

Transcript of the January 10, 2024, Orange County Board of Education Meeting

SHAW: Hello everybody, welcome. For the benefit of the record, this regular meeting of the Orange County Board of Education is called to order. Will, Darou, please call roll?

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Present.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Here.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Here.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

SHAW: Not here.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Here.

SHAW: Dr. Williams texted me he will be 15-20 minutes late, so he suggested we should just get started. Also, as we get started, because Dr. Sparks is participating remotely, we need to do every vote as a roll call vote, per the Brown Act. We can't just all vote at once. Right? Okay, so do not let me forget that and mess up. Do we have a motion to adopt the regular meeting of January 10, 2024, Agenda?

VALDES: So moved.

BARKE: Second.

SHAW: Okay. Darou, please call roll.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Present.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SHAW: No.

BARKE: Yes.

SHAW: Yes, oh.

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SHAW: Okay, so onto the minutes of the regular meeting, Minutes of December 6, 2023. I will move approval.

BARKE: Second.

SHAW: Darou, please call roll.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SHAW: Very good. Public comments, Renee, are there any comments regarding closed session items?

HENDRICK: There are no comments regarding closed session.

SHAW: Thank you. The Board will go into closed session to conduct inter-district appeal hearings followed by closed session items one through four.

[The Orange County Board of Education conducts closed session and returns to open session.]

SHAW: We are out of our closed session and into open session. As we get started, I can't be forgetting this, we have to do every vote as a roll call vote because we have Dr. Sparks participating by Zoom. Please everyone remind me on that, but we are going to get going. We will have an invocation. We have Dean West offering the invocation for us, and we will then have the Pledge of Allegiance led by Dr. Sonia Llamas.

WEST: Thank you, Board. Let's pray. Father, we just pray for wisdom to the trustees this evening as they diligently do the work of the County Board of Education, Lord God. We pray for our state, our governor, our administration, our school district administration, their leaders and their boards, their charter schools, their boards, Lord God, and their administrations, all the kids that we serve throughout the county and here. Right here. Our high-risk and at-risk students here in our county, Lord God, we just ask you to bless them. In your name we pray, in Jesus name.

BARKE: Amen.

SHAW: Amen. Thank you.

LLAMAS: Good evening. Everyone please stand. Right hand over your heart. 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.

SHAW: Thank you, Dean. Thank you, Sonia. We have such a blessing in the Orange County Department of Education with great staff, so I wanted to once again thank you and commend you for all your good work. Renee, do we have any introductions this evening?

HENDRICK: No, we do not have any.

SHAW: Very good. We will proceed to public comments, and Trustee Valdes will lead us off.

VALDES: Okay. First time I have done this. This is usually what Dr. Sparks does. She is halfway around the world, so I will start this. I'm going to read off a name who is up to speak, and then I'm going to read the next person in line. If you could start moving over to the podium, that would be great. First person is Cyndie. Next up is Barbara.

CYNDIE: Good evening, Board. My name is Cyndie Barcanan. The deputy superintendent is Miramontes. He is making an overhaul of the Alternative Education program. He is like the substitute teacher making changes to the teacher he is subbing for. A good example is when he made a decision to dismantle Skyview. Did the Board know? I do not think so. The Alternative Education Program is for students; many of them are traumatized. They are in schools for a reason. They are making it for a reason. There has been a terrible pandemic that happened that traumatized a lot of students. A lot of students have a lot of difficulties in their life. Their parents are transitory, their lives are in peril, and they need a stable school.

You would think, Superintendent Miramontes, that you learned a lesson from the last district you were at, Buena Park. Before you make changes, when you are interim superintendent, you need to get consensus from the staff, you need to know your leadership, and you need to listen to the teachers, and you need to respect them. You need to listen. I do not really appreciate what is happening with Skyview. I have been involved with Skyview for many years. I'm a retired teacher. I helped at that school. My students at my school actually volunteered there as aides to art and science. We took them, and we did fundraising to take them on field trips. I do not appreciate them dismantling the program and putting them in at different sites. Thank you.

WILLIAMS: Nice speech.

VALDES: Okay, next one up is Barbara and on deck is Tisi, T I S I.

BARBARA: Hi. Cyndie is a retired teacher from ACCESS for a few years now. I'm a present ACCESS teacher from Skyview. My name is Barbara Blasco. I teach third through fifth grade at Skyview Elementary and Middle School. I'm here to speak about the need to keep the Skyview School, K-8 community together. For almost 35 years, Skyview, formerly Project HOPE has been the K-8 county resource and asset for districts to refer students with the highest levels of need. With a strong built-in philosophy of K-8 community support, Skyview serves students with excessive absenteeism, high trauma, behavioral issues, and poverty. Skyview is not a homeless program.

Skyview is the only ACCESS program that serves an alternative, K-8, community-day school option for districts and families. When districts refer students to Skyview, they know we provide an extra tier of support of intensive academic, behavioral, social/emotional and mental health support, along with multiple family resources in a small nurturing environment. The families we serve also know this and feel assured in knowing that their children have equitable access to curriculum and resources that may not always be accessible in a larger school setting. The small K-8 learning community is one of the key components to the Skyview success. Students are embraced and given the opportunity to see that they are good kids who can do well.

One of the rewards as a Skyview staff, is to see the transformation and healing of students over time. They become a familiar, valued member of the Skyview community. The daily interactions across all grade levels build bonds of friendship and community. This K-8 community offers stability and continuity for children who may have not had access to academic success in the past. Students are safe and accountable in the smaller population. The K-8 community fosters trusting relationships with teachers and peers from emotional healing, readiness to learn, and academic progress. Skyview continues to support the OCDE mission and values of service to students and the community.

We believe the need to keep the program at the same site is integral to our continued success. If the school is split, much of the holistic, K-8 community approach will be lost. We will no longer be the resource we now are. We have more to lose than gain in this proposed move. Thank you.

VALDES: Okay. Tisi is up, and Diane is on deck.

TISI: Good evening. My name is Tisi Whitko, and I am the kindergarten through second grade teacher at Skyview Elementary and Middle School. I'm here tonight to speak on behalf of Sky View's K-8 model program and how our Eagles Catch Pantry and Family Resource Center is such an integral part of our Skyview community, and such a valuable resource to all of our ACCESS families. However, the ACCESS community could be in jeopardy of losing this essential resource if our K-8 community school is divided, which is the current plan. The food pantry was originally developed to service the high needs of Skyview students and eventually extend it to ACCESS families as well. Since the pantry is located onsite, our students have daily access to fresh fruit items like produce, milk, eggs, and bread as well, as well as other essential items like hygiene and clothing.

Typically, K-8 students do not have the burden of shopping for the family's groceries. But at Skyview, most often our students do the shopping due to the pantry being onsite and available five days a week. Oftentimes you will see younger siblings shopping with older siblings to make sure they get what is needed in the home, and together they can carry groceries and essential items needed for the week, home together on the bus. At any time during the week, our students have access to the pantry because it is located on our school campus.

Unfortunately, with this planned move, the temporary solution suggested is to bus students from the new location once a week to receive groceries. The suggestion is not a dignified approach for our students, nor does it meet our agreement with Second Harvest Food Bank. As a result, this could jeopardize our partnership and the loss of the pantry altogether. Even if we were to move the pantry to the new location, that would then cause hardship for our sixth through eighth grade students. The only solution is to keep Skyview Elementary and Middle School community together on one campus, alongside our food pantry so we can continue to provide a true community school model that the state of California is mandating. Thank you.

VALDES: Okay. Diane is up and Brenda is on deck.

DIANE: Good evening to our board, Skyview families, and staff. My name is Diane Estill, and I am the middle school teacher of Skyview Elementary and Middle School. I have worked at Skyview for nearly 15 years and have been an Orange County Department of Education employee for 30 years this September. Skyview Elementary and Middle School has been a positive, successful, and essential intervention for some of the most vulnerable children in our county, for the last four decades. Our program cultivates a positive school culture while helping children stabilize emotionally, catch up academically, learn to develop friendships and positive relationships, actualize self-empowerment, maintain self-control, all while integrating character traits we hope to see in children across our country.

Concurrently, our families are linked with essential resources and services in addition to parenting classes to further develop positive family dynamics. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to be part of this highly dedicated and skilled staff, and a highlight of my career as it nears its sunset. Our positive school community is the heart of our program. Skyview Elementary and Middle School should be utilized as an example of what a true community school should look like, not disassembled to make space for other programs. Skyview has made a lasting

positive impact on thousands of families in need across our county for the last 35 years. Separating our program will all but diminish it.

