yeah, appreciate you—

**CHASTAIN:** But always a lot to celebrate with our charter schools and how they are operating their schools. We tend to be overwhelmingly happy with what they are doing. As you can see, out of the 19 schools that are currently operating, 14 are in good position, two are in fair. So that is a good percentage—

**SPARKS:** Yeah.

**CHASTAIN:** —of the schools that we have got going. So they have been pretty diligent in trying to keep their finances going well.

**SPARKS:** That is great.

**VALDES:** That is great.

**SPARKS:** Yeah. Thank you to you and your office.

**VALDES:** Thank you.

**SPARKS:** You guys are doing a great job.

**VALDES:** Thank you, Aracely.

**SPARKS:** All right, so now we move to the Williams Board Policy 400-4.

**VALDES:** Where did everybody go?

**SPARKS:** I know. They went to have dinner.

**AUDIENCE:** We are here.

**BARKE:** We have our die hards out there. I see them.

**WILLIAMS:** So I want to thank everybody for speaking up to what they felt this resolution represented. I think it was a very good discussion. I appreciate people giving me their input. And from that input, there is going to be a lot of language changes. We are going to be working with our attorney on this so it won't be so confusing. The purpose of this, despite what those who are out there were saying, it's not anything that is meant to hurt any one particular racial group.

We had our ethnic study public forum where we learned the difference between critical, versus constructive ethnic study. We had that dialogue. And from that forum, if we can recall, we understood and saw that Critical Race Theory was infused in many of the curriculums. And the purpose of this, obviously, I do not believe in Critical Race Theory, I think it remains a theory. It should be remained at an academic level. It belongs in higher education, but I don't think you can teach it or mandate it in K-12. To create systems of instruction or pedagogies that are based upon the concepts that there are oppressors and oppressed in society, I think is racism in and of itself.

The individuals who spoke about the Asian community, I'm married to a Vietnamese individual. We are having our first son, which will be a mixed kid. My grandchildren are mixed kids. My son married an African American. So to say that it's racist, is incorrect, and does not represent the truth and I don't think they actually read the entire policy. But I do admit that some of the language may be interpreted in a way, so there is going to be some cleanup there that I think will help it.

But a lot of this, specifically in here, is just to create the concept that we are all the same. That regardless of our race, our gender, our sexual identity, we are all the same. It's not meant to hurt kids who identify with a sexual orientation that is different than mine. Actually, it was meant to protect them. So those are some of perhaps the impressions that people have of this and I appreciate their input. Again, it's not meant to be hurtful to any particular group. The individual who spoke on behalf of the Cambodian community, I think that is important that we talk about those sorts of things. I think it's important to talk about what happened in the Japanese internment in World War II.

So constructive ethnic studies is a good thing for society. Critical ethnic studies, which is infused with the type of, not the typical Marxism, which is based upon class, but is based upon race, is bad. When you look at Nikole Hannah-Jones, 1619 Project, I think that is wrong. America wasn't started, and nor does it exist, on the concept that slavery was the primary purpose of this nation. So we can go back to a year ago, I would encourage us to reread our white paper that we created. This policy was meant to follow that. It was not meant to impact anyone in a negative way, but it was to give greater liberties and freedoms.

**SPARKS:** Does anyone else have anything to add to Dr. Williams comments?

**VALDES:** I was particularly taken by the comment tonight about, that it takes history away. I mean, I read it multiple times. While I think it's a lot of words there, boy, at no point did I think it meant to take history away. One of the things I think I'm a little dismayed, sitting here now for, what is it, 90 days or less? I think I have mentioned this before. In my public school education, I

don't remember any of this. Now, I'm going to date myself. I'm 53 years old, so I'm a product of the 1980s. But I went through 100% public school education. I don't remember any of this. I don't remember any of it in college. I don't remember any of it in law school, nothing.

