

SPARKS: Welcome everybody. Just want to announce that Board President Tim Shaw is joining the meeting via Zoom as you can see there. So there will be roll call votes on all the action items and I'm going to be running the meeting as efficiently as we possibly can because we have a full agenda today. So Darou, roll call.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke.

BARKE: Here.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams.

WILLIAMS: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks.

SPARKS: Here.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes.

VALDES: Here.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw.

SHAW: Here in downtown Sacramento.

SPARKS: Fun times. Note a revision to the agenda, removing Item number 15, the Orange County Classical Academy has withdrawn its material revision to add an additional facility in Orange Unified School District. Okay? Adoption of the regular meeting of May 1, 2024.

BARKE: So moved.

SPARKS: Do I have a second?

WILLIAMS, VALDES: Second.

SPARKS: I don't know who was first. I think Ken was first. All in favor and roll call.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes.

VALDES: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes. Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw.

SHAW: Aye.

SPARKS: Okay. Five to zero. And the regular meeting of April 3rd, 2024 approval? Do I have a motion?

BARKE: So moved.

VALDES: Second.

SPARKS: Okay, roll call?

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes.

VALDES: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes. Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw.

WILLIAMS: He said "Aye."

SPARKS: It was kind cut off.

SHAW: Am I not coming in? I'm sorry. I'll turn my volume all the way up. Sorry about that.

SPARKS: That's all right. Okay. Five to zero then. Approval. Renee, do we have comment cards for any closed session items?

HENDRICK: No, we have none.

SPARKS: Okay. None. So at this point we're going to take a recess to go into closed session to conduct our appeal hearing and our closed session items. We will see you then around five o'clock. Thank you.

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

SPARKS: Okay. We'll call the meeting to order the Orange County Board of Education. Welcome everybody. You guys could get settled in. We're going to go ahead and get started. All right. First we're going to have our report out from Mr. Rolen from our closed session. Mr. Rolen, are you ready? Oh yeah. Okay.

ROLEN: Thank you, Madam Vice President. This is a report out from the May 1 meeting, closed session item number one, the Board received information from counsel; no action was taken. Closed session item number two, again, the Board received a report and information from counsel, direction was given; no action was taken. With regard to closed session item number three, no action was taken but for the approval of Nielsen Merksamer bills by a vote of four; four being Barke, Williams, Valdes, and Sparks; and one abstention, Trustee Shaw abstained because he could not view the bills. Madam Deputy Superintendent, are you ready to receive the invoice numbers of the bills that were approved? Invoice number 264966; Invoice number 266572; Invoice number 268595; Invoice number 269669; and invoice number 270551. I have this on a spreadsheet in my office if there's any miscommunication. That will do it for the report out this evening.

SPARKS: Thank you, Mr. Rolen. I'll just note that President Tim Shaw is joining us via satellite from Sacramento. So I'm running the meeting today, so bear with me. First we're going to have Rabbi Ciner to the podium to give us the invocation.

SPARKS: Welcome.

RABBI CINER: Thank you very much. I'd like to thank you for giving me the opportunity and the honor to share this invocation with you, particularly during these troubled times that we are now living through. The Jewish people have just completed the holiday of Passover, celebrating the exodus from slavery on our way to the land of Israel, where we have maintained our presence for thousands of years. It was this journey that inspired the founding of our great country, and we thus find that many cities and towns here have these biblical names. This country has been a beacon of freedom, tolerance, respect, and diversity and that has been the bedrock of our strength. As George Washington famously wrote to the tourist synagogue of Newport, Rhode Island, "it is now no more that toleration is spoken of as if it were the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights."

The letter continued with the promise that the government of the United States, which gives to bigotry, no sanction to persecution, no assistance, requires only that those who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens in giving it on all occasions their effectual support. We are living at a time where there is much strife, division and bigotry. We see this in our institutions of higher learning. It is the early years of education which can set our students onto the path of which George Washington spoke. May the Almighty grant us the wisdom, understanding, foresight and strength to guide our city and its students on the pathway of respect and tolerance, continuing to build this great country and its citizens on the foundations upon which it was set and bringing blessing to our city, our country, and the world. Let us say, Amen.

SPARKS: Amen. Thank you, Rabbi Ciner from the Beth Jacob Congregation of Irvine. We so appreciate you coming here tonight. Next we're going to have the Sunburst Youth Academy Color Guard presentation of flags followed by the National Anthem to be sung by Cadet Rosario, and then Cadet Scott will give the pledge of allegiance.

COLOR GUARD: Color Guard Halt. Right turn. March. Color Guard Halt. Present colors.

ROSARIO: Oh say, can you see, by the dawns early light? What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming. Whose bright stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight, o'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming? And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air, gave proof through the night that our flag was still there. Oh, say does that star-spangled banner yet wave, o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

COLOR GUARD: Order. Color. Left turn. Color, forward march.

SCOTT: Prepare to pledge. Present arms. Civilians, put your right hand over your heart. Ready, begin.

SCOTT: 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 to Sunburst Youth Academy for the Color Guard presentation and Cadet Rosario for the National Anthem, and Cadet Scott giving the Pledge of Allegiance. Thank you all so much. So we have a few special presentations. First, I'd like to invite the Freedom Committee of the OC Board of Director Secretary, Tim Richards, the board member Dwight to the podium, followed by Dr. Ramon Miramontes, Deputy Superintendent of Instructional Programs, and I remind board members to be ready to present the certificates and award money to the winners. Media will be taking some pictures. Okay, welcome.

TIMOTHY: Thank you, Madam Chairman. My name is Timothy Richards and I wear the uniform, the United States Army Corps of Engineers. I served our country for 27 years, and now I'm retired and authorized to wear this uniform.

WILLIAMS: Thank you, sir.

TIMOTHY: One thing I learned about my military experience, education does not stop when you put on the uniform. As a matter of fact, it doubles-down. The uniform, the first time you go into the army, it's a two-months course to learn to be a soldier, to become qualified in a MOS. There's another soldier, another school to go through. I was entered in military as a private, as a corporal; I went to another school as a sergeant with three stripes; I attended a leadership course. Do you see where I'm going? Leadership in military is very important. Leadership and education go hand in hand. I was selected to attend officer candidate school as a sergeant. I attended for a six-months course; I learned to be an engineer officer. I graduated and I was commissioned in the Corps of Engineers, and then served in Korea and Vietnam. And when I returned, I went to another school. Education never stopped in the military. Also, one other thing, as I was going through the military, I took correspondence courses. So military and education go hand in hand. Thank you. I'd like to introduce some. . . would you like to bring it up? This is our founding father.

DWIGHT: No, no. Oh yeah. So this is Jack Hammett. Here we go. Okay.

TIMOTHY: Jack Hammett was a founder, and about 14 years ago he started with World War II Veterans, and he founded the Freedom Committee with the mission of passing the Torch of Liberty on to the next generation. Please.

DWIGHT: And this is, his wife and him were both Pearl Harbor survivors because she was in Hawaii at that time. So we go by and visit his grave. Jack and Mary Jo Hammett are Pearl Harbor survivors. And then here's the next picture.

TIMOTHY: This is the picture of World War II Veterans. They were wearing the uniform of the Pearl Harbor survivors. They all wore Hawaiian shirts. Jack served in Pearl Harbor and he was there at the bombing. He was a medic. So he was very much involved in the medical facility with the bombing of the Japs.

DWIGHT: We'll go to the last slide, just the gentleman to the far left, Dick Higgins, was a founding member of the Freedom Committee, and he just passed away. He was the last Pearl Harbor survivor from Orange County and founded the Freedom Committee. With help Jack found the fitting committee. But this is really cool. Tim's going to touch on the last thing. We always like this because it's something very important for us.

TIMOTHY: As I read this up there, "Please do me a favor, take care of my country for me. Jack Hammett. Always remember, never forget." Thank you.

SPARKS: Thank you so much. Dr. Miramontes.

MIRAMONTES: Thank you and thank you for your service. As I mentioned before we started the meeting, my father-in-Law was a lieutenant colonel, was a chaplain in the US Army for over 25 years. One of the wisest men I know. So I know that he talked to me all the time about the doctorate of completed work. And then some other personal pieces: my son will graduate from law school next week and has been accepted to the Air Force JAG program. So we're really excited as a family.

But it's not about me tonight. It's about the students that are here and the members that are here to celebrate with us. So good evening, President Shaw, members of the Board and fellow guests. The ACCESS and CONNECTIONS teams deeply appreciate the opportunity for our students to participate in the annual Jack Hammett Memorial Day Essay and Art Contest. Students are invited to participate from ACCESS and CONNECTIONS programs. Our students respond to a prompt: What does Memorial Day mean to you? We had 43 submissions from our ACCESS students, and in the third year of inviting CONNECTIONS students to participate, we had 25 submissions either written or in pictorial art form from our seventh grade adult transition students. As a reminder to our guests, ACCESS is OCDE's outstanding nationally recognized alternative education program offering transformative learning experience support to students across Orange County. Our amazing CONNECTIONS program at OCDE serves students referred to from 28 school districts with the extensive support needs. Before we get started celebrating the students tonight, I'd like to introduce our ACCESS and CONNECTIONS team members who have supported these students and they're here this evening. Please stand and be recognized, but let's hold the applause to the very end. Dr. Katy Ramezani, Director; Dinah Ismail, Principal at Sunburst Youth Academy; Ruth Ramirez, Principal, Area Eight; Spencer Gooch, Assistant Principal, Area Three; Julie Bauer-Ochoa, teacher, Southwestern Anaheim; Mike Zanio, teacher from Mission Viejo. Let's give them a big round of applause.

And from our ACCESS CONNECTIONS group, I'd like to recognize Chris Romanosky, Director of Special Education; Christa Paul, Principal of CONNECTIONS at Harbor Learning Center; Joe Arnold, teacher of CONNECTIONS at Golden West College. Here to co-present with me, Analee Kredel, Chief of our Special Schools. Thank you.

KREDEL: Thank you so much. We have Kristin Bartus, our teacher at Irvine, our CONNECTIONS at Irvine program; we have Richelle Garcia, who's one of our school psychologists that supports a number of our sites; and Amy Smith, another one of our school psychologists mental health manager. For fear of missing anyone, if there's other ACCESS or CONNECTIONS staff members in the room, please stand up, please, because we want to recognize you. Thank you. So today we're celebrating our 68 students who submitted Memorial Day essays or art. All the students tonight will receive a Certificate of Completion, or Certificate of Participation, and then additionally, they'll be honored with a monetary amount. So we're very excited about that. So we're very proud of the work of our students, including of course our teachers, our administrators, and our staff that support them. And I also want to have a big thank you for our board members and our cabinet members who financially contributed to these awards and made this possible tonight. So all the Trustees have been provided with copies of the essays and the pictures in your binders. And now I'm delighted to recognize the winners of our top three essays for our ACCESS program. So we have, it's kind of fun. We have a tie for third place. So we have two third place winners in ACCESS and we have Gabi and her teacher is Mike Zanio. Gabi.

KREDEL: Gabi. Okay. Mike, will you come up and get her award? And I know you'll make sure to get it to her. So unfortunately, Gabi can't be with us tonight.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Okay, one, two.

KREDEL: Thank you. Thank you. Yes, thank you. Thank you.

KREDEL: So our next third place winner goes to Brynna, and Brynna is here with her teacher, Jacqueline Cerbin.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Front and center.

KREDEL: I guess you can all tell Brynna is from our Sunburst Youth Academy, so it's wonderful.

PHOTOGRAPHER: One, two. One more. Perfect. Thank you.

KREDEL: Congratulations. Well done. Our second place awardee and winner is Hieu from Southwest Anaheim and he is here with his teacher Julie Bauer-Ochoa. Please come forward.

WILLIAMS: Here's a million dollars. Yeah, there we go.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Ready? One, two. Okay. One more. Perfect. Thank you.

KREDEL: And our first place awardee is Ruby, and she's from our Mission Viejo program and her teacher is Mike Zanio. Please come forward Ruby.

MIKE: Okay, want to go first?

BARKE: Oh, sure, sure.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Ready? One, two. On one, two. Step over there. Perfect. One, two. Great. Thank you.

KREDEL: And now we have the pleasure of having Ruby read her essay.

RUBY: Thank you. Even as a student who hasn't directly experienced the horrors of war, Memorial Day holds profound significance for me.