Having this multi-grade model has allowed our younger students to develop meaningful relationships with our middle school students and has allowed our middle school students to develop leadership skills, yet stay young, to remain children in a world where they are being pushed to grow up much too fast. Our school community is helping break the cycle of poverty in real measurable ways. If our staff is asked to move to make room for other programs, that is exactly what we will do; despite only being at this site for 15 months. Whatever is asked of us we will do. The only thing we ask is that we are maintained on a single campus as a single program so that we can continue to do this important work. As individuals we can all do powerful and impactful acts. But as a strong school community, the impact we can make is immeasurable. This is what our families deserve. What makes Skyview special is our community. Losing this community will be nothing short of a tragedy for the families we serve.

VALDES: Okay, let's see. Brenda is up, and Laura is on deck.

BRENDA: Hello, my name is Brenda. I have three kids in Skyview, and I'm here to ask that Skyview stays together as one. I actually was referred to come to this school from a traditional school, because they were not able to give that extra attention to my daughter that has an IEP. Later I found out that my other daughter has an IEP. The teachers have worked with them, and they have improved a lot. In a traditional school with 28-plus, 30 students, there is no way teachers would have found out that they had an IEP. the teachers are so overwhelmed with so many students. This is a great school with a great support. Why change it if it is working so well? I think there should be more schools like this one.

We want to invite all of you guys to come and visit Skyview so you guys could get a better understanding of this program. Thank you.

WILLIAMS: Very good.

VALDES: Okay. Laura is now up, and Nancy is on deck.

LAURA: Good evening. My name is Laura Chandler. Professionally, I serve as an associate professor at California State University Fullerton in the Department of Public Health. My experience with Skyview began approximately eight years ago when I was serving as the chapter president for National Charity League. We began to do some philanthropy work with the Skyview community, which we still continue to do to this day. Now, I could use my three minutes or 2.5 minutes to tell you what you already know with regard to the research findings on the benefits of school community. I could cite best practices and provide you evidence-based models that support what Skyview is and what they are doing. But what I think is much more telling is what you are witnessing tonight. We have parents from vulnerable and often disenfranchised groups that have become empowered to be here tonight to advocate and to utilize their civil rights for their children and a program they know firsthand. They have experienced the significant positive impact in their lives and the lives of their children.

You also see before you—and you have heard from teachers who with this many years of experience are often burnt out and cynical. But these teachers, these teachers are so committed that after working a full day, they are here to plead their case and to plead with you for the students that they serve and their families. I respectfully urge you to think deeply and thoughtfully about your decision to dismantle this program at Skyview. You have a very unique opportunity this evening to witness the actual evidence. The product of Skyview's impact. Its ability to not only produce data reports and positive indicators and outcomes, but to truly transform the lives of students, families, and communities.

It appears I have a bit more time. Because I am a scholar, I will leave you with one statistic from the literature. The American Public Health Association in 2018 stated that community collaboration and integration with schools is one of the most effective ways to address the social determinants of health. With my 25-plus years of work in the community, and community health, and in youth development, I can tell you firsthand Skyview exemplifies community collaboration and integration. Again, I implore you to reconsider implementing what you may think to be just an insignificant administrative decision, but more as one that can greatly impact the trajectory of the health and wellbeing of those you serve. Thank you.

VALDES: Okay, Nancy is up, and Bill is on deck.

NANCY: Good evening. As we step into a new year, it is an opportune time for the Orange County Board of Education to set new goals that reaffirm a commitment to the educational welfare of all students within the jurisdiction of the Board. Perhaps the Board will resolve to stop wasting taxpayer's money on excessive and frivolous legal fees; \$49,680 just in December. I hope to see prudent fiscal management and transparency, ensuring that taxpayer money is used effectively and efficiently without waste. Every dollar spent should directly contribute to enhancing student learning, safety, and wellbeing - not to lawyers, litigation, and lobbyists.

Perhaps the Board will work in partnership with local school districts to align decision-making, instead of usurping local authority and not supporting elected officials to make the best decisions for their districts. Perhaps the Board should resolve to decrease any undue emphasis for personal interests or agendas. The primary focus should always remain on the needs and interests of the students and families. Decisions made at the board-level should be free from personal bias and should instead be driven by what is best for all students.

Lastly, and most importantly, I hope to see a strong commitment to inclusivity and support for every student, regardless of their background or circumstance. This includes a dedicated effort to understand and address the unique challenges that different student populations face within our community. By doing so, as a community, we can ensure that all students have access to equal education and the opportunity to succeed. I look forward to a new year for this board.

VALDES: All right. All right, Bill is up. Rudi, R U D I, is on deck.

BILL: Good evening, board members. My name is Bill Masters. I'm a resident of the city of Orange. I'm glad that Nancy here brought up transparency on financial obligations to be able to meet what she needs to do for the Board. It has been brought to my attention that in 2001, Nancy

and her husband filed for bankruptcy. This disqualifies her from being able to run for any type of political office that involves finances, or banking institutions, or any other institutions that deal with money. Transparency, a lot of politicians, people that are politicians, they talk about transparent, transparent, but yet they hide everything. This is not good.

The other things that I want to talk about is the Teacher's Union. Let me make something perfectly clear. I'm pointing at the camera. People, parents, the Teacher's Union is not your friend. They are not your child's friend. They have a political agenda to run your children's lives. You see it all over the media if you listen to the right media. What I want to do is I want to show you here, Nancy's website. On this website here, we have six unions that are backing her financially and by paperwork. One of them is Planned Parenthood. They have changed their logo, okay. They have changed their logo to accommodate their narrative. They made it PP. Clever aren't they? Planned Parenthood, they abort babies. They kill children. Then we want to vote for them in office to guide our children through their education. I think not. Planned Parenthood also got busted selling body parts, but yet we have people like her that want to run for office. This is a bad idea.

The other thing that is going on, on the east coast, they are making people go back into remote learning. You know why? Because the border is open. They are sending them all to New York to stay in the schools. They have kicked the kids out of schools so that they can take care of the illegal immigrants that have come across from, not Mexico, not south of our border, but from other countries. This needs to stop, and we cannot have people like Nancy running for office. Thank you.

VALDES: Okay, Rudi is up. Yvonne is on deck.

RUDI: Okay, a really exciting event happened recently. Clarence Howard, who is a really well-known actor, "Hustle and Flow" was one of his movies. He did a military movie too. He was talking about the quantum mechanics of the universe, and it seems that Clarence Howard and myself are thinking in the same area. He started 40 years ago, and I started in '78. Hawking in '80 got the Nobel Prize for his Theory of Everything, and his Singularity Theory, and his Black Hole Theories. But I immediately knew he was wrong. I redefined the universe in 1980 with the Krause con-verse universe. It was not a big bang and expansion. It was a simultaneous explosion implosion. It was a great dularity that created the universe. How else do you get a micro world and a macro world? It is a great dularity. The physics is wrong.

I wrote the quantum mechanics of the universe, the Krausenber Principle. I even wrote the equation for it in 1980. Now, first of all, you have to understand I'm throwing in with the new world order. This is a lost cause. The people are out of control. They need to be put under control. New world order [spoken in Latin]. I will be working my faction of the NWO. Now, what I'm talking about is for you guys in schools to make your kids super genius like me, super genius, creative, intelligent artists; two books, "Ideas and Integrities," by Buckminster Fuller. Who is Buckminster Fuller, the greatest architect of the 20th century? He invented the geodesic dome. That is what is used up in space. Everything is triangulation. It was a life-changing event. When I asked him, what is the simplest composition of the universe? Do you know what he

wrote back on a piece of paper? It changed my life in '78. The simplest composition of a universe with an inside and an outside is a tetrahedron. That just blew my mind.

The second book that you need to require of all students is Jacob Bronowski's "The Ascent of Man." They could just watch the 12 volumes, one hour sessions of Jacob Bronowski's, "The Ascent of Man." That is what started the ascent of my mind.

VALDES: All right.

RUDI: Thank you.

VALDES: Yvonne is up, and Amanda is on deck.