I have been contacted by multiple people who tell me and show me, I have seen pictures that have been relayed to me, as a trustee on this board, of condoms on a wall. That would not be acceptable to me. I know there was a comment made tonight about looking for evidence. I have talked with members of my own community who have said, I don't go to the public school. Well actually let me be entirely clear, my kids go to the charter school at El Sol. Because I'm a trustee, I asked some of the parents, why are you here? I think the most given answer was either the school is closer or they thought it was a better educational opportunity. But the next answer that I got was, I don't like what is being taught in the Santa Ana public school system. These are Latinos. They are relatively conservative, generally speaking. I view some type of policy like this as absolutely necessary. Not only because as a parent, some of these issues I'm not comfortable with my son or daughter being taught. But quite frankly, I have a bit of a concern with respect to the waiting lists in Santa Ana, at the public school system, at the charter schools.

Some of those charter schools have waiting lists of 2,000 kids. I'm concerned about this mass exodus in the public school system; I genuinely am. I would just ask you to consider, the people who voice an absolute objection to anything along these lines, I view this as hurting. I view what is happening in the Santa Ana school system as hurting the public schools, because there is a large percentage of parents that are not going to accept it and clearly have already told me they are not. And there is a lot of teachers jobs at stake.

I don't want to see public teachers' jobs just being reduced. Currently we have I think about 22,000 kids in the charter schools. What is it going to be if it turns into 50,000? I have been told that there are four charter schools in the pipeline over the next year. This board is very likely going to approve all of them. That is another 2-4,000 kids. How many public teachers jobs are going to be lost? I'm sorry to all the folks out there that are just deathly opposed to anything like this, but I think it's necessary. Not only to put some framework on our school system, but to save public school teacher jobs. So I just wanted to mention that tonight.

**SPARKS:** Well thank you, Trustee Valdes. I think let's continue to talk about the ins and the outs of these really important curricular issues. I would like to propose that we table the issue until we have really given the issue all the vetting and careful thought that it deserves.

**WILLIAMS:** Right. It's currently tabled now. The idea and the concept is that it's going to be finessed with the language to make sure we are all understanding and comfortable with it. I did fail to mention that it did take into consideration the California Healthy Youth Act, what we saw in our forums and what the parents came to us—and masks over those several months two to three years ago. That is also injected here. You can't have content that is age inappropriate for a K-12 classroom. Some of the content that we saw and was demonstrated during that time period was certainly inconsistent with decency of community values. And the other aspect is, I think the dismantling of law enforcement and the anti-law enforcement sentiment, that is something we are seeing that needs to be talked about because this is a country based upon law and order. If we

don't have laws and order and begin to dismantle those concepts, then we don't have a country anymore.

**VALDES:** I genuinely think, we as a board, need to put something on paper. I have said this before, I think, Dr. Williams respectfully, I can clearly tell you spend a lot of time on that. It's a little bit much for me, but I think something needs to be put on paper. I don't think we can just not do anything. I think there is a lot at stake, particularly for like I said, the public schools, which are just going to hemorrhage students if we don't do anything.

**SPARKS:** So I don't know if I need to make a motion to table until we have given the issue all the vetting and careful thought that it deserves?

**WILLIAMS:** Can we bring it back? It's going to take some time to get the right language.

**SPARKS:** I think it's going to take some time.

**WILLIAMS:** And now we are going on Thanksgiving and Christmas.

**SPARKS:** Yeah. There is no time certain.

**WILLIAMS:** Well, there is no urgency.

**SPARKS:** It doesn't need to be next month. It needs to be when we are ready I think.

**WILLIAMS:** There is no urgency.

**SPARKS:** Yeah.

**WILLIAMS:** Yeah.

**SPARKS:** That is the motion I wanted to put forward.

**BARKE:** I will second your motion.

**SPARKS:** Okay. All in favor?

**BOYD:** Wait. This is—

**SPARKS:** Yeah.

**BOYD:** There is no action.

**SPARKS:** Oh, there is no action. Oh, because it's discussion.

**BOYD:** You can't do an action. Yeah.

**SPARKS:** Oh, okay.

**BOYD:** It is a discussion item.

**WILLIAMS:** This is a discussion item.

**BOYD:** All right, so we will just table it for further discussion.

**WILLIAMS:** Can I bring it back when I think it's ready?

**SPARKS:** When you are ready.

**WILLIAMS:** Trustee Valdes and I have been talking about this, so I want to get his input more on this.

**SPARKS:** Sure.

**WILLIAMS:** Along with Greg's.

**SPARKS:** Sure.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay.

**SPARKS:** Yeah. Okay. Yeah, so it's an information item, so we don't do a formal motion. Okay. Is there anything else before we move on to the next discussion item? Okay. So I want to just confirm the April board date change to April 12, 2023. All five members said that we are all available, per poll. And I guess we will put that on as an agenda item for the December 14 meeting to approve that.