It's not merely a day off for school or work, but a solemn reminder of the sacrifices made by countless individuals who bravely fought for their lives. Although I haven't walked in their boots or felt the weight of a uniform, I deeply empathize with those who have, especially the courageous souls who found themselves on the front lines. Memorial Day serves as a poignant reminder of the irreplaceable human lives lost in the line of duty. Behind each statistic lies a unique story. A family shattered by loss and dreams left unfulfilled. These individuals were sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers, each cherished and loved, their absence leaving an indelible void in the lives of those they left behind. Our fallen heroes represent a diverse tapestry of humanity. United by their unwavering commitment to defend the peace and freedom we hold dear. On Memorial Day, we honor not only their service but their humanity.

The laughter, the tears, the hopes and the dreams that were extinguished too soon. Beyond the individuals, Memorial Day underscores the collective responsibility to ensure that their sacrifices were not in vain. It's a day to reflect on the broader implications of war, to question the necessity of conflicts and to advocate for peace whenever possible. As a global community, we must strive to resolve conflicts through diplomacy, sparing future generations from the horrors of lives taken violently and prematurely. Moreover, Memorial Day compels us to support the veterans who return home with physical wounds, psychological scars, and the burden of traumatic memories. They deserve not only our gratitude but our unwavering support as they navigate the challenges reintegrating into civilian life. It's important for us to ensure that they receive the care, resources, and respect they need to heal and thrive post-service.

In writing this essay, I aim to resonate with our citizens impacted directly and indirectly and help others adopt an empathetic approach, especially to something so precious as human lives being irreversibly changed. While I don't have firsthand experience with war, my compassion for the sacrifices made by others drive me to reflect on the significance of this solemn occasion. In conclusion, Memorial Day serves as a poignant reminder of the fragility of human life, the cost of our carefree moments, and the enduring legacy of those who made the ultimate sacrifice. As we gather to pay our respects and honor their memory, let us also recommit ourselves to the pursuit of peace, justice, and empathy in our communities and beyond. Thank you.

MIRAMONTES: Thank you, President Shaw, members of the Board for your support of this wonderful initiative, and special thanks to our veterans who are here that we honor. I'd like to get one picture with the Freedom Committee of Orange County and Ruby, your winner, if that's possible.

PHOTOGRAPHER: That's great. Ready, one, two. Okay. One more. Perfect.

MIRAMONTES: Thank you.

KREDEL: At this time I'd like to announce our CONNECTIONS winners of both an essay as well as the art category. Our third place awardee is awarded to Emiliano, and Emiliano attends our CONNECTIONS at Irvine High School with his teacher, Kristin Bartus.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Can you turn this way? One, two. One more. Great. Thank you.

KREDEL: Our second place awardee is Stacy from our CONNECTIONS at Golden West College Adult Transition Program, and her teacher is Joe Arnold. I don't believe Stacy's here tonight, but we want to make sure we honor her, so, her art was fabulous.

WILLIAMS: Are you going to see her?

JOE: Yeah.

WILLIAMS: Are you going to give her her money?

MIRAMONTES: Let's get a picture.

KREDEL: Joe's trustworthy.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Okay, Ready, one, two. One more. Perfect.

KREDEL: And our first place awardee in the art category is Hank, and he is also from our CONNECTIONS at Golden West College Adult Transition, and his teacher is Joe Arnold.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Picture as well. Teachers, well, okay, one more. Okay. One more picture. Why not. Thank you both. No worries. Just hold it down here, okay? Yep. Perfect. Nice smile. Ready, one, two and, perfect.

KREDEL: And we also have a first place awardee in the written essay contest, and that is Noah, and he is from our CONNECTIONS program at Golden West College ATP, and his teacher is Joe Arnold.

PHOTOGRAPHER: One, two. One more. Perfect.

MIRAMONTES: And the Freedom first place as well.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Perfect.

MIRAMONTES: Noah, wait there.

PHOTOGRAPHER: One, two. Another one. Last time.

MIRAMONTES: Thank you, Mrs. Kredel. Thank you, Freedom Committee of Orange County, and thank you Board of Education once again. This concludes our presentation. Thank you.

SPARKS: Thank you. Before we have our next presentation, I want to offer a short break if anyone who might want to transition in or out. We have a crowded field today.

SHAW: Dr. Sparks.

SPARKS: Yes.

SHAW: I just wanted to say before everyone leaves, I'm very sorry I couldn't be there in person. I'm up at a work conference in Sacramento, but you guys look and sounded great.

SPARKS: Oh wonderful. Thank you.

VALDES: Oh hey kids, there's cookies outside.

SPARKS: We have cookies and goodies outside for the families if you so choose - out this way.

WILLIAMS: Thank you, Scott.

SPARKS: Oh, they can go out that way, or this way? Okay. So there are cookies and drinks outside for anybody who would like. Will someone direct them? Darou, will someone direct them out there? Good to see you. Yes.

[The Orange County Board of Education takes a break and returns.]

SPARKS: Let's go ahead and transition. If we could go ahead and transition in or out, that would be great. No pun intended. Hello. Thank you for coming, or thank you for entering. We want to move on with the meeting if we could. We have a very long agenda. Thank you for coming. We have snacks in the back: water, cookies, all sorts of goodies, and if you don't want that you can stay here with us, but we're moving on with the meeting.

SPARKS: Hello. Mari Barke, time to come back. I know, I thought it was a ghost. Okay, we're going to go ahead and move on with the meeting. Thank you all so much. Here we go. I want to make one quick announcement. If you guys, seriously, if you like In-N-Out Burger, who doesn't like In-N-Out Burger? Maybe the vegans of the world. Okay, if you like In-N-Out Burger, I have a great announcement for you, but you have to sit down like good kids. Okay, thank you. So In-N-Out Burger will be served, not tonight, but mark your calendar. Monday, May 27, the 70th Annual Memorial Day Ceremony. 70th Annual Memorial Day ceremony will be Monday, May 27th by the Freedom Committee of Orange County. It'll be Monday, May 27th at 11:00 AM in the Harbor Lawn Memorial Park, 1625 Gisler Avenue in Costa Mesa. Free admission, free In-N-Out burger. Okay, so put it on your calendar, be there or be square. It's on the back table. It's a little flyer like this. Okay? Thank you all for organizing yourselves and coming back. We do have a long agenda today, so we do want to kind of keep things moving. At this point I would like to invite Sarah Bach, Sycamore Creek, to the podium to facilitate a student performance. Is Sarah coming? Where is she? Oh, she went to get a cookie. Oh, okay.

AUDIENCE: Sarah had surgery.

SPARKS: Oh, okay. She may have snuck to get a cookie. So while we're waiting on Sarah . . .

BARKE: I think it's Alisha, because Sarah had surgery.

SPARKS: Oh, it's Alisha.

BARKE: Alisha's here. She's here.

SPARKS: Oh, there you are. Okay. Alisha we'll be here.

ALISHA: Good evening.

SPARKS: Perfect.

ALISHA: Thank you so much everybody. Sarah sends her regrets. She's unfortunately recovering from surgery. She cannot be here tonight, but we are so happy to present Ms. Katib and our fourth grade class and I will let her come up and introduce them.

SPARKS: Wonderful, thank you.

AURELIA: Hello, my name is Aurelia Katip and I am the fourth grade teacher at Sycamore Creek Community Charter School and this is my class. Some of them, they've been with me since first grade, some joined and left since second, third grade, and some are new to our class this year. We do various cycles of poems and songs and rhythms each morning as we cycle through the subjects throughout the year. So I am immensely proud of them for working as a class and doing this sample of some of our morning rhythm for all of you to see.

SYCAMORE CREEK FOURTH GRADE: Life and to life and to life and love, your life and love to your life and love to the spirits of our life.

2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44, 46, 48, 50.
Counting back is easy if you skip over one number. 50, 48, 46, 44, 42, 40, 38, 36, 34, 32, 30, 28, 24, 22, 20, 18, 16, 14, 12, 10, 8, 6, 4, 2, 3. 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39. 39, 36, 33 and 30, 27, 24, 21 and 18. 18, 12, 9 and 6 and 3. 4, 8, 12, 16, 20, 24, 20, 32, 36, 40, ends at 44 and 40. 48, 44, 40, 30, 32, 20, 24, 20, 12 and 8 and 4 and 0. 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 100. 100, 95, 90, 85, 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, 0. 24, 30, 36, 42, 48, 54, 6 feet. 66 72, 6 72. 66, 6, 6 54, 48, 42, 36 30 24 18, 12 6 and you are done. 37 7 14 21. See what we can do. 20, 35, 42 ABCs 49 56 63 7. Next there's 1 77 84, 7 14, 21, 28, 35, 42, 49, 56 63, 7 77 84, 4 40, 56, 4 8 70 40, 40, 45, 54, 63, 72. 1 9 8 9 63, 54, 45 and 9 9 9 18 27, 36, 45, 54, 63, 72 81, 19 99, 1 0 8, the oh 8 99 91, 70 63, 54, 45, 6 30, 7 18, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 90, 80, 70, 60, 50, 40, 30, 20 10, 11, 22, 33, 44, 55, 66. 7 8, 8 77 65, 44, 33. 12 1 4. Okay, 1 2, 1, 3 1 3 is 48 is eight is two. Raise your hand please. Ones move in front of the two. Two we moving in. There we go. 12 eight is 96. One times eight is eight, two times 15, three times 8 is 24, four times 8 is 32, five times 8 is 40, six times 8 is 48, seven times 8 is 56, eight times eight is 64, nine times eight is 72, ten times eight is 80, 11 times eight is 88, 12 times eight is 96. 12 times eight is 96, 11 times eight is 88, ten times eight is 80, nine times 8 is 72, eight times eight is 64, seven times eight is 56, six times eight is 48, five times eight is 40, four times 8 is 32, three times eight is 24, two times eight is 16, one times eight is eight.

AURELIA: And then for our last presentation and a lot of our movement and math is incorporated into rhythm and movement. This last poem is a poem called *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud* by William Wordsworth. This will be our concluding presentation.

SYCAMORE CREEK FOURTH GRADE: I wandered lonely as a cloud, that floats on high o'er vales and hills, when all at once I saw a crowd, a host of golden daffodils, beside the lake, beneath the trees, fluttering and dancing in the breeze. Continuous as the stars that shine and twinkle on the milky way, they stretched in never-ending line along the margin of a bay. Ten thousand saw I at a glance, tossing their heads in sprightly dance. The waves beside them danced; but they out-did the sparkling waves in glee. A poet could not but be gay, in such a jocund company. I gazed, and gazed, but little thought what wealth the show to me had brought. For oft, when on my couch I lie in vacant or in pensive mood. They flash upon that inward eye, which is the bliss of solitude, and then my heart with pleasure fills and dances with the daffodils.

SPARKS: Brava, Brava to our little ones and the teacher, you guys, Sycamore Creek, you were amazing. We were watching experiential learning in action. That was impressive. Truly impressive, and it seems like you guys were having a lot of fun too. As much as you can have fun doing math, right? You got to make math fun, right? Okay, so I'll invite Steven Kim to the podium with Project Kinship. Steven Kim, Executive Director. There he is.

VALDES: So, Trustee Sparks, can I give a little introduction of this?

SPARKS: Sure.

VALDES: So I put this on the agenda because a couple of months ago I was at Mayor Amezcu's Prayer Breakfast in Santa Ana and Steven Kim was there doing a presentation on Project Kinship and I was just really moved by what Mr. Kim's organization does for our kids in Santa Ana. So that's how Mr. Kim got here today and I'm looking forward to you telling Orange County what Project Kinship does for our troubled youth in Santa Ana.

STEVEN: Awesome, thank you so much. Aaron asked me if he was just my carpool here. I said, oh, you're going to speak too. So I brought him up. I wanted to just at least introduce himself.

AARON: So, hi everybody, my name is Aaron. I'm the associate Executive Director of Project Kinship. Steve is the wonderful person for us and I'm just the person at the back of the house. So I do the administrative portion of the work and I'm so grateful to work for Project Kinship and really work in partnership with the Orange County Department of Education because of all of the wonderful things you guys do as an agency and how closely it matches to the work that we do at Project Kinship. So thank you guys.

STEVEN: Thanks Aaron. All right, thank you. You didn't have to say all that, but thank you, Board Member Valdes and everyone here for the opportunity to share about Project Kinship. Thank you to Associate Superintendent Hendrick for her support over the years too. I feel like it's a homecoming. Darou, thank you for letting me send my PowerPoint in last minute, last night. Appreciate it. As I was driving here though, I'm OCDE homegrown. I don't know if you all know, but it's a homecoming for me because in 2006 when I got my MSW, I couldn't find a job anywhere. I got in a lot of trouble as a kid, a little bit of trouble as an adult, but it really created a lot of barriers, and Orange County Department of Education is the one that courageously allowed me to come in. Heidi Cisneros at that time was running Safe Schools.