YVONNE: Good evening. My name is Yvonne Gonzalez, and I am the parent of four daughters who are former/current students at Skyview. The small school setting has become like a second family to my kids. The K-8—I want to cry, sorry. The K-8 community has helped my family survive some of the darkest days. My children do not have a single teacher who connects with them, but a whole community of staff who know them, who understand their anxiety and mental health struggles, and who support them through their challenges. The close-knit, K-8 setting and the predictability of the program has helped them immensely. The energy that is being devoted to breaking this program up should be used to figure out how to keep it together.

Why is this separation even happening? Us parents have not been given a clear answer. If I wanted my children to attend a traditional school setting, I would have chosen our local elementary school. Instead, I have chosen Skyview Elementary and Middle School, a K-8 program with a small student population. That is what is best for my kids. Thank you.

VALDES: Okay. Amanda is up to speak, and Angelina is on deck.

AMANDA: Good evening. My name is Amanda Bustamante, and I am the education specialist at Skyview Elementary and Middle School. I wanted to give you some highlights about Skyview, the program that will be completely dismantled in February. Our attendance rate, on average, improves by 30% once students transition from their district of residents to Skyview. Our Eagles Catch Pantry served 1,429 families by providing 71,000 pounds of food during the 22-23 school year. In addition to food, we have been able to provide our students and their families with clothing, shoes, hygiene items, school supplies, diapers, holiday gifts, special meals, and more. Hundreds of community referrals have been written for emergency shelters, counseling services, mentoring programs, parenting classes, parent support services, childcare facilities, and more. Many, many churches, community clubs, organizations, and individuals provide community support that our K-8 students benefit from immensely.

Our staff has been witness to incredible transformations of students and parents. Some of the parents here today are examples of this. We are the community model that the state of California is mandating districts to create. We are already it. All of this is being dismantled to make room for other programs. In August, Skyview Elementary and Middle School had a visit from Farrah Pappa who works for the Federal Department of Education. After her visit, she sent us an email

giving us a glowing report. Part of her email read, and I quote, “To be frank, I was simply blown away at the dedication and passion of each and every person I met with. The students and families are lucky to have such hardworking individuals advocating and working on their behalf.” That is what our families will be losing if our younger students are forced to move to a traditional school campus. We are asking you to please hear our plea. Do not take this vital county resource away from our K-8 families. Thank you.

VALDES: Okay, last person is Angelina.

ANGELINA: Good evening. My name is Angelina Sanchez. I'm a mother of two students who go to Skyview Elementary. This school has tremendously helped me and my family with all the support and everything. But not only that, it has also helped my children's confidence, self-esteem. Boosted it up. From—gosh, I can't even say, from low scores to high scores within a short amount of time. That is just with the support and everything on how the foundation of the school is built. If we were to move them and everything, it would basically break up the foundation of what the school is all about, which stems from Project Hope. I'm not sure if you are aware of what Project Hope is about, but that is what the school has acted greatly in all areas. Not only just the support, but mentally, emotionally, physically and academically, it has worked all of the above for my kids.

I know that the separation, my kids are worried about it. How are you going to sit there and transfer them to another school? Everything that we worked so hard for, they are going to have to be worried about when they go to another school, looking as outcasts and stuff. Because they are not going to be—how can I say it, socializing with other students. It is going to be different. They are going to be looked at like special kids or whatever the case is. Everything that we built up, the confidence, everything, is going to just be tore down.

I'm asking just that if you guys could please just listen to us and understand that this tightly-knit foundation that we have, the support, the way everything is, the base of it, it is important to us to keep it the way it is. To separate that or just make changes and stuff, it would be a huge impact on our kids. That is all I have for now.

VALDES: Okay, so we got another comment coming in, two more. I only have one in my hand though. Okay, Z. Jasmine. Sorry, I'm having a little hard time reading it. It looks like Jasmine to me. Is that it?

JASSLINE: Jassline.

VALDES: Jassline, okay. Apologies, go ahead.

JASSLINE: Hi, my name is Jassline. I'm a student at Skyview. Today I'm going to be reading a note that a sick kid, he is not here today because he is sick, he said, “Dear, Mr.—

BARKE: Can you speak a little bit louder?

JASSLINE: “Dear Mr. Miramontes, I am a student of Skyview. To be completely honest, I do not think this whole change thing is going to work out. It might even ruin some people that are part of Skyview, including me. I'm sure you had your reasons, nevertheless, to make less changes for Skyview. I'm personally fine with these changes, but I care about this community and everyone in it. I was saved by this school. I'm a kid who had major anxiety. This is the only school I felt safe with. I do not have a lot of info on the changes. I'm trying to see anything positive to this, but there is so much negatives to this that just pile up.

Why, is my question. Why? Why did you have to pick this time? The holidays are just around the corner. Everybody is trying to spend quality time with their families. Speaking of families, I do not know if you know about how families could be, or will be, affected by this move. Siblings go to this school and will be separated from their older siblings. Transportation will be hard. Routes will be longer. Just so much problems that are positive to be formed. Little to no information of any of this. What about the student's safety? We do not know what kids will be coming to our school that could be troubled or lost.

Now, I encourage you, if you are willing to, please consider us as a community and what could happen to all of us if you make this change and go through with it. Kids have made good and strong relationships with a lot of the staff here. All of a sudden most of them have to go away. Not all the staff. The staff might get tough schedules and less money. But of course, we do not have any information. If you could send any information, details, et cetera, to anyone, whether it be to the principal, the staff, teachers, anybody part of Skyview.

The reason we exist as Skyview is because of us students who are saved and have a gift. Please try reconsidering this choice. Thank you and have a good day. To Dr. Miramontes, from Isaiah.”

VALDES: Okay, the next person up is Laura. After that is Diane again, a different Diane. Laura Aguilar.

ZAIRA: Zaira, sorry. Hi, good evening. How are you? As a parent—

VALDES: I'm sorry, Ms., what is your name?

ZAIRA: My name is Zaira Aguilar.

VALDES: Oh, I'm sorry. Okay.

ZAIRA: Sorry. As a parent and member of the Skyview community, I have witnessed firsthand the positive impact that Skyview Elementary and Middle School has had on our children. The school's unique structure where elementary and middle school students share a single campus, fosters an environment, a mentorship, and community that is rare in today's educational landscape. This arrangement allows our younger students to learn from their older peers while also providing older students with leadership opportunities. Moreover, Skyview cultivates a sense of unity and shared identity among students and promotes stronger relationships between teachers, students, and parents.

However, there are plans underway to separate the school into two different campuses, a move that threatens to disrupt this nurturing learning environment. According to statistics from the National Center of Education Statistics, schools with combined grade levels outperform those with traditional configuration in terms of academic achievement. Excuse me, I have a retainer. It is hard for me to speak. I'm getting used to it. This is particularly true for low-income students who benefit from longer relationships with faculty members. The proposed separation would not only disrupt our children's education, but also fracture or tight-knit community at Skyview and deprive students and families their daily access to vital resources such as the onsite food pantry.

We believe it is essential for the growth and development of our children that Skyview Elementary and Middle School remain on a single campus. We urge you to consider the potential negative impacts this change could have on student performance as well as community cohesion before making any final decisions. We mentioned Skyview has helped us as parents also. They have workshops for us. I brought one of my certificates that I got from the parenting classes, which also helps us at home with our students. I do not see Mr. Valdavez here. Is he here? Mr. Miramontes, I'm sorry. Okay. He is not here. I just thought it was very important for him to be here to hear this. I am sorry. I'm nervous.

HENDRICK: Yeah.

ZAIRA: Thank you guys.

VALDES: Okay, the last public comment is from Diane Saldivar.

DIANE: Hello, my name is Diane Saldivar. I'm the voice for Skyview. I just want to know where is Miramontes? Is he not here today? Was he not supposed to attend today's meeting? Does anybody have any answers to that? No answers? Hmm.

VALDES: Renee?

HENDRICK: Yeah, he is actually ill right now. He has been out all week.

DIANE: Okay. Well, I would just like to say if we are relying on Dr. Miramontes for his critical decisions to destroy Skyview, I would have thought he would have made a very big, big—his presence—it is very disturbing to find out. Us parents came and wanted to ask Dr. Miramontes a couple of questions. But he is not here to answer, so I'm going to have to hold my questions for when he is present. Thank you very much.

VALDES: Okay, that concludes the public comments. There is an information item on the agenda tonight for Skyview.