**BOYD:** Correct.

**BARKE:** Okay.

**SPARKS:** Okay. That moves us onto announcements, Superintendent Mijares.

**MIJARES:** Yes, thank you. It is an honor to be with you tonight. I did want to add on just a little bit to the discussion the Board was having to encourage you to recognize that there are basically six bodies, legislative bodies, that we have to report to with respect to curriculum. There is the California Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education, there is the Instructional Quality Commission, there is the State Board of Education, and then there is the legislative bodies on both sides, the general Assembly here in California and the Congress, that all weigh in on curriculum. And when the curricula is approved, and it's predicated on frameworks and standards that are all approved by the state of California, we now have to follow those mandates that come out of Sacramento.

So that is the vetting process that is inherent in our country and in our state. Most states have to do the same thing, so that is the thing you are constantly pushing back on. For example, the charter schools, they have to follow state law, you just talked to Miles over there, and they do. And we have got great charter schools in this county. You mentioned El Sol. I was in Santa Ana at the beginning of El Sol. That was started by a former board member and a principal that was retiring from Henninger Elementary School in Santa Ana, started El Sol Charter School. It's one of the best in the nation. And in fact, we had a split board that allowed El Sol to be born, if you will.

The Board also, we had just passed a bond, a very significant building bond. And the Board agreed to provide some resources to the establishment of El Sol. So our charter schools have to follow state laws too. Private schools is a different story. But all of our professional development, it's open to the private schools, it's open to the archdiocese of Orange County, the Catholic schools, Christian schools and others who wish to come to our professional development. We open it up to everybody that is a teacher. We don't just let people walk in from off the street. I mean there is times when that kind of discourse is necessary. But we try to respect the professionalism of teachers. We try to do professional development that is consistent with their standards as professionals. They are credentialed. They are licensed to practice teaching in our school system.

So just remember that, because if it's outside of the bounds of what we are required to do by law, then you get the friction. And that is what we live with. We live in this state, as professionals, of constantly trying to find the optimal point of implementation, which will be consistent with law and also make sense locally. And then remember too that every board, there is 28 districts, all with dually elected boards, they have the authority to approve curriculum because there is plenty of opportunity in there to customize some of the curriculum. And that is at the discretion of the local board. And people believe that I inherently have the authority to overrule a dually elected board and appointed superintendent. And that is just not the case. I mean, we are colleagues. We do the collegial working together and try to find common ground. When we are building our local accountability plans and there is a whole framework for how that is done with stakeholder involvement, all stakeholders need to be involved at the local level, we too are involved so that when it comes time to approve the local accountability plans, we are united with them.

People have asked, why is it in Orange County that you don't have fighting going on over the district's ability to establish their own LCAPs and the county office approving those LCAPs? And I simply say, it's because we start working together from day one. And when it finally gets through their vetting process with all of their stakeholders and the board approves their LCAPs, we are going to approve it too. And it's consistent with law. So those pieces have to be recognized. That we live in a representative government. We elect people and people make decisions. And my job is not bipartisan. It is nonpartisan, the job that I bear. People get mad at me. Well, why are you representing those groups? They saw you hanging out over there or hanging out over there. Because they are parents and they come. They ask me to come and speak, and I go speak. So my door has to be open to everybody, folks. Political party is irrelevant. Ethnicity, race, gender, we are here to serve everybody, so that is one thing you have to think about.

I just want to make, Madam President, members of the Board, three quick announcements. First of all, I want to thank Mari Barke, Tim Shaw and Jorge Valdes for coming to our Teacher of the Year celebration. I hope you liked it.