I got to tell you that that one opportunity grew me, and the way Project Kinship has grown is because of my roots at OCDE, and so it's a big deal for me to be here today. So I just want to thank you all for giving me the opportunity. So I'm coming back home just to kind of brag about what you all taught me to do. What I want to share is that in 2014, PK started and we modeled after a place called Homeboy Industries in Los Angeles with Father Greg Boyle, and we asked him if we could create a Homeboys in Orange County and he was like, "go my children" and he blessed us. It was two people in 2014. We're in 2024, we're at 130 staff, we're in over 35 schools throughout Orange County, we're in the adult jails in Orange County, all the adult jails here.

We're just finishing up doing all of the, starting to finish up all of the units in juvenile hall, and so we've significantly grown. But I want to take you back just briefly of how we started in our schools program in 2015. There was at one of the schools, in one of the school districts, there was a stabbing, a shooting, an assault, and four riots all in one week. And this is the picture that we saw coming into Orange County. This is Orange County when we went there and started working there, I'm preaching to the choir, to some folks here. We have a lot of challenges and a lot of youth face a lot of different struggles: parents who are incarcerated; kids are born into poverty; a lot of violence. We were like, how do we address this? How do we help youth?

So we said, what if we brought, this thing called restorative practices is one thing, but what if we cared children back to health? We realized that pain will never drive out more pain; that if you're able to help kids and walk with them, then significant things happen. So this one school site, they were like, "Come in." We had two staff come in and it was crazy. I'm not going to lie. When we showed up, kids were jumping out the windows, it was wild. We were like, we took a deep breath and we cared for them, brought different types of services and at the end of the year, attendance went up, violence went down. I'm happy to say that many of those kids have graduated and it's been really beautiful seeing all of them graduate, but their families also celebrating this graduation.

So this was a picture I just want to share of how we started. When we think about trauma, there's a lot of definitions, but I want to put this as our definition: "An assault on or the loss of faith and beliefs in the nature of life and people, both others and yourself." I don't know if anyone here has ever felt that, where you felt like you're losing faith in life, where you felt like I'm just in the weeds, I'm in the valleys. When I think about trauma, that impact of anyone feeling like they're alone, it's a very horrible place to be. Pandemic was pretty crazy, right? It brought along challenges and what I realized through the pandemic with my own challenges that I experienced, that healing always came through community. That there was always somebody that said, you know what, Steve, you may be having a rough time as a father, as a son, as an employee, but somebody reflected back to me during Covid of saying, "but I got you."

I think that's the case all the way around whether you're an elementary school kid, whether you're an elderly individual, having somebody next to you to help you bring your faith back and your beliefs back. In our opinion, the way we've navigated our organization has really been the key along with evidence-based practices, along with curriculum, all these things. But if you miss the heartbeat of caring for people and loving people, I feel like we fall short a little bit. So this is a circle that we've done. Basically restorative practices is where we put a lot of our energy in. It really is about building community and creating relationships. So a kid will get expelled or kicked out of class or get in trouble. We need to keep them accountable. But what we've also done is created a dialogue where they've been able to connect with teachers and the kids, actually the kids who were causing trouble were the ones actually becoming the school room monitors.

They were telling other kids like, "Hey, chill out, you, like, let's connect." So these are some things that we've seen through restorative practices, strong relationships across the board, effectively address behavior and issues, helps promote a supportive environment. All those things we have noticed through our work over the last few years and some of the things that we focused on is paraprofessional counseling, restorative circles, mediations, family support, home

visits and training. I'm a visual person so I want to bring you some pictures of over the last few years of what it's looked like for us. Every single one of these youth have had some type of high score on their ACEs. Every one of these youth have experienced significant challenges where no kid should ever have to face. What's been amazing is to see them smile, is to see the families smile, kids who've been incarcerated, kids who are getting in trouble to come out and thrive.

We've got kids, I'm preaching to the choir. Some folks when they come in, they don't even look you in the eyes, but when you're able to model for them, give them language, care for them, love with them, walk with them, you see, like, pretty soon after looking you in the eyes, they're greeting you asking how your day was. It's a pretty amazing thing to be a part of. So these are some of the districts we're in, some of the schools. We're in Santa Unified. We need an updated list, but I want to just give you a little visual of how we've grown. From that one school site, we are actually having to put wait lists and stops right now because of capacity. But really I think when we ask our questions, we don't want to do anything that doesn't work, but I feel like something is working.

So while we've experienced a lot of growth, and again, it's because of a lot of stuff that I've learned at OCDE, so I'm really grateful. Two last slides from me. What I've learned over the years is that if we don't transform our pain, we'll transmit it, and so when I think about even from my family personally, a lot of generational pain that's been passed on but what I've noticed is being able to transform some of that. I know for my own kids, it's been really cool to see this healing process and being a different father to my children. And then for me - I go by this - is, just assume the answer to every question is compassion. My daughter, hope it's the last story I'll have, is when I was rebuilding my life, I couldn't find a job. So I had to hustle, I was working, like, you know, I don't know, 10, 12 hours a day going to school, going to UCI, got my bachelor's degree, I still couldn't get a job.

So I went to USC, got a master's degree, I still couldn't get a job. OCDE came in and said, we're going to let you in. I've never been in this room before, but it's nice. So anyway, so got me in there, worked it out. During that time though, with that sacrifice, if any of you all can relate, I remember thinking was I a good father to my daughter, Hope, because I couldn't really be there for her that much. I was working and she just graduated from Cal State Long Beach with her teaching credential, and I think it's a big deal. She goes, dad, I passed the RICA on my first try. I was like, I don't know what that is, but it sounds good. She is working right now, she's subbing and when I look at her, I'll share the story real quick. She had some challenges and in fourth grade, I never knew this, she said that she's getting picked on every day at school.

She used to come home crying and I was busy working. She said that when I heard that from my wife, I felt this extreme guilt of like, was I a good father to her? It was a fourth grade teacher that took her under her wing when Hope was alone and just going through it while her parents were working, trying to just live the American dream, a fourth grade teacher took her under the wing and said, "I'm going to walk with you, I'm going to support you." Because of that, when she was in fourth grade all the way now in her twenties, she's a teacher and she wants to teach fourth grade. I'll tell you one last story about Hope is we named her Hope because during that time when she was born, it was really bad and we didn't have any hope, so let's name her Hope.

So during that time of being bullied and picked on, she developed an eating disorder. I watched her shrivel away for years while she was in college and she started going to these groups and she said, "Dad, there's this one girl in this group and she always looks so angry." She's like, she's gothic and all this stuff. I was like, all right. She goes, "going to become her friend." And I was like, all right, cool, whatever. So one day after group she comes to see me and she's got this big old smile and she says, "Dad, remember that girl I was telling you about?" I go, "Yeah." "I had her smiling today," and I was like, "What'd you do?" She goes, "Well in our group I noticed that she was always touching her back and she looked like she was in pain."

And she goes, "I brought her a little pillow and it brought this big old smile to her." And she goes, "We're friends now." And she goes, "Guess what? She also has a cat named Lucifer." I was like, of course she does, right? So my take home thing was I was like, "Hope I'm so proud of you. I'm so proud of the woman you've become, but I have a question. What do you think it was that made you do what you did?" And she goes, "Dad, I know you worked hard. I know you weren't around that much. I know you feel guilty." She goes, "But don't feel guilty. The one thing you've always taught me to is to be kind." As I get older, as I'm, you know, reaching the kind of top of my game here, I realize that taking it back to being compassionate, to people being kind, has really been the key element of healing and success. OCDE, I'm really appreciative of this time that you all given to me, but most of all in 2006, when you all gave me a chance, I'm the product of what you invested in. So thank you very much.

VALDES: Mr. Kim. I just want to thank you on behalf of Santa Ana and Orange County for all the kids that you help in our county. Thank you very much.

SPARKS: Thank you so much. Renee, do we have any introductions?

HENDRICK: No, we have none.

SPARKS: Okay. And do we have, no public comments? We do have. Okay. All right. I think Trustee Barke's going to help me out with that this time.

HENDRICK: We have 24 I believe.

SPARKS: 24

BARKE: I'm showing 26, Unless there's a couple missing.

HENDRICK: There is a couple here.

BARKE: Oh, okay. 26. We have 24.

SPARKS: Do we want a couple of minutes, or a minute and a half, or 90 seconds? 90 seconds so we can get through all of it. We want to hear everybody okay? Yeah. All right. Can we do 90 seconds? Is that possible?

SISAVATH: 90?

SPARKS: Yeah.

SISAVATH: Okay.

SPARKS: Is that too much math? No, I'm just kidding.

BARKE: A minute and a half. A minute and a half.

SPARKS: Will the machine let you? Will it let do you that?

SISAVATH: I don't know. We will find out.

SPARKS: Okay, or as close as you can be. Just as a reminder for the public comments, we actually use that podium there in the middle of the room for our public comments. Trustee Barke will call the first name and the person on deck. So that second person should be ready to jump on so we can keep things moving along.

BARKE: The first person is Kanan Durham followed by Lynne Riddle.

KANAN: Hi, I'm Kanan Durham. I'm here speaking on behalf of Pride at the Pier. I did want to start off my comment by thanking Superintendent Al Mijares for his years of service and wishing him the best of luck at his future endeavors as he is resigning from his post. But that does of course bring us to the next point, which is my understanding that the Board is going to be going through the process of appointing his replacement. So in that I, on behalf of the organization, had some questions, had some hopes. First of all, we'd like to see as much transparency in this process as we can. There's a lot of questions I know a lot of folks have of what does this look like moving forward. So in that, I'm hoping that as we see more meetings, there's some transparency on what the timeline for this process looks like.

KANAN: Will the Board be using a search form or having applications accepted? Also, I know that Mijares' term was through January 4th of 2027, so I know a number of folks are wondering if this is going to be an interim replacement until a special election, or if that's going to be through the end of his term. So we're hoping to have some transparency in future meetings in what that process looks like, and also hoping we get this process moving quickly because I'm sure having such an important role empty for a long time is not great for the general business of the Board of Education. And then in addition to that, I'd like to pass on some hopes in things you consider when having that appointment for the replacement superintendent. I know we'd like to see someone who is both qualified and experienced in this level of leadership. Is that my 90 seconds? It is. All right. Thank you so much.

BARKE: Thank you. Okay. Thank you. On deck is Michelle Sapanara following Lynne Riddle.

LYNNE: Oh, I thought I was next.

BARKE: You are. You are.

LYNNE: I'm sorry we only have 30 seconds, but nonetheless

WILLIAMS: 90 seconds.

LYNNE: 90 seconds. But even that. So, hello Al, it's Lynn Riddle here. In brief Al, at the same time, I am grateful to you beyond words for your loving lifetime of service to children. I'm deeply saddened to hear that you'll not be returning to the department and to your life's work for the care of all the children everywhere. Yet too, I also know that at your very core, my friend, you are well, that He has invited you to lie down in green pastures. He has led you on pathways along still waters. He has and He always will restore your soul. He invited you. Excuse me. And while I am sure that you know better, the Department of Education continues in all of its excellence. I know that they've got your back in carrying on the Department's work, never wavering in their dedication to every child's learning and every child's belonging. Be comforted by that my friend, and by their work. Their work continues in loving hands and the entire public schools' community stands with them and we will stand up for them and stand by them fiercely with honor. And in your name, be well my friend, and God bless.

BARKE: Thank you. Up next is Michelle Sapanara and following Michelle is Senator Gloria Romero.

MICHELLE: I got married and I'm Italian now. Sapanara.

BARKE: Sapanara.

MICHELLE: My name is Michelle Sapanara, Assistant Superintendent of Springs Charter Schools. I stand before you today for two reasons. One, is to urge your support for resolution that establishes a special bridge loan fund for charter schools, and the other is to provide a quick update about Springs countywide benefit petition. Charter schools do not grow reserves to the same level as districts, nor do we have the same access to alternative funding sources such as public bonds and certain facility funds. In addition, because the state pays the money for ADA growth in arrears, we often need to take out bridge loans that costs us thousands of dollars in interest and fees - if we can even qualify for these revenue anticipation notes. For my second item, I wanted to thank the OCDE staff for working with us through the process of submitting our countywide charter petition. Through this process, it became clear that both the county and Springs would benefit from delaying our charter petition submission until this July, so we can have the public hearing and the vote in the fall. I look forward to bringing the rest of our team here at that time. Thank you for supporting equity for the students of Orange County.

BARKE: Thank you. Following Senator Gloria Romero will be Linda Cone.