SHAW: Yes, thank you. We have a little bit of business to get to, but then we are going to have an information item about Skyview. If you could hang tight for just a moment? I do not want to forget. Should I call up Mr. Brenner to report out of closed session? No, we will do that later? Can we do it now before I forget? Okay.

BRENNER: Good evening, members of the Board. Good to be with you. This is the report out for closed session items one through four. The Board conducted a discussion with counsel and received an update and took no action in closed session. That is the report out for the closed session items. Thank you.

SHAW: Terrific. No invoice numbers, Jonathan?

BRENNER: Not at this closed session.

SHAW: Okay, very good. We will go to the consent calendar. Do any members of the Board wish to pull any item from the consent calendar? Seeing none, I will entertain a motion.

BARKE: I will move. So moved.

SHAW: I will second, and Darou needs to call roll.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SHAW: Thank you. It passes unanimously, 5-0. We will go to item number 12, charter submissions. Renee, are there any charter submissions this evening?

HENDRICK: Yes, you have one charter submission. The binders are in the back, and it is for the Orange County Academy of Science and Arts III. It is for a countywide petition.

SHAW: That is back in the room, the binders?

HENDRICK: You have your binders in the room. Yes.

SHAW: Very good. Thank you. Nothing else to say there. We will go to item number 13, board action on changes to the Board's standard agreement for Sycamore Creek Community Charter School II. Do we have a staff report?

HENDRICK: The staff report is in your binder—this is just their agreement.

SHAW: Okay. Are there questions from the Board about the changes of this agreement? Dr. Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes, I do. I'm not sure who from the staff is here to answer questions. Oh yes, Aracely. Happy New Year, Aracely. Good to see you.

CHASTAIN: Happy New Year.

WILLIAMS: For the sake of documentation and public disclosure and disclaimer, the purpose of all this, could you give us a background?

CHASTAIN: The Board has a standard agreement that you have approved for all charter schools who you approve here and that you authorize. That agreement covers areas that maybe aren't covered necessarily in Education Code. For example, any items that we might collect, how fees are collected, and how that happens. There is different items on there. It has gone through a few iterations. This is the most recent that we have. It is the one that we have pretty much put everyone on, with some changes depending on specifically with each school. They may request changes. Anytime that they request changes to the agreement, those come before the Board for approval or denial of those changes.

WILLIAMS: Okay. Basically, this is standard operating procedure. This is a standard document that all charter schools will be signing. It is a part of the relationship between our department and the charter school?

CHASTAIN: That is correct.

WILLIAMS: Is that correct? Okay. Are we going to be expecting this for every single charter coming up then?

CHASTAIN: Every charter has one, and all new charters get one that you approve when you approve the school. The standard for the Board is that you approve the standard agreement. If you approve them with no conditions, they get just the standard agreement. If you approve them with conditions, we write up the standard agreement and then add that appendix with the conditions for the school on there. That is what we send over to the school for signature. If they have changes that they are proposing to the agreement, those come before the Board for your review and approval, or denial.

WILLIAMS: I assume Sycamore Creek is in agreement to language changes and they have approved it from their end?

CHASTAIN: These are the changes that they requested to your standard agreement.

WILLIAMS: I see.

CHASTAIN: Everything that is red lined. Do you have a red-lined copy? I know sometimes it doesn't quite print up.

SHAW: It is more like blue lined.

BARKE: I was going to say it is blue lined.

CHASTAIN: It is blue lined for you? Okay.

BARKE: Yes.

CHASTAIN: Mine is red. Yours is blue. Everything that is there has been requested by the charter school. Staff reviews it, and we are fine with the majority of the changes. They seem to be technical in nature, dates and things like that. However, we do have concerns about two of them, two of these changes. One, it has to do with the term of the agreement. They removed language from your standard agreement. The language that they have crossed out says, "Charter school will submit its renewal petition for the new charter term to OCDE no sooner than September 1 and no later than March 1 of the final school year for which the charter school is authorized to operate."

I did speak to Dr. Bach about the changes so I can understand what she was requesting here. It appears that what she is requesting is as much flexibility as she can get, as to when she submits. We are fine with that on principal, right. We understand that sometimes schools want more time depending on what is happening with facilities and things like that. For planning purposes, we would like some sort of an idea of when they plan to submit in that final school year. If September 1 doesn't work, July 1 is fine. Our only request would be that the Board take action in that final year of the charter term. Our concern here would just be if she can give us a timeframe where this board would be taking action in that final year of their charter term. We are completely flexible on that as well. It is fine. We just would not want to see this completely stricken with no timeframe at all.

We are just concerned potentially of schools wanting to renew their charter very early, which would then potentially trigger a material revision for you to shorten a charter term in order to avoid a school stacking terms, if that makes any sense. For example, if a school is approved for seven years, this board has approved them for seven years, we wouldn't want them to come and try to renew at year four without shortening their charter term and beginning their new term that following year. If they were to do that, they could potentially have an 8, 9, 10-year charter term before the Board sees them again, which we do not feel would be in line with charter law. That is our only concern, but we are fine with the flexibility of them needing additional time, other than these few months. If we just can get an idea of what that is, that would be really helpful; or, at the very minimum, have the agreement state that board action needs to take place at the last year of the charter term.

The only other one that we have that we are a little bit more concerned about than even the term agreement is the zoning and occupancy. I wasn't able to get from Dr. Bach a real clear explanation as to why this was an issue. What they added on that section K, number two, is this is speaking specifically to what is needed to collect a certificate of occupancy. We collect either a certificate of occupancy or some sort of documentation that shows that the school is legally able to operate a school in the facility that they have chosen. If a school can't get a certificate of occupancy, we accept a temporary use permit, whatever it might be that they can get that allows them to have a school there. That is just a requirement that we have of all facilities, regardless of whether the facility is in the charter petition or it is a new facility that they have added later. For some reason they have added the language that says, "not contemplated in the charter petition." I wasn't quite sure why, and Dr. Bach wasn't quite sure why either. We would request that certificate of occupancy regardless. We were not comfortable with them specifying that it would only be required for facilities that are not in the charter—I mean that are not in the charter petition, or that it wouldn't be requested for facilities that are currently listed in the charter petition. I'm not quite sure which of those they meant.

SHAW: Okay. Do you have any more questions, Dr. Williams?

WILLIAMS: Knowing a little bit about Dr. Bach, I'm sure she was purposeful in her use of the word, not contemplated in the charter petition. You made it sound like she didn't know what she was doing and the purpose why. There is probably a reason. I can only look at this and think that it maybe something that gives her greater flexibility in the future.

BARKE: She is here if you want to ask her.

VALDES: She is in the room.

CHASTAIN: Yeah, I'm not sure.

WILLIAMS: Oh, she is in the room?

CHASTAIN: I did speak to her.

BARKE: She is here, yeah.

CHASTAIN: Yeah, I'm sorry. I did speak to her. She wasn't quite clear when I spoke to her, but she may have a better idea now.

SHAW: It may have been her lawyer opinion.

WILLIAMS: Sarah, did you want to come up?

VALDES: All this stuff sounds like items that her lawyer did for her.

WILLIAMS: Okay.

BACH: Where is our lawyer?

SHAW: Yeah, those lawyers, Jorge.

WILLIAMS: No, you spend too much on legal fees already.

BACH: That is right.

WILLIAMS: You do not need to bring her here.

BACH: Thank you.

WILLIAMS: And pay her \$2,000.

BACH: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Board. Thank you, Aracely. Full transparency, this has been going back and forth in an iterative process for what feels like months. It is months because you approved us back in August, August 2. I will always remember that date. I think we are good. We were under the impression this was something new, perhaps because we are eligible as a countywide. Yes, we had our legal review it, every word. I think there was a comma - that was how it is. But all in all, I think around the first item, which was the submission process, we are very happy if we can make the statement, that by the end of the term we could be before you. Again, that was for flexibility, as Aracely mentioned. Also because it is not really in the statute when a school comes before a board or their authorizer for renewal. We just didn't want to add more parameters when not necessary. At the same time, we absolutely agree. We do not want to take advantage, or stack, or do anything of the like.

If the Department is happy with the language about it being by the end, I thought we were okay with, per our conversation about that window.

VALDES: May I make a recommendation? I would recommend that we ask our counsel, Mr. Rolan during the next month, to telephonically meet with Dr. Bach and Aracely. Just fix the language so that everyone is happy with this. This doesn't seem like a big deal, and it doesn't seem like something we need to spend a lot of time on.