**BARKE:** Loved it.

**MIJARES:** I don't want to preempt. You might want to say somethings a little bit later.

**VALDES:** I had a great time.

**MIJARES:** You might want to say some things a little bit later.

**BARKE:** Yes, loved it.

**MIJARES:** As you know, we recognize all of our teachers. They come up through the school systems themselves and then the best of the best come to a large gathering and we happen to have the great venue of Disneyland hotel, which is wonderful. And then out of that we surface another—the top, top, top teachers, and I want to mention their names right now: Ben Case of Northwood High School in the Irvine Unified School District. He is a performing arts teacher, a music teacher; Tracy Dawson of Arnold O. Beckman High School in the Tustin Unified School District; Dr. Emily Liu of Irvine Valley College in the South Orange County Community College District; Jamie Morgan of Cerritos Elementary in the Savannah School District; Sergio Sanabria of Marco Forster Middle School in the Capistrano Unified School District; and Jill Summerhayes of Plavan Elementary School in the Fountain Valley School District.

Now, Ben Case is one of seven chosen to be the State Teacher of the Year and we have been remarkably successful. I think it has been several years in a row that we produce—and there is 319,000 teachers. To get seven teachers—and they go through all the local vetting and then state vetting. It's depoliticized, frankly, or de-political if I might say it that way. It's not supposed to be a political process. The State Superintendent only confirms decisions that were made down with lower teachers who are the ones that really kind of determine who are going to be the top teachers in the state of California. Last year we had Alondra Diaz, who is in the Saddleback Unified School District. She was our representative and she was in a group of about 10 teachers that were going to represent the United States. She went to Washington D.C., met with the President, lots of people met, and the US Department of Education weighs in and they select the number one teacher in America.

Then that person becomes an ambassador. You basically lose them for two years. They are an ambassador for the teaching profession and it's an international process. They do a lot of traveling. Ben will also be an ambassador for the state of California. Then I just wanted to thank also, as you know, the Orange County Teachers of the Year Foundation. It was established by William, Jeff, Bill Gross of Orange County, his son Jeff and Jeff's wife, Jennifer. They put up all the cash so that the six finalists received \$20,000. The semi-finalists received \$5,000 and then all the other nominees receive \$3,000.

Schools First also is a tremendous partner in helping to offset all of these costs. I just wanted to give them praise because the Gross family has given \$4 million since 1992, so it's pretty cool to get a \$20,000 check.

**BARKE:** Yeah.

**MIJARES:** Then I want to remind you that this Friday at 9 o'clock, from 9-12 o'clock, we are going to do our Fentanyl Summit, largely organized by Sheriff Don Barnes. But we have a number of people that will be speaking. I will be speaking as a representative of the K-12 system. It will be held over where the sheriff does its training in the city of Tustin off of Red Hill, 9-12 o'clock. It is really looking at this ravaging drug fentanyl that is 50-100 times more powerful than morphine.

Approximately 10,000 Americans die every month of this drug and the purveyors of all drugs, but particularly fentanyl, they will stop at nothing. Unfortunately our kids, we have had several students in Orange County that have passed away taking this drug. It is a prescription drug is what it is. But the people that make the drug and are selling it, sell it as though it is a pure drug. It is not. It gets laced with toxic items that can kill you in a matter of seconds. If you had a penny, an American, just a penny, one of our pennies, and you put a little drop of fentanyl, that is enough to instantly kill a person and it is a tragic situation. We are doing everything we can with this multi-interagency approach to really protect Orange County from the drug.

Then I want to remind you of two other things. Sunburst Youth Academy graduation will be December 8 at 10:00 a.m. at Mariners Church in Irvine. I hope you can come to that. If you want to come, please see Nina and she can talk to our staff. I can do that as well. Then we are going to have our Ninth Annual OC Pathway Showcase on December 7. In terms of the showcase, Orange County really I believe leads the state in terms of career technical education. Because the old days of having vocations and professions—and people say, “Oh, you are pretty good with your hands. Maybe you ought to go into the automotive industry.” No denigration there. I mean BMW can't find enough mechanics. Everybody is hurting for good quality mechanics and these mechanics can make six digits in those jobs.

But what we are finding today is that kids are now taking advanced placement courses or other courses, International Baccalaureate courses or Cambridge. Those are very strong curriculum and they are going to the university, but they are also involved in career technical education. So the two have been melded together. Try fixing electric cars today, right? Dr. Williams, you have an electric car. I mean they can't find enough mechanics. That is why it takes forever to get your car back when it goes in for services, especially if it's serious. It's a huge dearth. We don't have the labor pool to meet the demands of this nation as it stands right now, so it's a crisis point.