GLORIA: Good evening. You've changed the format. This is nice to be here. At any rate, I'm former Senator Gloria Romero and I wanted to speak generally in support of the charter funding resolution. It's very innovative, very creative. I know Dr. Williams and I over the years have had conversations about just as what was presented before, all the challenges, especially for a mom and pop, a new startup. I did email you with some specific recommendations as you draft rules and regulations, but generally there are so many costs ahead of time: facilities, staffing, lawyers

in order to get things implemented, and we oftentimes have to rely on the reimbursable, which doesn't come until months later. I do want to just make some quick recommendations that hopefully these will be prioritized to the small brand new startup, those charters that are operating in Orange County so that you don't supplant funding to go to other schools as well.

I really think you should reward good operators, good people who have not been sued on the basis of race or sex discrimination. So that issue of looking at who are the good operators that should get this money because it's not an unlimited source of funding, and also of course, to looking at all of these factors. As you go forward, if it's supported tonight, I look forward to participating with you and helping in whatever way possible to help draft. I know you've got a long program but thank you so much and I hope you pass this this evening. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. Following Linda Cone is Lori Kaylor.

LINDA: Good evening. At our April meeting, we heard some very painful messages from several speakers from the Jewish community. Many of them were students, some were parents and community members. As I listened, I thought, what could I do? What could I say? I have only one explanation for the outrage I feel when I see antisemitism, particularly in my country. Born in 1942, I saw the Holocaust as a current event. I saw gut wrenching photos of the horror that had recently taken place and as a child, I wondered how this could happen in a civilized world? Life experiences like visiting Auschwitz, the Anne Frank Home, Warsaw Ghetto, have not dimmed this outrage. Never could I imagine the reemergence of antisemitism at this level in my lifetime. Whatever happened to "We will never forget." As you know, I've regularly attended these meetings for several years now, actually since 2013. I know this Board has very limited authority in what it can do. However, you've allowed the Jewish community a platform and you've given me that same platform to express my support for that community. God bless you and God help us all.

BARKE: Thank you. After Lori Kaylor will be Alicia Walker.

LORI: I am also responding to last month's very sad testimonies from students and parents of persecution in this country. My grandfather was a paratrooper in World War II. He rescued walking skeletons from the concentration camps. He was horrified to see bodies thrown into a ditch like they were trash. He came back just horrified about what human beings can do to humanity. He later became a pastor. He always loved the Jewish people and our whole family also loved the Jewish people. In fact, my sister married a Jewish man. This brother-in-law had a lot of questions, and he threw them at my grandfather, thinking he could stump him. Questions on the Bible. My grandpa was able to answer every single one, and my brother-in-law came to understand that Jesus Christ was his Messiah. But whatever your religious background or vent, whatever your color or creed, we are all human beings, and we deserve respect and love for one another. Thank you so much.

BARKE: Thank you. Following Alisha Walker will be Hannah Cho.

ALISHA: Good evening. I'm Alisha Walker, Board President of Sycamore Creek Community Charter School, and proud mom to three students that currently attend. I just wanted to speak on

agenda item number 21. Sarah couldn't be here today, so in her place, I'm here tonight to show our strong support of this resolution for the Orange County Board of Education special fund. There are numerous challenges to starting and operating a charter school in Orange County, specifically the high real estate costs. Other people tonight have spoken about the challenges as well, and these burdens are so difficult, so your proposal to develop a special fund is of paramount importance and truly innovative. We thank you for that. We strongly support this initiative and ask the Board to adopt this resolution. I could share a story, but I think we're almost out of time, but briefly, our fourth graders that you saw up here tonight, last week gave presentations and many of them wrote original stories about an animal of their choosing. One of them was a penguin that ice skated, and it was fabulous. However, they share a classroom with fifth grade and the stories ran over a little bit, and our fifth graders had to come in to get their backpacks and it's just one of the challenges of being shared space that we've overcome. But we really applaud you for this resolution to hopefully make it easier in the future for our school or other charter schools. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. After Hannah Cho is Kevin Littlefield.

HANNAH: Okay. Good evening, President Shaw, esteemed members of the Board, and guests. My name is Hannah Cho and I'm a junior at Northwood High School in Irvine. I'm here today with a fellow high school student from Orange County, Tianna Zhang. My civic engagement journey began during the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2020 to 2021 school year when I organized Wings of Hope, a schoolwide competition that engaged students in crafting thousands of origami butterflies with gratitude messages on them to recognize local healthcare workers. I stand before you all today to ask that the Orange County Department of Education appoint a student board member position.

This past November, I was selected by the California State Board of Education as one of six students to be considered for the role of State Student Board Member to represent California's 6.2 million students during the 2024-25 term. During the voting process at the conference, I engaged with students statewide. I realized students have so many diverse perspectives and actions they want to implement in their respective areas, but they often lack the platform and support to call for change. Here in Orange County, we have an upwards number of 204,000 students and we believe that it is imperative to give them a voice in our community. That is why I ask the Orange County Department of Education to implement a student board member position. How much more time do I have? I have an anecdote, more like a quote. Okay. I'll just keep going and I'll stop when the thing goes off. While sharing a conversation with Shasta County Student Board Member, Jackson Richards, he brought up the point that. . . okay. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. After Kevin Littlefield will be Tianna Zhang.

KEVIN: Great meeting. This has been wonderful. Kevin Littlefield from Magnolia Science Academy in Santa Ana. I'm one of the teachers there and I want to thank the Board for the value you place on education - it's inspirational - and for committing your lives to education. Thank you for caring for the students of Orange County. Particularly, I'm here because I want to thank you for taking a long, long look at Magnolia Science Academy's vision and especially for taking

a long look in consideration at our data. Thank you for approving our petition to expand the wonderful work that Magnolia Science Academy has been doing as we seek to start a new school in Orange County. We will not let you down. Thank you very much.

BARKE: Thank you. After Tianna is Judy Y.

HENDRICK: Excuse me. You can.

BARKE: Yeah, right there.

HENDRICK: Thank you. Okay.

TIANA: Good afternoon, members of the Board. My name is Tiana Zhang and I'm a student from Valencia High School. So what I have prepared for you all today is a resolution that I've drafted, including AB 417. As you may or may not know, AB 417 was a law passed just last fall. So when this was passed, it promptly amended Education Code 1000, which states that on the presentation of a student petition with over 500 signatures, the Board must add it as an item within 60 days. If it's not added as an item, then the creation of a student board member position is automatically to be created. So what I have for you all today prepared in front of you, is one copy of the official Orange County Student Petition for Student Board Member. This includes over 28 districts across Orange County, all of which have high schools and all of which are the only districts within Orange County with a high school. It also includes over 500 signatures from over 65 high schools. So as you can tell, there's also a bunch of student comments on it addressing the need for student voice and how important it is to over 500 students and counting throughout Orange County. I look forward to speaking with this more in June, and I hope that you take a good long look at it because it means a lot to me along with all of my peers. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. After Judy Y is Stephaney Avital.

JUDY: Good evening. I'm among the many Orange County community parents who are here tonight to express my concern about antisemitism in our public elementary and high schools. I'm particularly concerned about the Students for Justice in Palestine Club at Tesoro High School. According to the NGO Monitor, SJP in different forms is the campus organization most directly responsible for creating a hostile campus environment, saturated with anti-Israel propaganda agendas and events, BDS initiatives and intimidation. In October, in the aftermath of the brutal Hamas attack, SJP published a statement referring to the violence as a historic win for the Palestinian resistance. The SJP Club at Tesoro lists their mission as campus awareness, elevate student movement, higher political engagement, fight for Palestinian liberation, and a ceasefire. The principal's response to my complaints were, or concerns about this mission, is that the club has no affiliation with SJP. They don't believe they've done anything wrong in spite of having a poster which says, "From the River to the Sea, Palestine will be free," which is a call for genocide. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. Following Stephaney is Aaron Faygehov.

STEPHANEY: Hi, my name is Stephaney Avital. Thank you for letting me speak today. I was here last month to tell you a story about my daughter when she was in the sixth grade. She had four friends who thought it was funny throughout the school year to do "Heil Hitler" to her and do other anti-Semitic jokes to her. But I think that we need to, instead of just telling our stories, we need to be heard. Yes, and tell our stories. There's got to be solutions. Another story I have is my cousin was kidnapped into Gaza and his wife was killed by a grenade explosion in one of the bomb shelters. What do these two stories have in common? Ignorance and hate. So we wait for my cousin to come home, but in the meantime, I decided I was going to do something about it and get active, and I realized that the solution to ignorance and hate is education and communication.

We have right here in Orange County, the Holocaust Education Center of Orange County that was recently opened. I gave each of you a flyer brochure. It's a very unique Holocaust center because it's based upon the art of a Holocaust survivor, Mel Mermelstein from Huntington Beach. He passed away two years ago. They were looking for a home for all his pieces he had done and lo and behold, they found one at the Newport Beach Jewish Center for Jewish Life. My goal would be to get every one of these flyers in the high schools and junior highs so that teachers and even teachers themselves can go and be educated. We have a high school that has made all of his faculty go through the museum itself, so I would encourage people to ask about it, inquire about it. I'm happy to talk about it. Thank you very much.

BARKE: Thank you. Following Aaron, we have Mike Tardif.

AARON: Good evening members of Board. My name is Aaron and I have a daughter who goes to Irvine and after the event of October 7th, within a week all her friends felt as if they turned on her. She suffered multiple assaults online and, on the campus, and ended up having PTSD symptoms until we had to pull her out of the school and she insisted on going to a different school. I understand that you heard multiple stories of that nature last time and today, and I'm here to encourage you to use your power to direct down to the schools and the staff that there is no place for political discourse in our schools. Regardless of whose opinion and how does one feel, whether it's teachers or faculty, our students are not feeling safe. When we went to the schools, we were told that it's free speech, but I would like everybody to understand that hateful speech is not free speech and please discourage it and use your power. Thank you very much.

BARKE: Thank you. Following Mike is Alana Rosenblatt.

MIKE: Good evening, Board President Shaw, go GW Revs, Board Members and department staff. My name is Mike Tardif. I'm a longtime resident of Orange County. I'm here to address you on agenda item 21, the proposed loan program. I'm a board member of Orange County Explorer Academy Charter Schools. Our charter organization is blessed to have dedicated and hardworking founders, board members, executive director, staff and involved parents. I know firsthand the startup expense and cashflow difficulty of getting a charter school established when properly structured and regulated according to guidelines already established in California law and previous precedent practice and resolutions. This proposed charter school bridge loan program will be of great benefit to ease financial burden of establishing quality Orange County

charter schools. I fully support your efforts to establish this charter school special fund loan program. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. Following Alana is Lori Suvalle.

LORI: I believe Alana left.

BARKE: Oh, okay. Are you Lori?

LORI: Yes.

BARKE: Okay, great.

LORI: Thank you so much for letting me speak. I did speak last month. I told the story of my son Joe, who was physically assaulted at Woodbridge High School and then two days later the young man who assaulted him at school stalked him and threatened him with a gun; also told him that he was going to murder him, take him to the desert, come back and kill his whole Jew family, and he does know where we live. He was expelled from the school immediately. He was incarcerated. My son did leave the state and is finishing high school elsewhere. Something I did not mention last month, in middle school my son was choked in class in front of the class in front of the teacher and told all Jews should burn. That student was supposed to be removed from the class and apologize to the class, which never happened.

That was at South Lake Middle School - a terrible school to be honest with a very bad reputation. But I agree that telling our stories is important. Just last week at my daughter's middle school, some kids in math class were graphing out points on a graph so that other kids in the class could figure out what shapes those formulas led to, and three of the kids in the class made swastikas. So for Jewish kids, and this is an ongoing thing, and I think teachers need to be better trained and monitored so that no child of any ethnic background feels alienated, or criminalized, or threatened in class and especially not supported by faculty and staff.

BARKE: Thank you.

LORI: Thank you for letting me speak.

BARKE: Next up is Heidi Landgraph and following her is Galena Bukh. Is Heidi here?

HEIDI: Right here.

BARKE: Okay, and next up is Galena.

HEIDI: I'm here almost every month. I mean yeah. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen of the Board, for allowing me to speak today. I especially want to extend my thanks to Dr. Ken Williams for showing support for our homeschool community by joining our community app consisting of teachers and staff at Suncoast Prep Academy. Happy to report our charter continues to grow and thrive with retention of 86% of our currently enrolled students returning next year.

In addition, my students' short film of Heidi is almost complete, entrepreneur students had a successful bakery blitz on Balboa Island where they debuted their businesses. We are putting together a student-led school-wide yearbook, and our graduation celebration in June is full with more families wanting to participate. Things are going really well. It's because of all of you wonderful board members that the residents of Orange County have the freedom to choose their sons' and daughters' education.