WILLIAMS: Are you happy with the language?

BACH: I'm happy with the language, and I am happy to wait. I absolutely do not want to waste anyone's time, if Aracely has another comment. I think the other concern she mentioned about what is not contemplated in the charter, it sounds a bit redundant. Right? It is clear that if it is not the charter then we would need a CUP of course, and to bring that before the Board. Whatever the Board desires.

WILLIAMS: Aracely, could you come up here? It sounds like we are just talking—

BACH: Yeah. I think.

WILLIAMS: —a lot about the same thing, and much ado about nothing. The Department is okay with the language. You are okay with the language. You had your attorney review it. It is before us now. We just need to vote on it. Is that correct? I do not want to waste time and have Greg look at it.

CHASTAIN: No, I agree.

WILLIAMS: As long as you are happy and we are happy. I'm fine with it.

CHASTAIN: We are not—

WILLIAMS: Jorge, are you fine with it?

VALDES: Well, Aracely said she wasn't fine with it.

CHASTAIN: We are not in agreement with that additional language that says, “Only for charter schools not contemplated in the charter petition.” Even if a facility is not in that charter petition, say, in four years she finds a new facility somewhere completely different than what is in the charter petition, does a material revision, gets approved to open a facility in a whole different city, we still would need it. I am not sure what that language was or why that was put in there, but I think Sarah understands why we need it. We had that conversation. She gets it, that we would ask for it from any facility.

BACH: Yes.

CHASTAIN: I would just ask that that language not be added to the agreement.

BACH: Just take out the “not contemplated”?

CHASTAIN: Exactly.

BARKE: Are you okay with that?

BACH: Yeah.

BARKE: Okay.

CHASTAIN: Remove the language. Then add the language that she will come before the Board in the last year of her charter term, and we are good.

BARKE: Okay.

SHAW: Okay. I'm going to go on page 34, at the bottom.

WILLIAMS: Page 39.

BARKE: He is going to start with the first one.

SHAW: There is two changes. Right?

BARKE: Yeah.

SHAW: At the bottom of page—well it says 34, it is actually—

BARKE: Yeah.

SHAW: So, it is section—

VALDES: We are going to do legal drafting in open session like this?

SHAW: Yeah.

BARKE: Get it in the record, and vote it.

SHAW: These are very simple.

BARKE: Vote on it. Yeah. Yeah.

SHAW: These are very simple changes, right?

CHASTAIN: They should be simple, yes.

SHAW: Section two, paragraph C, instead of it being completely lined out, we just want it by the end of the term? Those words?

CHASTAIN: Correct.

SHAW: By the end of the term?

CHASTAIN: Charter school will submit its renewal petition in the final year for which the charter school is authorized to operate.

SHAW: Okay. You good with that, Sarah?

BACH: Yes.

VALDES: Did you get that, Renee?

SHAW: We got that language? Okay, then we will just go to page 39, section K, paragraph two, and just delete the words, “not contemplated in the charter petition.”

CHASTAIN: Correct.

SHAW: You are good with that, Sarah?

BACH: Yes.

SHAW: Okay.

BACH: Thank you.

SHAW: I will move those amendments as stated. Okay.

BACH: Thank you.

SHAW: With that, move approval of this item.

BARKE: I make a motion to approve.

SHAW: Okay, Darou, please call roll.

BARKE: We have a second?

WILLIAMS: Second.

SHAW: Oh, I'm sorry. Dr. Williams' seconds it.

BARKE: Okay, perfect.

SHAW: Everyone good with that?

HENDRICK: First and second, got it.

BARKE: Mm-hmm.

HENDRICK: Thank you.

SHAW: Okay, thank you.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

BARKE: She said yes. I could read her lips.

SPARKS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SHAW: Very good, thank you. You still awake out there Lisa? The sun has come up it looks like.

SPARKS: Yeah, lots of coffee.

SHAW: All right, so let's see. That takes us to information items. Is that correct? What is board recommendations?

WILLIAMS: We do not have any.

SHAW: We do not have any, okay. We will go to information items, so this is where we will hear an update on Skyview. I believe, Renee, you are going to have a statement upfront.

HENDRICK: Yes. As Dr. Miramontes wasn't able to join us, he has given me a couple notes. Just to let you know, he did meet with parents on December 19 at 1:00 PM; also, on December 21, he met with staff. On December 20, a couple of the board members also met with parents. I know he has diligently been working through the agreement with Anaheim Elementary. I do not believe that is completed yet. They are still working on that. As a reminder, Dr. Miramontes is the deputy superintendent over Instructional Programs. His job is to oversee all of our student programs. That is his main position. He feels deeply for the parents. They are trying to work it out so there is no impact.

To clarify, the program isn't being dismantled. They are actually talking about just moving the K-6 to another location so that we are able to expand the middle school. All their services, teachers, everything goes with them. It is not that they are dismantling it. They would move to a new site. There are some logistics that they are still trying to work out as far as the pantry. He doesn't want them to lose any services. He wants them to have more services that are what happens on an elementary campus. Anaheim Elementary has a very robust Expanded Learning Program for afterschool programs. Our students do not have that. He was thinking that would be a good thing for them. That is part of the process. Any questions that you have, I can address them and he can get back to you in a written format since he was unable to be here. He apologizes. He really thought he would make it, but was unable to, as about three other cabinet members by the way. They are all sick right now.

SHAW: It is going around, huh?

HENDRICK: Yeah.

SHAW: Was that all you had? Okay. Trustee Valdes asked to put this on the agenda, so I will call on Trustee Valdes. If you want to lead us off?

VALDES: Okay, thank you. The way this got onto the agenda was I got multiple emails from people, some of them parents. I think there was a teacher practically begging me to put this on the agenda, so I have done that. I do read those emails.

AUDIENCE: Thank you.

VALDES: I would like to hear from both sides. Can one of the teachers be sort of the representative and stand at the podium so I can figure out what is going on here? You guys pick.

HENDRICK: Can I just clarify a little bit though, too? I know they are here for you to hear. But just as a reminder, the programmatic aspects of the program are under the Superintendent and not the Board. I just want to make that a little bit clear.

VALDES: Okay.

WILLIAMS: Well, that is to be debated.

VALDES: Yeah.

HENDRICK: Okay.

WILLIAMS: We have had this debate for my 28 years on it. The Board has always been excluded and never told about these things. We always get these surprises.

HENDRICK: We are not saying—

WILLIAMS: Please, I have the floor, Renee. You cannot speak over me when I have the floor. This has been always an issue with this board. The Board has never been involved, and they have been excluded and marginalized about the programs themselves. That is not in the Education Code. I have always held the position that the Board should be told about it and be a part of it. And that the staff does not, the Superintendent does not have the right for sole discretion on making these important decisions. We had this happen with a homeschooling program about 10 years ago. Remember Jack Bedell's comment? He wished that the Board would have been told about it. We had a big stink about it at that time, and it is repeating itself now. The staff and the Superintendent continue to do the same type of process of excluding the Board.

When you guys came last week, we had no idea about anything. Really, my heart is for you. I think there is a compromise we can reach. I do not think this is being done right. We are elected. We are responsible to listening to you. The staff is not elected, except for the Superintendent.

That is my position. I would like to see something worked out where there is a compromise, where can keep these kids on the site. These are very special kids.

VALDES: I am gonna—

WILLIAMS: These are kids that are high risk, and that is what we are here for. That is what I have to say. Sorry, Renee, but that is just the way it has always been.

SHAW: All right, we will get to you, Kevin, in a moment. I promise.

VALDES: Well, I'm going to echo those comments. I do not believe that this is some unilateral decision, and I was really surprised and dismayed that I was not told at all about this. The first time we heard this we were in the public comments from, I think it was, the December meeting. Can one of the teachers stand up at the podium and sort of represent everyone so we could figure out what is going on?

SHAW: Talk about drawing the short straw here.

SKYVIEW STAFF: Hi.

VALDES: Okay, so this is a K-8 school. Right?

SKYVIEW STAFF: Yes.

VALDES: The proposal right now is to move K-6, so to divide the school?

SKYVIEW STAFF: They fluctuated between K-5 and K-6, which I do not think the staff has particularly strong opinions about that. If it is split, it is split. It doesn't matter where the dividing line is.

VALDES: Okay. Why do you feel that it is better to keep everybody on one campus?