That is all I wanted to say. I hope you can come to some of these events that are forthcoming. Just let us know if you want to be there and we will make sure that you have a seat. That is all I have under my reports.

**SPARKS:** Thank you. Thank you very much. All right, Nina, Deputy Superintendent.

**BOYD:** Just a reminder that your December board meeting has been moved to December 14 and we have updated the website so that the public is aware of that as well. Submission deadline for any agenda items is November 30. I wanted to remind you about the board videos. We have Tim and Mari confirmed. If the other board members would please take a look at your calendars and respond to Darou if any of you can make it? Also on the 15th, just because Media does set up, that is the day that we have confirmed for Mari and Tim currently. We still have some space that day that we could accommodate. If not, then you have the calendar for the other dates that were sent to you.

We also just sent you information on the California Charter Schools Conference, March 13-16 in Sacramento. If you all RSVP with us by next week, we can take advantage of early registration. It is also really important that you RSVP as soon as possible with Darou so that we can try to get hotel accommodations. The city fills up quickly close to the venue. The Sacramento Convention Center has been redone. Having been there during the Charter Schools Conference, you do not want to be at one of the outer-lying hotels if you can help it. Especially now, because of taxis and so forth, it is really hard to commute around. Then Renee, you have an update on the Esplanade report.

**BARKE:** Darou, you can mark me down for CCSA, save me an email. Thank you.

**HENDRICK:** In your red folder, you have the quarterly update for the Esplanade Project, so that is doing well, as usual. We are on budget for our operating revenue. We did have a dip in our occupancy for July, but it was just because tenants were moving out and then we were doing some rehab. Right now we are basically at 91% again, so that is kind of where we have been staying. I was very excited to see the note. Our principal is now \$8.6 million, and we are below the \$10 million mark and still on schedule to pay that off in a timely manner.

Thanks to the Board's action a few years ago, our interest rate is fixed at 2.84%, so very happy that we were able to do that a few years ago. Any questions on that?

**SPARKS:** Not from me. No? Okay, great. Then we will move on to legislative updates. Does anyone have anything related to legislative updates? Any committee reports?

**BARKE:** Nope. I was just going to say that I did have a great time at the Teacher of the Year Award. It was my first visit and I look forward to going back.

**MIJARES:** Great.

**BARKE:** So that was a good evening with some colleagues. It was very nice and a lot of representation from the Department so that was great to spend an evening with the Department.

**SPARKS:** So that is board member comments. We will just continue on that.

**BARKE:** Oh, I thought that is where we were. Sorry.

**SPARKS:** No, that is okay. Dr. Williams, any board member comments?

**WILLIAMS:** No.

**SPARKS:** No? Okay. How about you, Trustee Shaw?

**SHAW:** Oh, I was just going to say, likewise. I really enjoyed the Teacher of the Year event. I knew it would be big. I didn't realize it was that big.

**BARKE:** Yeah, yeah.

**SHAW:** How many people were in attendance?

**BARKE:** Eight hundred, maybe?

**MIJARES:** Probably, yeah.

**SHAW:** Eight hundred, okay.

**BARKE:** It seemed like the Academy Awards for teachers.

**MIJARES:** Yeah. Right.

**BARKE:** Yeah.

**MIJARES:** It's a deviation from the cookies and punch that teachers would get and a pat on the back. It is special, and we are lucky because we have the venue. And we have the good will on the part of people that want to make an investment.

**VALDES:** Yeah. That was a great night.

**MIJARES:** In fact, the Grosses continue to say, "How can we do more? How can we do more?"

**BARKE:** That is awesome.

**SPARKS:** Wonderful

**BARKE:** You just take so many photos. You must have been exhausted.

**MIJARES:** Yeah, it does wear you down.

**BOYD:** Dr. Mijares has mentioned before, too, nobody does it better than Orange County. Dr. Olmstead's staff—

**MIJARES:** Yes, Christine.

**BOYD:** And our Media Department do a phenomenal job. But if you ever go to the state and have the opportunity to see what they do. I was just appalled.

**BARKE:** Oh.

**BOYD:** I just thought, we get our people so pumped up, and then we go up there with them and they are looking like, is this it? It was in a hotel and not even one of the best hotels in Sacramento. It just was no comparison.