Whether that's charters, public, private or homeschool. Recently the California Senate introduced Bill 907, which if passed, would allow for the packing of this very Board. I know you're aware the state to mandate the budget and expenses for education and for the OC Board of Education election to be moved with a statewide general election in November. If this bill is voted on and passed, then our very freedom to choose what our own children's educational future holds is at stake. On behalf of our staff and families from Suncoast Prep, we are strongly opposed to this Bill. We just want to let you know we're fighting for this. Thank you for all you do. Truly appreciate every one of you.

BARKE: Thank you. Galina? After Galina is Windi.

GALINA: Hello. I wanted to say thank you to Dr. Williams and Ms. Barke. Thank you so much for taking the time out of your already very busy schedule to meet with us last week to hear from my daughter Rebecca Simakoski, a student at OCSA, and a JC Club President. Also Mr. Valdes and again, Dr. Williams, thank you for taking the time to meet with OCSA administrators on our and our kids' behalf. As you've heard, antisemitism at OCSA has gotten much worse since October 7th, despite more current efforts to assist Jewish students by Assistant Principal, Abbe Levine, the procedures of consequences for the students, accountability of teachers, appropriate curriculum in the classrooms, and adequate reactions of administration to antisemitic events on campus, still need a lot of work. Teachers like Lana Swalha, who teaches ninth graders a biased one-sided version of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and wear (inaudible) around the school, which makes Jewish kids feel very unsafe due to its current symbolism.

Rachel Trask, who openly supports any anti-Israel movements or propaganda on campus and displays Palestinian flag in her classroom, and Carl Peterson who teaches Journalism Plus, and so no issues in last month's articles, but article published in the school's newspaper *Evolution* was false, historically inaccurate information and anti-Israel rhetoric for which we are yet to see a retraction with corrected and historical facts. These teachers should be reprimanded, educated and possibly removed from their positions after a number of misdoings that were reported to the administration over the years. Your assistance and support to make OCSA a better, more inclusive and safe school are greatly appreciated and valued. Thank you so much.

BARKE: Thank you. After Windi is Fabiola.

WINDI: Hi, I'm Windi Eklund from Suncoast Prep. We have experienced significant enrollment growth leading to increased revenues in a path towards fiscal stability. We are committed to prudent financial management and remain confident in our ability to emerge stronger each year. When our team stepped in to save Suncoast in 2022-23, the school was in declining enrollment, and we didn't have students enrolled wishing to attend a learning center.

We currently have an enrollment of about 1100 students over five counties and our Orange County students are looking forward to our learning center opening in 2024-25. Due to COVID-19 and yearly changes in the school population, assessment results represent different groups of students. Longtime legislative provisions allow parents to opt out of state testing. We now have a conflict with newer legislation penalizing charter schools if parents exercise their right. Due to this conflict we collect data on reasons for opt-outs to help alleviate parent concerns and encourage their participation.

This has helped us address family concerns, successfully doubling our past participation rates. Now that a higher percent of the school population plans to return next year, we will have data that represents growth in the same student population. We support the passage of AB 2254 by Rubio, which will continue to allow charter schools to use verified assessment tools to track student progress. While the California State dashboard is valuable for identifying areas of improvement, it's limited by its reliance on a once-a-year test, lacking a true growth metric. It's crucial for charter schools to have flexibility to use alternative assessments to demonstrate academic success over time to support charter renewal. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. After Fabiola is Cyndie Borcaman?

FABIOLA: Hi, my name is Fabiola Saucedo and I just came to thank you all for giving us the opportunity to choose Suncoast. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. After Cyndie is our final speaker, Karen Jaffe.

CYNDIE: Good evening, Board. I'd like to address the issues with Superintendent Miramontes. Miramontes, despite his temporary status as Deputy Superintendent, has made substantial changes to decimate the ACCESS program. ACCESS is an alternative education program. Miramontes has little to no understanding of what alternative education is. His plan is to have big hubs taking the alternative out of ACCESS. Recently Miramontes announced the closing of El Modena Outreach Program, which is at the Senior Citizen Center in El Modena, Boys and Girls Club in Tustin, Tustin Main, Skyview, Mary's Academy for Pregnant Girls. This is over 200 to 300 students. Many of these students cannot leave their neighborhoods due to gang affiliation. It's not safe. There's discussion to continue closing other sites as well. Miramontes has filled administration positions with his cronies. I've attempted to find out the salary of consultant, Fred Navarro, with no success. He's a crony of Miramontes and he was fired from Newport Mesa as a Superintendent. The teachers and staff have continued to contact me because they are very worried about retribution from Miramontes, and fear for their jobs. Lori Martinez, teacher president, is in alignment with Miramontes and is not a representative to the teachers. God save the kids of ACCESS. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. Karen Jaffe.

KAREN: Hi. I didn't make any prepared remarks. I've had a long week here at work, but I wanted to really reach out to Dr. Williams and Dr. Barke, Ms. Barke, and Trustee Valdes for their work on behalf of all of the students at OCSA. I personally don't have a child at OCSA. What's ripping me apart is what I see on our college campuses and what I see from our students

today, and what they're hearing and the hate that they're spouting. It is beyond reprehensible and we have to make a change in the curriculum and in the students and what they're exposed to in their schools and in their school programs and by their teachers. It is heartwarming and really welcoming that we have people from the broader community that support us. It has taken a toll on all of us and it has made our lives very difficult. I really want to say thank you for all of the time that you've put in. My family was part of the Holocaust. My aunt, great aunt's blood was drained because she had a rare blood type. I cannot begin to tell you the horrors that all of this brings back and I really want to thank you all from the bottom of my heart and the hearts of my community for taking the time to listen to us and taking the opportunity to go and try and get to the bottom of what's going on and I'm here to help. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. Okay, that wraps up our public comments.

SPARKS: Okay, thank you. Okay, moving on to consent calendar. I would actually like to pull two items from the consent calendar, item number 10 and number 12, if that's possible.

WILLIAMS: And I'll second that with the removal of item 5.

SPARKS: Oh, okay.

WILLIAMS: So three items.

SPARKS: So three items. We'll pull number 5, 10, and 12.

SHAW: President Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

SHAW: If I may, I would like to be recorded as an abstention on item 13 when we get to voting.

SPARKS: Okay - we were gonna - you want to pull that item too then because of that? Because we were going to approve the rest of the. . .

SHAW: I don't think it's necessary, but I think I just want to be recorded as an abstention please.

SPARKS: Okay.

SHAW: In the notes, or the minutes.

SPARKS: Okay, perfect. So we can move on with the items on the consent calendar that are still remaining, which are 6, 7, 8, 9, 11 and 13. Do I have a motion to approve?

BARKE: So moved.

VALDES: Second.

SPARKS: All in favor? Roll call.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw.

SHAW: Aye.

SPARKS: Except for 13. Yes. Okay. All right, so that - thank you. That moves us - let's start with item number 5, which is pulled by Dr. Williams.

WILLIAMS: Yes. So I'm pulling item number 5 just because I think it's significant and special enough that it needs to be voted upon and spoken upon. Also, just, I think there's a typo, maybe Darou you can help me on the resolution, the last "Whereas" it says on May 30th, I think that should be 27th, so that would be corrected when we make the motion and approve this. I do just want to make a couple comments. This Board has been supportive of this resolution for, Renee age me, how many years now have we done this? 20? A long time.

HENDRICK: 20, yeah.

WILLIAMS: Yeah. It's been a long time and it was started way back when we met Dr., or Mr. Hammett, Mayor Hammett from Costa Mesa who came with the Freedom Committee and we gave recognition to all our veterans and to all the active members of the military from World War II and Pearl Harbor that came to those meetings, and just like you saw today where we had our, Sunburst Academy came, all those young men and women. For some of you who may not know what Sunburst Academy is, but it's an opportunity for kids who have gotten themselves into trouble, who've gotten themselves into issues with the law, arrested, incarcerated, and they have, when they get in front of a judge, a couple options: go to jail and juvenile court school, or go to a program that will give you opportunities that you never have before.

So these kids from the Sunburst who come here, I shed a tear each and every single time as we see kids that would normally not have opportunities, but graduate from school. They have attack

team sergeants, master sergeants, and our kids that go there have our education program and they graduate with a high school diploma and a lot of them have gone on to Ivy League schools. They're absolute incredible the stories that they give. Each one of those kids who came here can give a story that would shed a tear, and this is one of our charter schools that we've had. So they kind of run together because it's a celebration of what makes United States the greatest country in the world. Are we perfect? No. But do we stand up for liberties and freedoms? Do we stand up for the issues that Karen and Galena, you shared with me when we went out with Mari, the antisemitism, the hatred. That's not America and my heart is destroyed when I see what's happened in America. So we so appreciate you coming here, sharing your stories, and that's what's going to change hearts and minds. So thank you for coming and thank you for this Board. I hope and pray that we all of course vote for this because this means so much. This celebrates America and what we really stand for. So I'll make the motion that we adopt this.

BARKE: I'll second it.

SPARKS: Roll call.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw.

SHAW: Aye.

SPARKS: Okay. Passes five to zero, and that moves us to the pulled item number 10, which I pulled. I am in support of this, supporting the resigning board member from the Cypress School District and offering a certificate of merit and a letter of commendation. I just would like to discuss with my board members that we kind of issue this for all of our board members of the local districts that end up leaving for one reason or another, and I think we should acknowledge their service and I don't know if we do that because I don't recall seeing this in a consistent way, so I wanted to see what you guys thought.

BARKE: Yeah, I'm supportive.

WILLIAMS: So we do have some very nice officious looking certificates that I think would be a little bit better than the ones that we would typically give for a student graduating. So, yeah.

SPARKS: And this would be for board members who've served and that we acknowledge that service for our districts when they move off the Board for whatever reason.

WILLIAMS: Excellent idea.

SPARKS: Do we take that for a vote then? Do I have a motion?

BARKE: I'll make a motion to vote to issue a certificate to board members who resign for one reason or another.

SPARKS: Or they serve but then they resign, or they're off for one reason or another, but I think we acknowledge the service.

BARKE: Okay. Yeah.

WILLIAMS: So, parliamentary question.

SPARKS: Yes.

WILLIAMS: Are we voting on number 10 or is this a separate item that's not on the agenda?

SPARKS: Well, this is a question I'm not sure about, but I wanted to discuss it and pull item number 10 for discussion.

WILLIAMS: Renee and I are looking at each other.

HENDRICK: So, normally we actually do recognize them with certificates and also a letter goes out, and that has been our normal practice, and so when November comes up and there's an election, whoever terms out, and so we do try to keep on top of that so that is a pretty normal process for us.

SPARKS: I just don't remember seeing it as an item.

HENDRICK: Yeah, no, it's been on there. It could be usually grouped with two or three, so maybe it's just harder to see. This one I think is because there's only one. Normally there's like three or four together based on the timing, but we could definitely make sure we double-check that piece and so a staff we say yes, we'll make sure that you have those in the future and that way you could just vote on the one item, if that makes sense.

SPARKS: Yeah. Okay.

WILLIAMS: I totally agree with you, Dr. Sparks, that I think this is appropriate. Very good.

SPARKS: It's important because these are volunteer positions as we know, to serve our community, and I think even the district school boards go through a lot as well and have a lot of important decisions to make for their local school district. So I'd like to make sure that we're acknowledging that service.

WILLIAMS: So I'll make the motion then to actually approve Item number 10, if that's okay with you.

BARKE: I'll second it.

WILLIAMS: Okay.

SPARKS: Roll call.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke.

BARKE: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Aye.

SPARKS: Okay. Passes five to zero. Thank you. And then that moves to item 12 that I pulled on the annual updated Orange County Department of Ed Investment Policy, and I just had a question related to, on page 43 in our packet at the very top there's a line saying, on the issuance of debt, says, I'm gonna get my glasses. It says, "The Department shall not issue debt for the sole purpose of generating funds for investment." Then the next line says, "The Department shall limit the issuance of debt for the purposes of meeting short-term cashflow needs to fund capital projects," and I'm just wondering how that's operationalized exactly.

HENDRICK: I'm going to call Dean up to the podium team since he's our investment person.

SPARKS: Perfect.

DEAN: Hello.

SPARKS: Hi.

DEAN: Okay, so there is no changes to policy, but specifically it's good for you to read, to see this every year. That way you see the point now, you kind of point it out and kind of get clarity on it. I think what I would lead there is that we don't have - normally I think it is county office and hardship - we don't have that debt ability to issue that debt like a normal school district was. Now in the case of facilities like for the Esplanade project, that was a case where you did have different parameters to do it, but we have borrowing in the school districts, they'll have options obviously in the facilities area, but they also have the loans from the county treasurer that they have resources and so we don't anticipate, obviously with your solid, County Office of Ed is one of the most solid institutions in the county, right? So there is no need for debt. I think the only debt that you have is on the Esplanade project, which is neighboring here, which is at a 3% loan. I think you only have seven years left on that piece. So there is no reason to issue debt. The policies tend to be more uniform, so this has come through with our treasurer. Usually the treasurer is the one that will, when they make edits to their general policy, we'll kind of edit the policy so it's maybe broader in scope, which would be also applicable to school districts.