SKYVIEW STAFF: We have just built an amazing community over the years. We collaborate constantly. It is a stressful job. We help manage the stress among the whole staff, rather than one or two people bearing it. The kids, for your average, typical children, school community is one small part of their life. For our kids, it is a huge part of their lives. There aren't a lot of other ways they participate in the community. We are constantly trying to integrate them into the community, and we get our kids back to the district of residence as soon as they are ready, on an individualized basis. The minute they show academic capability, emotional stability, all the things we want to see in our own children and children everywhere, we get our kids back into the regular school district. This is a specialized program. The world expects more from its citizens than what—we really take good care of our kids. In the world, they expect you to work more independently. When they are able to, we send them back.

VALDES: Okay. Typical of the ACCESS program, this is a stepping stone towards getting kids back to their regular school district.

SKYVIEW STAFF: Thank you. You said it beautifully, yes.

VALDES: Correct? Okay. I do not want you to single out any of the kids. I know that the word homeless was used, perhaps erroneously. Can you characterize what most of the kids are undergoing in their lives at the school?

SKYVIEW STAFF: Yes.

VALDES: Tell me more about the students.

SKYVIEW STAFF: Sure. We are a Title 1 school. I would say close to 100% are living in significant poverty and lots of trauma. With trauma, comes anxiety. A lot of our kids have school phobia. The student that Jassline read for, Isaiah, had not been able to successfully be on a public school campus in years. It has just been miraculous the slow progress he has made.

VALDES: When you say trauma, I'm thinking there is perhaps, *perhaps*—

SKYVIEW STAFF: Perhaps.

VALDES: —drug use in the home, or there is violence, is that what we are talking?

SKYVIEW STAFF: I think each case is unique.

VALDES: Okay.

SKYVIEW STAFF: But I do think some of our kids have experienced that.

VALDES: One of the comments that I have heard twice now is that there is a pantry on this campus. There is none on the other campus, and some of the food services are not going to this new campus. Is that what I'm hearing?

SKYVIEW STAFF: Right. A little more than five years ago, Skyview created a contract with Second Harvest. The contract is attached to Skyview, but it is open to all ACCESS families, and two-thirds of our program will be moving to another site. I understand the remedy is to bus them over once a week. But our kids have access to that pantry five days a week. They need it, and they use it. It is not just for food. It is for lots of things that they need, constant resources every day.

VALDES: Another comment that was made was that you didn't want to move to a traditional school campus. This is not traditional in that these are ACCESS kids. Is that what you are saying? Was that the meaning of that comment?

SKYVIEW STAFF: Yes.

VALDES: Is there something special about this school site?

SKYVIEW STAFF: Well, our schools are small in nature. For kids that have experienced so much trauma, keep their world small for a while. Keep it as stress-free as possible. You do not have to get along with 500 kids on a playground. We keep it small. We build a community. These children develop beautiful relationships, and it is sad when they go. But they know they are loved, and they know that they can reach out to us anytime. They are somebody. We know their stories. We know their faces. We know their names. That doesn't happen on a traditional school campus, to no fault of anyone's. They are just too big. A teacher can't learn 1,800 kids' names, stories, and faces.

VALDES: The reason why you want to stay together is because this is a small group? You want to keep it a small group. Is that it?

SKYVIEW STAFF: Because we are one of the primary communities for our kids, if not the only community. I do not mean outside of their families. We all have community within our own family. But as far as the public goes, we have created a community for these kids. It is meaningful. My students have relationships with all of these teachers and all of this staff. It is not just me. I happen to be the teacher that would be left behind. I just keep thinking, my gosh, I love my students. I know I do great things with them, but it will pale in comparison to what a staff of 10 could be doing with our kids, compared to just me.

VALDES: I heard another comment tonight about there being a better natural break. Is there a natural, better break time for this, or is really the request to just keep it together indefinitely?

SKYVIEW STAFF: No. There would never be a good time for this.

VALDES: Never be, okay.

SKYVIEW STAFF: We are a program that has been in existence for almost 40 years. It is a K-8 program. We have made remarkable progress with our families. You should be using us as an example of an amazing community school, not breaking us apart. It just doesn't make sense.

VALDES: Okay. All right. Vern, would you take the podium? To introduce everybody, Vern is the assistant director of the entire ACCESS program, correct?

BURTON: Correct.

HENDRICK: Technically, assistant superintendent.

BURTON: Assistant superintendent of Alternative Ed., yeah.

VALDES: Okay, I stand corrected.

BURTON: It is okay.

VALDES: Thank you, Vern. I'm guessing that you know something about this and the reasons why.

BURTON: Yes. Yes, sir. I do.

VALDES: Can you tell the Board what is the need to move the K-6? Why was that decision made?

BURTON: We are really looking at opportunities. It is opportunities of expanded learning in the afternoons. Giving the kids a chance to socialize with other students their same age, kind of acclimating them back into that fold. Getting that experience that is felt they are lacking from their district school, so that is kind of the crux of it.

VALDES: Okay, but everyone here says they do not want that.

BURTON: Let me say this is a phenomenal team of teachers. As an assistant superintendent, I'm very lucky to have a group that are passionate.

VALDES: We have 10 teachers here.

BURTON: Right.

VALDES: I'm listening.

BURTON: And the principal is phenomenal too. Michelle Kilgore is here as well. The parents, and they are using their voice. Absolutely, it is a phenomenal team. Again, we wanted to look at the big picture. Try and expand what we can offer them to try and give them more. That is really the goal of what we are trying to do.

VALDES: That was the heartfelt reasoning, and I believe that. But now we have all these people who do not want that.

BURTON: Correct.

VALDES: Okay, and feel that the kids are better served if the group was kept together. Right? When you moved K-6 to the alternative site, what was the plan for all that school space? I mean, who was going to take over that school space?

BURTON: There is a need for junior high, to have that space used for junior high kids that are removed from the district as well that come to ACCESS. Also, maybe a contingency of the ninth grade as well. It is really seventh, eighth, possibly ninth, that we are getting an influx in Anaheim in that area. There is a need for that space.

VALDES: Now we have both sides, and now we at least understand the reasoning.

HENDRICK: Jorge, can I just maybe help give a little bit of background?

BURTON: Please, please.

HENDRICK: That site was built for a 9-12 site. The number of K-6 students is 17. Is that correct?

BURTON: Yeah.

HENDRICK: That is the numbers I have. Part of the start of the conversation was expanding the middle school program, which is where the districts are asking to reform our students. Those currently, it is difficult to house them in our street-front sites, because they shouldn't be in with 12th graders. That is kind of what started this conversation, is my understanding; not wanting to impact the programs that are already at Skyview. That was never the intention, to change any services. I think having that context of realizing how many students there are, the reason for that, and how it started.

SHAW: The Harbor Learning Center, isn't there going to be more building going on there? I mean we are not done there.

HENDRICK: Well, that was it.

SHAW: It seemed like there was room if we needed more facility. No? I mean, I do not know.

HENDRICK: Well, I do not know where you would put it.

SHAW: I don't know.

HENDRICK: There is a grassy area, I guess.

SHAW: That is it though.

HENDRICK: Those other rooms are full of classes of 9-12 students.

SHAW: I was just thinking about the first room we went into where it was all the Christmas toys.

HENDRICK: That was one classroom, yeah.

SHAW: Okay.

HENDRICK: Yeah. Currently, right now, Skyview has those four front classrooms. They are a little segregated from the 9-12 portion of the school.

SHAW: Okay. Do we have a comment from the teachers?

SKYVIEW STAFF: Well, I do. Yes. One, I respect the fact that real estate is needed. That is why I have said move us. It is not our first choice. We have only been there 15 months, and the first move was monumental and took months and months to do. You need the space. I have said over and over, please take the space. We do not want to give it up, but we will. You know what,

we care about all ACCESS students. I understand that some of them are in unsuitable regions of the county. Take it. Just move us. We want to be a community. We have made powerful impacts on these people's lives. They are all here to tell you. We need to stay.

VALDES: Are you saying, move all of you?

SKYVIEW STAFF: Yes.

VALDES: That would be good?

SKYVIEW STAFF: I have offered that many times now. You need the classrooms. Move us somewhere that is safe for us to be, too. I think it is very poor planning. We have only been there, not even a year and a half. Take the space. It was a mistake that was made. We will give it up. We just need to stay together as a community.

VALDES: Is that possible, Vern?