**MIJARES:** Yeah.

**BOYD:** I think the relationships, the donors, the partnerships that this office has developed and nurtured over the years is just phenomenal. But our team, definitely, Dr. Olmstead and our Media Department, we had, I believe, three new employees. That was their first time and you would have never known—

**BARKE:** Wow.

**BOYD:** That they had not done this before.

**MIJARES:** Yeah, and I'm glad you said that about Media. I see Ian back there. Everything that you see is produced largely, in fact, all of it is produced by the Orange County Department of Education. The videos you see, they are all done, high quality resolution, professional work in terms of videos. Laura back there. I can't see who else is in the room. But they do all this work, and it's very time consuming. Hopefully the videos that you are going to go through, you will see the quality of their work.

**SPARKS:** Wonderful. Trustee Valdes, anything you want to add?

**VALDES:** Yeah. I took a trip this month to the Harbor Education Center on October 14, and I just wanted to share my experience there. The Harbor Education Center is a dual campus and it is an ACCESS school. For the benefit of the public, that is an acronym that stands for Alternative, Community and Correctional Education Schools and Services. Yes, I know how to read that off the website. It is also a special education campus, and I was met there by Vern Burton who is the Assistant Superintendent of the ACCESS program, Analee, I hope I'm pronouncing this correctly, Kredel, who is the Chief of Special Ed Services. Ms. Hendrick was there. I also had the pleasure of walking the campus with Christa Paul, who is the site principal.

Again, for the benefit of the public, the ACCESS program is run by the Department of Education. I believe they have 11 campuses. The Special Ed. Department has 14 campuses around Orange County. So the ACCESS program, we have kids who are there from their districts who have gotten into some trouble. They have gone astray a little bit and they are behind on their credits. There is about 82 kids on that campus from the ACCESS program. And boy, I mean the quality of the people there that I saw was just phenomenal to me. These are kids that if we don't put a highly intensive level of resources into, they are going to go on a bad way in life. I was really heartened to see what the Department is doing with respect to some of our troubled youth and getting them back on the right course in life.

The Special Ed. Department has special sentiments to me because I do have a son who is dramatically disabled and I saw some kids there. I met one who was suffering from hallucinations. It reminded me a lot of my own son. I can tell you, Dr. Mijares that the people that you have in charge of these departments are just topnotch and I congratulate you on appointing them. Again, in particular, Vern Burton and Analee Kredel, just a really special campus with a lot of effort being put into these kids, and really proud to see it.

I wanted to say thank you to all of you that I met there that day. What you are doing is very special, and very important and that should not go overlooked.

**SPARKS:** Well thank you, Trustee Valdes.

**MIJARES:** Thank you.

**SPARKS:** I wish I could end on that note, but we have to go back into closed session. We will go into closed session for about 20-30 minutes, hopefully on the 20ish side. Then we will conclude the meeting, and we will have a report out and then conclude the meeting. Thank you all so much.

[OCBE conducts closed session and returns.]

**SPARKS:** The report out from our Legal Counsel Jonathan Brenner.

**BRENNER:** Good evening, everybody, and especially to the members of the Board and to Superintendent Mijares. This is the report out for closed session numbers one through four. As to closed session one, a discussion was held with counsel and no action was taken. As to closed sessions two through four, a discussion was held with counsel; no action was taken except for the approval of Epstein, Becker, Green's invoices. Since I wasn't at the last meeting, I have got double the number of invoices to read to you, Ms. Boyd, which I will do right now. It is invoice numbers 1097263, 1097264, 1097265 and 1100414.

**BOYD:** 1100414?

**BRENNER:** 1100414.

**BOYD:** Got it.

**BRENNER:** 1100415, and 416 is the third, with the same first four numbers. The action taken by the Board to approve those invoices was unanimous on behalf of all five trustees who were present. That is the report out for tonight's closed sessions. Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you very much. I just want to give a little shout out to our sheriff's deputy here, and our staff here in the media room and everywhere. Thank you all for hanging with us at this late hour and thank you all for being here as well. It is a wrap, so I will close the meeting for tonight.

**BARKE:** Thank you.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**MIJARES:** Great job.