When you're talking about the investments specifically, they're all directed by code and they're all done by the treasurer, so we don't have those, but if there was options like on page, the previous page 41, the second page lay or something like that, if there is options that you have in the policy that you could invest those funds, but we haven't done that and if there were going to be any changes to the policy, normally wouldn't see it necessarily waiting for this annual time to come bring to you. We'd probably bring it to you right away if there was some need and be very direct about this is the change we're going to make, but most often when you see this policy, there's no changes. The last time we made significant changes was because of the, we let the treasurer review it and we're kind of working with them to make sure all the compliance were there.

SPARKS: And the reason I'm curious about how that particular line, "the Department shall limit the issuance of debt" and wondering how that's operationalized, because it could be the way that's operationalized, if there's a limit or a cap to it that might impact another item that we have on the agenda today regarding facility.

DEAN: Yeah, I don't see that as a thing. I could review this clause and find out for some reason, that we can always bring it back to you to realign policy for some reason.

SPARKS: I don't mind approving it, but I want to know that it's not, in improving it, we're not impeding progress in another area.

DEAN: Right.

HENDRICK: Maybe just to clarify, there are very specific options in the Education Code that allow you to do debt, and so what we're saying is we won't do anything besides what's allowed in

Education Code. It's very clear in the Code when you can and cannot loan funds. So it's very prescriptive, very tight in there, so we couldn't go beyond that, I guess is the thing.

SPARKS: Okay.

HENDRICK: Does that make sense Dean?

DEAN: Yes.

SPARKS: Okay. Do my board members have any additional comments or questions related to that?

BARKE: No, I think it was a very good question though.

SPARKS: Okay. Okay. I think I got my clarification on that and we can move forward. Thank you so much.

WILLIAMS: I just want to make the motion to adopt this policy.

BARKE: I'll second.

SPARKS: Okay. Roll call.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

SPARKS: Okay. Item passes five to zero. That moves us on to charter schools. Renee, do we have charter submissions?

WILLIAMS: Do we have item number 13? I can't recall.

SPARKS: No, we went ahead and approved that, and he just abstained.

WILLIAMS: So we didn't pull it.

SPARKS: Yeah.

WILLIAMS: Got it. Okay.

HENDRICK: Yes, we do have one charter submission, which was in Ednovate. I cannot say that word today. So it's submitted and the public hearing will be on June 5th with Board action on July 3rd. Then as you're aware, Tustin International Charter School appeal was withdrawn. And then Orange Springs Charter shared that they would delay theirs until the fall, and then the Orange County Classical has withdrawn their material revision at this time.

SPARKS: Okay, thank you. At this point I will call Aracely Chastain to the podium to facilitate the charter school's public hearing for the Magnolia Science Academy.

CHASTAIN: Good evening, President Shaw and Vice President Sparks and Trustees. Today the Board will hold a public hearing to grant or deny the Magnolia Science Academy Orange County countywide petition that was submitted on January 31st. The petition proposes a classroom-based TK through high school program for an initial charter term from 2024 through 2029. The Magnolia Public Schools Network currently operates one state authorized charter school in Orange County, one in San Diego and eight in Los Angeles County. The charter school has notified four districts of their intent to open school facilities; that is Irvine Unified, Placentia Unified, I'm sorry, Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified, Orange Unified and Saddleback Valley Unified. The Board held a public hearing on March 6 to consider the level of support for the charter school and the petition has been reviewed according to Education Code as legally required, and you've been provided the Orange County Department of Education staff report, which was published on April 16th that summarizes findings from that review and offers recommendations for consideration by the Board based on information gathered throughout the review process, including a clarification meeting that was held with the petitioners on March 11th.

CHASTAIN: Staff recommends approval of the Magnolia Science Academy Orange County Charter petition. This experienced charter operator will use the 2024-25 academic year as a planning year and begin serving students in 2025-26. Prior to Board discussion, Magnolia Science Academy Orange County representatives will have equal time and opportunity, or ten minutes, whichever is longer, to present evidence and testimony responsive to the staff recommendations and findings published on April 16th. I now call representatives from Magnolia Science Academy Orange County to the podium.

SPARKS: Thank you.

ALFREDO: Good evening, Board President Shaw, distinguished board members, OCDE staff. My name is Alfredo Rubalcava, Chief Executive Officer and Superintendent of Magnolia Public Schools. I first want to thank the OCDE staff because throughout the process their cooperation, communication, and collaboration, and attentive to detail, made this process very easy and we do look forward to working with them in the future to continue serving the great students and families of Orange County. Secondly, I just want to talk about a little update of things that have happened since we last were here. There was validation and affirmation of the great work that Magnolia has done over the past 20 years. On March 21st, 2024, the California Charter School Association did name Magnolia a Hart Equity and Innovation Award winner for the Charter School of the Year. We are extremely proud of that ward. In addition, the US Department of Education also awarded Magnolia Public Schools \$11.3 million for us to expand and replicate our schools, not only in LA, San Diego, but Orange County. That's a testament to the work of all the people that represent Magnolia. So, big applause. With that, we do know the work will be very difficult ahead of us, but since we've been in this space for over 20 years, especially serving under invested communities, we are very positive that through a collaborative with the OCDE staff, the Orange County Board of Education, we're going to continue doing transformative work. So we ask for your yes vote to continue this mission and vision of Magnolia Public Schools. With that, I'm going to turn it over to my colleague, Dr. Rowell.

MARIA: Thank you. Good evening. Good evening distinguished board members. I wanted to present in front of you a little Magnolia packet to address some of Mr. Valdes' questions from when we previously met. It's entitled "Push Past Your Limits at Magnolia." I invite you to turn to page two and I wanted to share that our school site, we have a total of 31 families that are directly from Santa Ana. The black dot that you see is our campus and that has the highest concentration of around 60 families that encompass our mobile homes on both sides and behind us. Around 81.5% are socioeconomically disadvantaged; 76.5% qualify for free reduced lunches; 9.5% are Title III or immigrant status recipients; and 83.4% represent our unduplicated that house our English language learners, homeless and foster youth, as well as our SED students. Please turn to page 14 and check out all of the social life in action where our scholars socialize, engage and succeed.

TK-12 students participate in numerous amounts of sports, drones, club robotics, trips to the Pali Institute in Big Bear, and our seniors will have a culminating Washington DC trip as they receive Congressional award medals. On page 22, this showcases our valuable partners from UCI where many of our students participate in research, start well that support our mental health and social-emotional learning of our TK through second graders: PBS, SoCal Mix Academy, Think Together, our afterschool program, and now, our Tiger Woods Foundation. Finally, I leave you with a few QR codes to peruse at your leisure that showcases all of the media coverages. We have been recognized from our food banks back in the pandemic to an *LA Times* article where we collaborated with the OC Soccer Club and launched virtual soccer clinics. Also, we had the first ever Mexicana-born woman in space, Astronaut Katia Echazarreta, who inspired our scholars with her dynamic story in her journey into space. We also have First 5 and PBS SoCal where they prepared our kindergartners as they enter our campus. Our most recent media coverage was from our robotics and parenting classes that were featured in ABC News, Telemundo and the like. Again, we greatly thank you for this opportunity and we look forward to

your voting and future collaborations. Once a Magnolian, always a Magnolian. Thank you for your time.

SPARKS: Thank you. The hearing is now open for public comments. Trustee Barke, please call for the first speaker.

BARKE: All right, the first speaker is Lourdes Mejia, followed by Gael Mejia.

LOURDES (VIA SPANISH TO ENGLISH TRANSLATOR): Hello. Good afternoon. Thank you for giving us the opportunity and considering our school and being able to expand one more. I am a volunteer, a mom volunteer, and I invite you all to come and visit our campus and see all the good things that we are achieving together. As well as all the achievements of our students, that our students have obtained, thanks to their hard work and above all, the dedication of the teachers and directors, because without them this will not be possible. Thank you.

BARKE: Next up after Gael is Gokhan Serce.

GAEL: Hi, my name is Gael Mejia and I'm from Magnolia Science Academy Santa Ana. I just wanted to be thankful for this school that gave me so many opportunities of doing different stuff. Let's say since the beginning, since I entered the school, I was scared and I admitted I started crying because I was scared. But then I had some awesome staff teachers that were there for me and they asked me a bunch of questions and then I felt better about it. So now, ever since, I've not seen everybody as a teacher, but as a family member. And thanks to my awesome principals, staff teachers, drama teachers and club teachers. We have so many sports like soccer, basketball, and many other things. And I just wanted to be thankful for all of these awesome opportunities that Magnolia has given me. And yeah, thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. And then the last speaker of the night will be Javier Orduno.

GOKHAN: Okay, I'm just trying to raise the microphone. Sorry about that. Good evening, President Shaw, members of the Board, staff and attendees. My name is Gokhan Serce. I'm the Regional Director for Magnolia Public Schools. On behalf of Magnolia Public Schools, I want to extend our heartfelt thanks to Orange County Department of Education Charter Office because they were so collaborative and they provided valuable feedback to make sure that our charter petition submission process is very smooth. We value OCDE's commitment to high standards, ensuring that we deliver an outstanding educational experience for Orange County students. We are deeply appreciative of your dedication to educational excellence and your efforts to nurture innovative learning environments within our community. At this crucial juncture, I respectfully request the Board support, they approve the petition for Magnolia Science Academy, Orange County. Granting your approval will allow us to extend our successful educational program to a broader student base, significantly enriching the academic experiences of underserved students and fostering a stronger community with enhanced opportunities. Thank you and have a good evening.

BARKE: Thank you.

JAVIER: Good evening, President Shaw, trustees, and Vice President Sparks. I'm the Orange County local representative for the California Charter School Association. CCSA is a membership and professional organization serving our member schools and advocating for fair share policies for over 1,200 public schools in California. Our mission is to meet the needs of parents, educators, and communities for excellent public school options by supporting and advocating for high quality nonprofit charter schools and sharing their success throughout California public schools. I represent the association who recommended the approval for the new countywide charter petition for Magnolia Science Academy Orange County as an Orange County Board of Education authorized charter schools. Magnolia Science Academy is a member in good standing of our association and in our opinion, it meets the legal standard for a new countywide charter petition on the California Education Code 467605. CCSA has worked with the leadership at Magnolia and knows they are providing programs for our students throughout the community that families want, and approval of his new petition would be to allow the school to ensure that continued and expanded services are available to students under their care.

CCSA supports this school and respectfully urges you to approve this petition. Magnolia Public Schools was being awarded by the CCSA Hart Vision Equity and Innovation Award during CCSA conference on March 2024. This a testament to the outstanding dedication and commitment to serving students in families in vulnerable communities over the past 20 years. Furthermore, we celebrate Magnolia's remarkable achievement in receiving a highly coveted and competitive multi-million-dollar grant from the US Department of Education. We have reviewed the Orange County Department of Education staff report for Magnolia Science Academy Orange County and do not believe that staff report provides any legal barriers to the Board approving this petition. For this reason, we encourage you to approve the petition and allow Magnolia to serve the communities; more communities that want options for high quality education in Orange County. Thank you very much.

BARKE: Thank you.

CHASTAIN: This concludes the public hearing. The Board has three options for action regarding countywide charter school petition. Option one, approve the charter school petition. Option two, approve the petition with conditions. This action would result in approval of the charter and require the execution of an agreement to address issues identified by the Board. Option three, deny the charter school petition. Vice President Sparks, I now close the public hearing and return the meeting to you.

SPARKS: Thank you, Aracely. Okay, this brings us to Board questions. I will start to my left, Trustee Barke.

BARKE: I have no questions. I'm very excited that they want to be a countywide charter and what it will bring to Orange County. So I'm very excited and look forward to a positive vote.

SPARKS: All right, I'll go down the line to Trustee Dr. Williams

WILLIAMS: And I share the same sentiments. No questions from me.

SPARKS: Okay. I will then move. I'll then move to Trustee Valdes.

VALDES: Could I ask Maria Rowell to come back to the podium? So Dr. Rowell, first of all, thank you for answering my questions and really giving me what looks like a 12-page packet, most on statistics that I was asking about.

SPARKS: A beautiful 12-page packet.