BURTON: We can definitely have that discussion with Dr. Miramontes and Cabinet.

VALDES: How many more kids would have to go if the whole group left? If K-6 is 17 kids, then how many kids is seventh and eighth?

HENDRICK: There is another 17. Based on the numbers I have, there is another 17. The site that they would be moving to may not accept them though, because it is an elementary site. They may not want seventh and eighth graders there.

BURTON: Well, yeah, we can't put the seventh and eighth graders on the elementary school campus. That is kind of the rub in this.

HENDRICK: In most districts, junior high is separated from the K-6.

VALDES: Is it really that big a deal for 17 kids? I mean, are they really going to say no?

BURTON: We are working with the Anaheim District. But that conversation hasn't been had because we are looking at moving, like you said, the K-5 or 6 to that campus. We haven't included the junior high, because it is an elementary school campus. Again, this is a decision now talking with the Anaheim School District, because we are going out to their campus. Well, I'm a big believer of, you never get something unless you ask for it. Can we ask for it?

HENDRICK: That is part of the conversation. Dr. Mijares is continually having conversations with the other schools right now. He is taking all this information. He is listening to the parents. He is listening to the teachers.

AUDIENCE: No, he is not. He is not even hearing us. (Inaudible).

SHAW: All right, folks, we can't just have outbursts going on. Be respectful.

VALDES: Vern, it just seems like some accommodation can be made. We are only talking about 17 kids.

SKYVIEW STAFF: We are a program that ranges between 40 and 60 kids.

VALDES: Right, but the seventh and eighth going with the rest of the group—

SKYVIEW STAFF: Right.

VALDES: —is adding 17. Right?

SKYVIEW STAFF: Nineteen.

VALDES: Nineteen, okay. That just doesn't seem like that many kids to have to separate them.

BURTON: Just to be clear, Trustee Valdes, you are asking that we look at the seventh and eighth going to the site they are going, not trying to find a separate location for everyone?

BARKE: Right, just keeping them together wherever it might be.

VALDES: Just keeping them together.

BURTON: Keeping them together.

BARKE: Wherever it might be.

BURTON: Okay.

SHAW: It sounds like that is what they would like.

VALDES: That is what they want.

SHAW: But of course, that is up to the Anaheim District if they are going to accept that. Right?

VALDES: Well, you do not get something unless you ask for it.

SHAW: Right. Right.

VALDES: Is it a really big ask to bring an extra 19 kids? I do not think so.

HENDRICK: There are a bunch of factors that Dr. Miramontes will look at, and I will relay all of the conversation to him. We feel for the parents. But almost every student in our ACCESS program comes from trauma and everything too. This is something the whole program experiences. I feel as moved by listening to the parents as you do, and I understand that. But there are 4,500 other students in the ACCESS program. That is part of the equation, so I think that we have to look at all options. We have not signed the MOU with Anaheim yet. That is in

the works. But there is questions with that, and that could be one of those questions. We will relay all the information.

SHAW: Okay. Do you have anything else, Jorge?

VALDES: All I'm going to say is if 10 teachers come down here on behalf of their kids, I'm going to listen. I'm going to try and do what I can.

SHAW: Dr. Sparks, do you have any questions or comments?

SPARKS: Well, I would just echo really much of what you all are getting at. I appreciate that the teachers have come out and spoken. It is very important it sounds that we are able to keep them together and accommodate the situation.

SHAW: Thank you. Okay, Dr. Williams, do you have more to say?

BARKE: Watch out.

SHAW: Of course he does.

BARKE: Watch out.

WILLIAMS: I will be moderating my thoughts and words. Again, outside of the issue of that, that has been ongoing for 28 years here. You look at the different Education Codes. Here is one. California Education Code 1983 on community, schools and the schools that we operate, 1983 paragraph (g), "County boards of education operating these schools shall ensure that appropriate services and programs designed to address the language needs of pupils identified are in compliance with applicable federal laws." To say that we are excluded from this process, paragraph (e), "The course of study shall be adopted by the county board of education." The Superintendent does have the component where he is engaged with the employees and the teachers. No doubt about that. That is not our role. To exclude us as part of this conversation, I would like to see change.

SHAW: Trustee Barke and I teamed up and went on a tour, as most of you know, of Skyview. I was thinking we would have the most to say, but you guys said a lot already. Trustee Barke, what are your thoughts?

BARKE: Well, I definitely continue to be touched by the community. That day I was there I was overwhelmed with just the community that I saw, and it was just so special. I have never seen anything like it. I can understand why you all have passion and why you are here. If I were you, I would be doing the same exact thing. My heart is with you, and I will do anything I can to make your wishes come true. I'm still trying to figure out what I can do, but I will do whatever I can. I appreciate you being here again tonight. I appreciate last month when you came. I appreciate all of you that met with us that day. I think we met just about every one of you that day on campus, and we got to tour your classrooms and the campus. It is a very, very special community. I can understand.

SHAW: Lots of times when you are on the Board, people show up. They want to tell you how lousy something is going. It was great to see, no, we are doing great. Leave us alone. I think that is really neat to see. I totally echo what Mari said. Touring the school really touched my heart. I could immediately sense the comradery amongst the students, the teachers, everybody there. It is a very neat thing. I am concerned about the pantry. That seems to be such an awesome setup where the kids can just have the food pantry right there at their fingertips. That is obviously an ideal situation. It is really unfortunate. If they were two and a half miles down the street and then having to get up Harbor Blvd. to get back to the food pantry, that wouldn't be as nearly as good. The whole time I have been on the tour and here, I just feel that if it was not designed to be the permanent home for Skyview, I just wish somehow that was communicated upfront with everybody. Then you do not feel like something is being taken away. I do not know where that breakdown seemed to happen. It seemed to me that was even the understanding with the teachers.

BARKE: The garden. I remember the garden.

SHAW: Yeah, the garden was really nice.

BARKE: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

SHAW: It is like, wait, we just built this garden. I'm sorry that this kind of went down the way it did. As far as next steps, the plan is to move in February. Is that right?

BURTON: We are working on the MOU with Anaheim, so there is a lot of details, obviously. They brought up some, the food pantry. We are looking at a February move, if possible, based on the MOU. Realize, once we get the MOU, it has to be brought to the Anaheim School Board, too. We are trying to get that. It looks like if we can't make this date, which I think is next week, it would be the February date, of the Anaheim board when they—

SHAW: Okay.

BURTON: They have to present it to their board.

SHAW: Mm-hmm.

BURTON: That make sense?

SHAW: Yeah. It has got to be approved.

VALDES: I just think if we are going to try and make a good faith effort, we need more time than that. I mean the Anaheim board has to review it. You are going to make the request to bring all the students over. Someone there has to review it. I just do not know if that can be done by February.

WILLIAMS: I just got to say something more.

SHAW: Okay. Go ahead, Ken.

WILLIAMS: In a representative government, in a constitutional government, the elected individuals, not people who are appointed, not people who are hired, we the people who are elected represent the people who come to petition before us. I am hearing very strongly about this very unique group of boys, and girls, and families. I'm not so sure they need to move. Why can't we accommodate them and work them into our plans to integrate with this other junior high program? Why can't we do that? Why do we have to make these changes? I'm not so sure. Again, this has to do with keeping the Board out of the dialogue, keeping the Board out of what is happening. We take care of the most vulnerable kids and families in Orange County. Local school districts just do not have the same great teachers that we do. They do not have the heart that our teachers do. I'm just concerned that we are moving way too fast.

VALDES: I agree.

WILLIAMS: There is not enough elected people in this, Jorge.

VALDES: I agree.

WILLIAMS: Staff, I love ya. But I think you are entirely wrong on this. I think there is a compromise that can be reached. To move these people out is the criticism of the people, by the government that governs them. As Abraham Lincoln said in the Gettysburg Address, "This is a government of, for, and by the people." I'm listening to you. I'm looking out there; different color skin, different backgrounds, different economic levels, different educational levels, but you are human beings like me. You are no different. If I were in your shoes, I would do what you are doing. I would appeal to your government people. I would keep on coming here. Keep up the fight. Do not stop the fight. Come and tell us what you need. I will do everything I can to help your kids.

I have been doing this for 28 years, and everybody here has the same heart that I do. I will be damned if I'm going to sit here and say nothing. I'm sorry if I swear, but I feel very passionately about this.

AUDIENCE: We appreciate you.