VALDES: Yeah. And it's very nicely done, but I think the voters, or excuse me, the people of Orange County need to hear some of this stuff. You kind of glossed over it, but I want to go over this again. So you have 58 staff members. Your student count is 508. You serve a Hispanic and Latino population of 81.3 at the school. The demographics are 76% of the students qualify for free reduced lunch, so that means these are low income, right? 3.5% homeless, 81.5% socioeconomically disadvantaged. Let's see here, 16.7% are special education. So I also see that 311 families come from Santa Ana and 87 families are outside of Santa Ana.

MARIA: Correct.

VALDES: All that's correct?

MARIA: Yes.

VALDES: So, and then on your statistics here, am I to read this correctly that *US News and World Report* said that you are the second best high school in Santa Ana? Is that, am I reading this right?

MARIA: The seventh.

VALDES: So, seventh in Orange County.

MARIA: Seventh in Orange County.

VALDES: So despite all those socioeconomic numbers, they list you as the seventh best high school in Orange County, the second best high school in Santa Ana, the 19th best high school in Southern California. And they are surveying the - thank you - the 49th best high school in California, the entire state, and they are surveying 18,000 high schools nationwide.

MARIA: Correct.

VALDES: Right?

MARIA: That's correct.

VALDES: All I can tell you is this is going to be a very easy vote for me.

BARKE: Thank you.

SPARKS: So thank you, Trustee Valdes. So I would like to make a motion.

BARKE: What about Mr. Shaw?

SPARKS: Oh, Mr. Shaw, I keep forgetting that you're on the video. President Shaw, what do you have to say before we make a motion?

SHAW: My imposing presence isn't distracting you? I wanted to just thank Trustee Valdes for putting all those terrific facts out and obviously Magnolia has a lot to be proud of and we're certainly proud of everything going on there. But I don't have any questions.

SPARKS: Fantastic.

BARKE: I'll make a motion.

SPARKS: So I'll just move on to make a motion to approve the countywide charter. Do I have a second?

BARKE: And I'll second it.

SPARKS: Roll call.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: An emphatic yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Ditto. An emphatic, yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Emphatic yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

SPARKS: Okay. Congratulations. Passes five to zero.

MARIA: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

SPARKS: Sure. Yeah. So, at this point we'll take a little break because we'll take a few pictures. I see some requests for pictures. So let's take a seven-minute break because we still have a lot more on our agenda for the meeting, so we'll take a seven-minute break for pictures, restroom and so forth.

[The Orange County Board of Education takes a break and returns.]

SPARKS: Okay. I am trying to get us out of here by. . . Well we're doing okay. I thought my goal was to get us out before nine and I think I'm going to make it. My goal was to get us out before nine. I think I'm going to make it.

BARKE: I had a bet on 8:45 today.

SPARKS: Did you? Okay. That's pretty good. I think we might make it. I think we might make it before that. I was aiming for nine, but I think I'm going to make it.

BARKE: Nine. Do that.

SPARKS: I, I'm really trying. Because there's a lot back in and I'm just like, I'm getting more bold. We already have been texting about it. We were kind of caught in a situation. Yeah, no, we're on the same page. Yeah. Okay. So I'll start rounding up people. We've got about three more minutes. Okay. No, you don't have enough meat on your bones. That's it.

SPARKS: Okay. board members, community, we're ready to start the meeting, again. Say your last goodbyes. We're herding. Herding the cattle, feeding the chickens. It's time to come back. Thank you all. Thanks so much. All right. At this point I'm going to call David Giordano to the podium to facilitate the public hearings on items 18 and 19.

GIORDANO: Well, thank you. Good evening, Vice President Sparks and members of the Board. I want to thank you for allowing the Superintendent to conduct this public hearing for public input on California School Employees Association proposal to the Superintendent for the 2024-25 school year. Thank you. Each of you should have a copy of CSEA's proposal. So at this time, I'd like to open the public hearing and ask Ms. Hendrick if we received any public comments regarding this item.

HENDRICK: No, we do not.

GIORDANO: Okay. So hearing no comments, this hearing is now closed.

SPARKS: Okay. Thank you. You can move on to the next item.

GIORDANO: Okay. Thank you again, and good evening. Thank you again for allowing the Superintendent to connect this hearing for public input on the Superintendent's proposal, the California School Employees Association for the 2024-25 school year. Again, you should have a copy of the Superintendent's proposal and at this time I'd like to ask Ms. Hendrick if we could have any public comments regarding this item.

HENDRICK: I have none.

GIORDANO: Okay. Again, hearing no public comments, the hearing is now closed.

SPARKS: Thank you very much. Appreciate it. Okay, we'll move on to Board recommendations. Item number 20 that I'm going to actually abstain or remove myself from this item discussion.

SHAW: I too would like to be recorded as an abstention.

WILLIAMS: I'd like to make a motion to approve item number 20.

BARKE: I'll second.

SPARKS: Roll call?

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Abstain.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Abstain.

SPARKS: Okay, I guess that's three ayes and two abstentions.

SHAW: Why don't I just mention, Lisa? I will be traveling to Washington DC coincidentally for my work. So the Department is not paying for my flights or hotel rooms or anything, but we're going to kill two birds with one stone while I'm back there and try to meet with some people regarding education and some of our issues. But I'll have the Realtor Association pay for me.

SPARKS: That's great. I'll just add over the weekend we were able to put a proposal together for, related to the efforts that I'm working with the lobby firm. So we'll be following up with various meetings related to that proposal that we just put in for an exciting project in South

County and also a project in Santa Ana area. So I'll, as I get more information next week, I will come back and report back what Tim and I are able to come up with in addition to what I just shared with you. Okay. We'll move on then to Item 21, word action on a resolution regarding the establishment of a charter school special fund and, Dr. Williams.

BARKE: We have two public comments.

SPARKS: Okay. So Dr. Williams and Valdes are leading this and we'll start with the public comment and then they can talk about it.

BARKE: Okay, Collin Felch, followed by Kapil Mathur.

Collin: Good evening, Board. Collin Felch. I'm the Deputy Superintendent for Vista Charter Public Schools. It's always a pleasure to be here. I'm here in support of the charter school special bridge funding resolution. As you know, I run three charter schools authorized by OCDE, so I can speak firsthand about how the resolution will provide a great benefit to Orange County charter schools and their surrounding communities, like the ones that I serve each day. At charters, we often do more with less. However, it's only right that charter schools and most importantly, charter school students and families, have equitable access to resources and opportunities especially during times of financial uncertainty and when the state is likely to enact deferrals once again. It is essential that even during these times of financial uncertainty that we continue to deliver high quality educational programs for our students and the opportunities that this resolution could provide the boost to do exactly that. While the funding would provide necessary and equitable support for new schools and schools experiencing unforeseen financial hardship, it could also support innovation within our schools, which is not only an important element of the charter movement, but at the end of the day, our kids deserve it. Thank you very much for your time and continued support, and I encourage you to support the approval of this resolution.

BARKE: Thank you.

KAPIL: Good evening, President Shaw, members of the Board. My name is Kapil Mathur. I'm the Founder and Executive Director of the Orange County Academy of Sciences and Arts. We operate two charter schools, and we have a third that was recently approved by this Board. I'm speaking in support of the resolution to provide funding for charter schools. When you think about funding, I think of it through the lens of equity and there's a difference between equity and equality. We already have funding mechanisms where different populations of students qualify for different levels of funding. Charter schools serve a disproportionate number of students that have needs. One of my schools has 49.1% of our students as unduplicated, and 30% of them are students with disabilities. Those students require additional funding. When you start a charter school, the funding that we get comes after the attendance, but we have to pay for books and teachers and supplies before the school opens.

So for our first school when we opened, we had to obtain private financing. So essentially, we had to factor our receivables to a private company at a very high interest rate in order to get the money to buy the necessary materials to open the school. We are the stewards of public funds

and your funds are also public funds and you are the stewards of those public funds. Public funds shouldn't have to come with high interest rates, and so I encourage you to support this resolution to support all of the kids in charter schools in Orange County. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you.

SPARKS: All right. I will turn the discussion to Dr. Williams.

WILLIAMS: Yes. So, to begin the discussion, I'll make a motion to adopt this resolution and then we can go into. . .

SPARKS: Okay, I'll second that.

WILLIAMS: Okay. Thank you for the second. So, when Trustee Valdes and I began talking about these issues last month, as you may recall, there was some problems getting it properly adopted. It was kind of put on very late, and so we held it over to bring it to today's meeting. This is a bridge loan. It's not meant to give money away. It's not a grant. A bridge loan actually is an asset on the P&L of any institution. The money is expected to be brought back and paid. How exactly we do that, that is why this resolution speaks to the technical language that will be discussed and we're looking forward to working with the staff on how to do this meeting, the letter of the law, working with legal counsel and perhaps even the county treasurer. So, there's a lot to this. This serves as an innovative idea and concept. We do have funds that are there in our reserve funds that we could start this and so we're starting small, we're building upon a principle and some may be critical of it. I think there's enough spoken to at support at the last meeting and today, that this is something that would help our new charter schools and it's only meant for our charter schools. It's not meant for any other charter schools. So I'll keep it open for discussion. Jorge.

SPARKS: Trustee Valdes.

VALDES: I just want to thank the folks for the support, or request for me to support this since I partially drafted this. I think it's pretty good. I think it's necessary. I do want to give credit to Dr. Williams. This was originally his idea. We've been working on it for a while, but I want to give due credit where credit is due. This was originally Dr. Williams' idea. I think this is appropriate and I think one of the public comments tonight is really the primary reason why we should do this. If a new charter is going to open and they're going to take public funds and they're going to spend it on a high interest rate loan in order to open, this is just a better option. We are all stewards of public money and I think this is just a better option in order to open up a new public school.

SPARKS: Great. Trustee Barke, you have anything to add to the discussion?

BARKE: No. As you know, I'm always pro expanding our school choice in Orange County, so I think this would be a wonderful way to make up for that delta where the charters initially don't have the same money to start up. So I'm very excited about it. I think it's very, an excellent idea.

I think it's very creative and something we have the ability to do it. I think it's a wonderful opportunity.

SPARKS: I would just add, I think this is a very innovative idea. I think the spirit of it is really fantastic and much needed. I just want to make sure that we are in close conversation with the CCSA folks and the legal, our lawyer as well, to make sure that the I's are dotted, the T's are crossed and that we're complying with the law in moving forward. So we may need to do a little bit of a deep dive. It looks like you guys have already done that, a lot of that work since our last meeting, so it's a lot more detailed than it was a month ago. So I suspect we approve and we start dotting all the I's and crossing all the T's and making it work.

WILLIAMS: Working with our Department here, finances, Renee and Dr. Miramontes, and probably will bring back estimation January next year all the details.

SPARKS: Great.

WILLIAMS: So in theory we're establishing it, putting into the budget and then the actual implementation, probably next 2025?

SPARKS: That sounds reasonable. Okay. Any other discussion?

HENDRICK: So I just want to clarify just because I don't want you to think I'm not listening to what we're doing. I can't actually set an Object Code, a separate Object Code for this because that says exactly what the expense is, but if you remember, you have on your Board discretionary fund, it's actually in the fund balance and then we'd line item it there. So you'll see it there, but it's not a separate Object Code. We would just call it the Charter School Special Fund. So it's going to be in the fund balance. So I just want you to, it's there. It's just not up in the top of the budget because you don't know what, it would be reducing revenue. It's not expenditure. So it's just an accounting technicality. But I just don't want you, when you look at the budget, you're like, where did my thing go that I asked for? So I just want to clarify.

WILLIAMS: We expect you and David to be an integral part to process of bringing this back to us.

HENDRICK: Thank you.

SPARKS: But thanks for explaining that because that will save some headaches down the line.

HENDRICK: Yeah.

SPARKS: Wonderful. All right, so we go ahead and put it to a vote. Roll call.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke.

BARKE: Aye.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes. And if I might, you didn't ask me for my comments, Lisa. That's okay. I forgive you.

SPARKS: Sorry, I can't see you because I'm looking this way, right? So I don't see you.

SHAW: I just wanted to also thank Ken and Jorge for their hard work on this item, and the challenges of opening a charter school, hearing from our charter leaders. It is very daunting and if we can help save them some costs on interest that it's just wasted money, that'd be great. Presuming we're within the law here and the logistics, we'll come back later and I'm sure we'll be looked over by plenty of lawyers. Thank you.

SPARKS: Thank you, Tim, and thanks for your patience with me not seeing you sometimes. All right. We'll move on to item 22, Board action on board member stipend. Valdes.

VALDES: So I want to withdraw this item for tonight. I want to pull this. I would like more time to speak with our counsel about this. This wasn't really drafted the way I wanted it and then I saw this after the deadline, so it went out to the public. But for tonight, I'm going to ask to withdraw this.