SHAW: Well, yeah, thanks again for coming. We just had it on our agenda as an information item. The way the government laws work, there is no vote for us to take. But we do appreciate you all coming and having your voice be heard. I would encourage my colleagues, if you haven't had the chance to visit, I'm sure you guys would love to have everyone come by. You can see for yourselves the great work going on there.

AUDIENCE: Without notice, too.

SHAW: Okay.

VALDES: I have a feeling I'm going to propose a resolution for the next meeting.

WILLIAMS: Good, good.

SHAW: Let's move on to announcements, announcements from the superintendent.

HENDRICK: In your folder, you have upcoming dates. Wednesday, February 7, is the next regular board meeting. We have a submission deadline on January 24 for the board packet to be delivered on February 2. As a reminder, the office is closed on January 15 for Martin Luther King Day. The OCSBA seminar from Capital Advisors on the state budget is January 17. I know, Tim, you have already registered, but it is a Zoom link.

I wanted to let you know there are some changes coming to the ACCESS sites that are run by Probation. As we endeavor to try and make sure we are giving you more information, we have two sites that are actually run by Probation. We have the Youth Resource Center in Central and North. They will be closing the Central and moving it into the North. They rehabbed the Orange one, so that will be coming in February. It is moving those students. We have no control over that. That is a Probation decision.

BARKE: That is temporary while they make some—

HENDRICK: Yeah, they are making some major changes to their new site. Then, we are being told that there will be some major changes coming for the Juvenile Hall also. That probably is going to be put off. It was supposed to be this spring, but it looks like they are not ready to go to bid for that yet. We will let you know what that looks like, but it will be a revamping of those. Again, those are not our sites. They are run by Juvenile Hall and Probation. We are guests at those sites and must follow those rules. I do have some exciting news, it looks like Media is trying to bring it up, from Analee Kredel, our chief of Special Schools. You ready?

MEDIA: Yep.

HENDRICK: Okay.

[Video is played.]

VIDEO VOICE OF KREDEL: I am Analee Kredel, and I have the privilege to serve as the chief of the Special Education Services Division. I am pleased to share some exciting news with you.

[Video is stopped.]

HENDRICK: Yeah, it would be great if we could see her.

BARKE: Are we going to see her?

HENDRICK: While he is doing that, I think you approved the upcoming meetings. Just to let you know, there was a to-be-determined in October.

BARKE: I had a question about that.

HENDRICK: Rosh Hashanah was the first Wednesday, and the second Wednesday is Yom Kippur.

BARKE: Perhaps we could do a different day. Those are our two holy days.

HENDRICK: Yes. The question was, do you want to look at a Tuesday/Thursday? We can do a polling for that, for the future. It is next October.

BARKE: Okay.

HENDRICK: We did see that. We tried to move it to the next week.

BARKE: Thank you.

HENDRICK: We were like, oh, that won't work either.

BARKE: Thank you. I appreciate that. I was wondering what was going on in October.

HENDRICK: Yeah, that was why.

BARKE: Okay, thank you.

HENDRICK: We have checked every other month, so I think that was the only—normally we would have just moved it to next week. We could either go to the third week. We will try maybe a Tuesday, Tuesday and see.

BARKE: All right, I'm going to try and figure this out.

HENDRICK: There she is. Okay.

[Video is played.]

VIDEO VOICE OF KREDEL: My name is Analee Kredel, and I have the privilege to serve as the chief of the Special Education Services division. I am pleased to share some exciting news with you about our division. As you know, our role is to support our district partners in a variety of ways, including providing direct programming to students needing special education services. We only serve students referred to us by their home districts, including individuals with extensive support needs, such as language and behavioral needs, medically fragile, and students that are deaf and hard of hearing. We serve ages three to 22, as well as under three, year-olds with deafness. Because our school programs serve only special education students with IEPs, our programs have been called Special Schools.

As we continue to move towards creating inclusive learning environments and working to ensure that all students are given their rightful presence, I am thrilled to announce our new program

name, Connections, Empowering Every Learner. As we have 13 program sites throughout Orange County, each site will add their location name, such as Connections at Mann, Connections at Hillview, et cetera. The development of our new name has been many years in the making, with a strong effort to ensure it truly represents our students. We feel very strongly that Connections embodies our program in so many ways, as they are designed to support our students as they make connections with learning, connections with peers, connections with their community, job skills, careers, and connections with independent living.

We are currently in the process of rolling out our new name to you, our students, our families, staff, and our district partners. Please join me in celebrating our students and the launch of Connections, Empowering Every Learner. Thank you.

[Video stops.]

HENDRICK: That will be rolling out over the next year, or the next few months I guess.

BARKE: You are fine with Wednesday, October 9. Yom Kippur is the 11th. Usually they are separated by about 10 days. That is why I didn't think it fell that way, so we could do the ninth.

HENDRICK: The ninth?

BARKE: Yes, Yom Kippur begins sunset, Friday the 11th.

HENDRICK: Thank you. That is all I have on my updates.

SHAW: Terrific. Thank you. Let's see, legislative updates. Anyone have anything to report? Seeing none, we will go to committee reports. I do have a report here. The Website Committee met, Dr. Williams and I. I was looking over the Board's website and saw things that probably should just be deleted in my opinion. In talking with Renee, I guess we do need consensus of the whole board to make deletions to our site. I was looking over, I'm on the Board of Education tab called Board Updates. There is a lot of statements and things posted there. Former Trustee Beckie Gomez and I had a lot of fun with incompatible offices, challenges. There is a lot of statements on here related to that. This is several years old now. They should probably just be deleted. I think people would be more confused than anything by looking at this. For example, the second one down, under statement, says, "Tim Shaw's resignation statement." Well, I'm back.

VALDES: As the president.

SHAW: And I'm actually the president, so maybe we just delete that. We delete the whole section called Board Vacancy. That is when Trustee Beckie Gomez had resigned. Let's see, also at the very bottom, it is under Documents and Resources, another mentioning of the board vacancies, and resignations, and appointments, and all that. There is probably five/six different entries. With your consensus, I think we should probably delete for clarity's sake. Did that make sense, Renee?

HENDRICK: Mm-hmm.

WILLIAMS: Tim, if I can? We talked about this a few days ago prior to this meeting tonight. One of the big issues that I see is that we can make another policy and just assign this to the Website Committee to make these changes spontaneously. Instead of coming to the board here, maybe we can just combine it in a document and put it under the consent calendar?

SHAW: Oh, okay. Does that work?

WILLIAMS: That is an idea that we can do to make it easier, rather than bringing all this up this time in the board meeting agenda. That is what I would recommend. If it is okay and acceptable to my fellow board members, that we can have consensus.

SHAW: Just put it on the consent calendar.

WILLIAMS: Just put it on the consent calendar. If you are okay with the Website Committee making these decisions—

SHAW: Yeah.

WILLIAMS: —you get that document. Okay. Duly noted, Renee?

HENDRICK: Mm-hmm.

WILLIAMS: Okay, very good.

SHAW: Do you agree with that, Dr. Sparks?

SPARKS: I very much agree with that.

SHAW: Okay. Any other committee reports? Let's see, board member comments. Lisa, while you are still awake, go ahead, board member comments.

SPARKS: Yeah, it is daytime now. No, I'm good. I do not really have any comments at this time. Thank you.

SHAW: Okay. Maybe I will start to my left this time. Trustee Barke?

BARKE: I just want to say again, I just want to thank Skyview and our team who helped tour us at Skyview. It was a very memorable day. One of the best days I can remember in touring various facilities, so I just want to comment on that again. I had intended to.

SHAW: Dr. Williams?

WILLIAMS: I said enough.

SHAW: Okay, Jorge?

BARKE: Oh, he said enough.

VALDES: Thank you to the Skyview teachers for coming down. Thank you for the emails. Like I said, I do read them. I do act on them. I had a great tour of the Citrus Springs charter in Santa Ana this month, and I want to thank everybody there for giving me a great tour.

SHAW: Thank you. Yeah, I have managed to visit a lot of schools being on the Board. It was very special being at Skyview. Seeing the young kids read, that was really, really neat. They are doing a great job. With that, I think we are officially done, right? Oh, do we have any more public comments? No? None were submitted? Very well, we will stand adjourned to the next regular meeting of the Board, February 7, 2024, 5:00 PM, here in Costa Mesa. We will see you then.