SPARKS: Okay. So noted. Then we will move on to information items, any communication information or discussion? We'll start with President Shaw. Do you have any communication or information or discussion you want to share?

SHAW: Well, yes. I didn't know if it'd be under board member comments or legislative updates.

SPARKS: I'm sorry. Well, the first one is communication information discussion, but you can wait until Board comments if you want.

SHAW: Yes, I'll wait until then.

SPARKS: Okay. Then let's go ahead and start then with the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, any announcements that you have?

HENDRICK: We do have a few today. I'll do the simple ones first. The next Board meeting is June 5th. The deadline for that is May 22nd, the Board packet delivery by May 31st. I wanted you to think about your organizational meeting. Last year we did it in June instead of July. So for you guys to decide when you will do that this year.

SPARKS: So you mean for all the Board meetings next year?

HENDRICK: Yes. Aracely, if you could come up and talk about the charter school update please. In your red packet, you have our bi-annual charter school report in your packet. So Aracely will walk you through some of that.

CHASTAIN: So this is provided to the Board in the fall and spring of each year. As you'll recall, the report includes updated enrollment and financial status based on the second interim report for the charter schools. The spring report also includes academic data and any pertinent information that the Board may need to be made aware of. I won't review the entire report, but I just want to highlight a couple of items. Epic Charter School is rebranding and changing its name to Epic California Academy beginning in June of 2024. They have gone through quite an extensive process to come up with a new name and have asked for a lot of parental information and feedback. So that's what they've been working on for about a year. Explore Academy is going to be opening in the fall of 2024 and they are in the process of planning that and doing the work in order to be able to open

International School for Science and Culture. Their nonprofit status has been suspended since January 3rd of 2022. We were made aware of this in January of 2024, and their nonprofit status was suspended for not being in good standing with the Franchise Tax Board and that's her failure to file tax returns. So the school was sent a Notice of Concern in January of 2024 and is correcting in submitting all past due returns and had asked for an extension I believe on current tax for this year. They are in violation of their charter and the agreement with this Board; they are currently still operating and we are hopeful that as far as we know, everything has been submitted and we're hopeful that when their nonprofit status is reinstated that it will be backdated to when they lost it. So there won't be a gap there in the nonprofit status.

WILLIAMS: Question. So ISSAC lost their non-status because of failure to pay taxes, or file taxes?

CHASTAIN: File. Typically, I don't think they have a lot of taxes to pay. I think it's, but they still have to file their taxes annually every year and I don't believe that they had been doing that, and so in January of 2022, they lost it. We didn't get that information until January of 2024.

WILLIAMS: Okay. They didn't volunteer that information to you?

CHASTAIN: I don't recall how we found out. They may have, I'm not sure. I can find that out.

WILLIAMS: So as a consequence of losing their nonprofit status and failure to file their tax returns, are they in a status where they're practicing, I shouldn't say practicing, but running the school illegally?

CHASTAIN: Well, the Education Code 47604 does state that a chartering authority isn't liable for the debts of a charter school or any obligations of that charter school from performance, acts of omission, anything like that, if they are operated as or by a nonprofit, a nonprofit public benefit corporation, and if the chartering authority has complied with their oversight responsibilities according to law. Now we do comply with our oversight responsibilities according to law. However, it isn't super clear to me in the Ed Code, and this may probably be a better question for your attorney, whether there's any liability were something to occur at the school while they don't have a nonprofit status.

WILLIAMS: Okay.

HENDRICK: I am not sure they're able to accept public funds like apportionment if they're not a nonprofit status though, so the state could recall those funds.

CHASTAIN: And to answer your earlier question, we were not, actually we're the ones who notified the Executive Director of the school when we received notification, so she had not been aware, and we're not sure why. I think that, I'm not sure what was happening with mail or email or what was going on, but I do recall that we notified the Executive . . .

WILLIAMS: You notified Padmini?

CHASTAIN: Yes, Dr. Srinivasan. So she called immediately to try to find out what was going on and started filing those tax returns.

WILLIAMS: So she didn't even know? Is that what you're saying?

Aracely: I believe she did not at the time that we called her. Yeah.

WILLIAMS: Okay. That's a problem.

VALDES: Should we bring them down here?

WILLIAMS: We need to do something.

VALDES: I don't think we should just sit on that. We should bring them down here.

WILLIAMS: No, this is serious. This is disappointing, actually.

VALDES: So, you want to put an agenda item and bring them down here?

WILLIAMS: Yeah.

SPARKS: Call them to the next meeting.?

WILLIAMS: I think this is something that, this is a school that had a rough start. It goes way back many years. They had a rough start and then finally they cleaned up - if I can use the word

cleaned up - their act in a colloquial way. And then this is just something we learned how long ago?

CHASTAIN: We found out in January of 2024, that there had not been any . . .

WILLIAMS: Okay, so a few months ago?

CHASTAIN: Yes. So we issued a Notice of Concern that same month asking for corrective action.

WILLIAMS: And did she respond to that?

CHASTAIN: Yes, she did immediately and called the Franchise Tax Board and found out what was going on and that's when she started submitting her back-tax, filing her back-taxes. My understanding is she asked for an extension for the 2023 taxes, which she was granted.

WILLIAMS: Right. And just historically when all the issues we had, if you can help remind me when that was, a few years ago, we worked with her and gave a lot of grace and she resolved the issues and now we're facing another big no-no - if I can use that term.

CHASTAIN: This is concerning for us, which is why I just want to make sure I pointed it out to the Board.

WILLIAMS: I would like to hear from the Executive Director on this, and that's nothing against Aracely, but she's getting secondhand information. I'd like to hear this from the person in charge.

VALDES: Yeah, I agree.

CHASTAIN: And she may be able to provide you a deeper update as to where she is right now. We have asked for something in writing that shows that she's submitted everything she needs to submit. I don't think we've gotten that yet. So obviously, we just have to take her word for it right now but our understanding is that she has taken it seriously and is doing what she needs to do to get that nonprofit status reinstated.

WILLIAMS: Do you want to put an agenda item for next month on this?

VALDES: Let's do it.

WILLIAMS: Can we do this? Can you bring this back to us? And if she hasn't answered your question, then I would say yes. I'm going to give her a call and take her out to the woodshed - in a metaphoric way of speaking - I'm going to be critical of this. This is so simple, straightforward. You don't do this.

VALDES: So, we're going to put an agenda item that Aracely is going to give us an update next month. Is that what we're doing?

WILLIAMS: Update on this, and then if nothing's done. . .

VALDES: If Aracely isn't satisfied in the responses, then we'll take further action next month. That's what you want to do?

WILLIAMS: I think that's reasonable.

VALDES: Okay. All right. I'm fine.

WILLIAMS: If my colleagues agree with that.

SPARKS: I think maybe you should feed her some chicken feed instead of taking her to the woodshed.

WILLIAMS: Chicken feed? Okay.

CHASTAIN: The report states that Oxford Preparatory Academy is looking for an Executive Director. That role has been vacant since December 12th. However, I wanted to give you an update that they have filled that position on April 29th. They selected Dr. Kimberly Fricker as the new Executive Director of the school. We continue to be concerned with the financial status of Unity Middle College High School. We have recommended that the back office provider and school leadership present the school's governing Board with a realistic budget that's based on conservative enrollment numbers, and that cashflow projections be presented at each Board meeting to make sure that the Board can make informed decisions on the school's future. Right now, cashflow I believe, is only being presented at the budgets that need to be submitted to the state as opposed to every month, which is more the best practice that all of our other charter schools tend to operate under. And because this school is in such financial straits, we want to make sure that the Board is aware of how much cash they have over each month. I'm not exactly sure where they're at right now, but I know that it's been significantly below 30 days of cash and I don't think they even have 30 days of cash from now through the end of the fiscal year. So we are concerned on them meeting their obligations.

WILLIAMS: When are they coming up for renewal?

CHASTAIN: They are coming, just a second. Look at your report.

WILLIAMS: I mean, because we almost had a closure mid-semester last year.

CHASTAIN: Unity, their term expires in 2027, so they have a little while. The other school that you'll see that is in poor fiscal condition on there . . .

VALDES: You want to bring them down too?

WILLIAMS: Yeah, that's a school that we really need to have a dialogue with. Who's the leader at Unity right now? Who is the Executive Director?

CHASTAIN: I will have to get back to you. That name is escaping me right now. Okay.

AUDIENCE: Lauren Gonzalez.

CHASTAIN: Our CCSA partner knows.

AUDIENCE: Lauren Gonzalez.

CHASTAIN: Lauren Gonzalez.

WILLIAMS: Lauren Gonzalez. Okay.

SPARKS: Well why don't we do the same where we can have Aracely report on them again next month and then if we feel the need to bring them in. .

WILLIAMS: Do we know what their student count is right now?

CHASTAIN: Currently, let me look at your report again here. As of March of 2023, they had 79 students, and then March of 2024 they dropped down to 60, so I think they currently have about 60 students. Our concern is that they keep creating budgets at amounts much higher than that. So we want them to stay really conservative in their budget creation. They shouldn't be making those numbers over-inflated because they haven't been able to reach those enrollment numbers historically. So I think those types of presentations to the Board could potentially make it feel like, oh, our budget is getting better or will be better. But if you haven't been able to meet those budget projections for a few years, we really want them to stop creating budgets based on unrealistic projections, or what we would consider to be unrealistic projections. They also did do a fiscal stabilization plan. The difference between them and Irvine International Academy is that we find the fiscal plan for Irvine International to be realistic and doable, whereas here we're struggling a little bit with what they're presenting as far as enrollment numbers. Okay.

VALDES: So what do you guys want to do?

SPARKS: The same as with the other school.

VALDES: Okay.

CHASTAIN: I don't know that I'll have anything different to say about this school when it comes back, but if you want the school to give you any sort of an update, they can definitely come and do that.

WILLIAMS: Do we want to ask for that?

SPARKS: I just think we want to bring them at the same time we bring the other, so I don't know. What do you?

WILLIAMS: I agree.

SPARKS: I just want to treat them the same, give a chance to explain themselves to us, and then if Aracely has any additional information, knowing that we're going to call them in, if we don't see something different.

WILLIAMS: How often are you reaching out to Unity, Aracely?

CHASTAIN: They're assigned liaisons, which the coordinators that we work with try to contact every charter school on a monthly basis just to get an update, see if they need any support, have any updates to give us. But we also monitor their Board meetings, so we do listen to those to see what's being presented before the Board, and that's how we know what's being presented budget-wise for the Unity Board.

WILLIAMS: And what you're expressing is that their budgets are not good practices or best practices, and they tend to overestimate?

CHASTAIN: What we are seeing is an overestimation of enrollment, an over projection of enrollment based on what they think they can enroll. But we're not sure what they're basing that on because that hasn't been what historically has been shown as being the enrollment of this school. I know they're working hard on enrollment, every school does, because that's the bread and butter of keeping a school open. But they've been struggling with enrollment now for a while and it's gone down since the last time that I gave you guys a report.

WILLIAMS: Do you look at this situation different than ISSAC?

CHASTAIN: ISSAC as far as the nonprofit status?

WILLIAMS: Well, so it sounds like the paperwork filing with the Franchise Tax Board, that was a big, big oversight. That's pretty obvious and I'm concerned about that. But the overestimation of the ADA funds to establish a budget - that's a little bit different of an issue.

CHASTAIN: They are different issues, yes.

WILLIAMS: Yeah. And one is, I mean I suppose you can go back and get your tax status changed, filing the proper paperwork, but as far as financial solvability of a charter school, that's a whole different issue, and so that's why I asked the question. This seems to be a little bit more serious with Unity than it is with ISSAC.

CHASTAIN: With Unity, what's happened in the past, if you'll recall, is that eventually it becomes difficult to pay what you owe your vendors, to pay what you owe your teachers. And so we have in the past received notification that the Department and the Board is being sued for a vendor not being paid or something like that. We've sent that back because we are not liable and that doesn't become an issue for us. This isn't the type of situation we're in with Unity right now, but we are concerned over their cashflow. I don't know what options they have for borrowing more money. They're pretty overextended on borrowing already, and I don't know that they're paying what they owe to their lenders. I think they're just trying to stay above water with their . . .

WILLIAMS: I think Jorge, to answer your question, that may be a little bit different of an issue than with ISSAC and that would be something maybe that we should bring to the next Board meeting, a little bit more serious . . .

VALDES: I'm fine with it. I mean they were here a few times last year. I think we had, if I remember correctly, we had Vista Charter sort of helping them out and loaning them their Executive Director for a while. And then I know that their Executive Director no longer works with them, so now they're on their own again. I mean this just seems to be a charter that has a long term of low enrollment problem. And now Aracely is telling us this. I think we should at least bring them down here, at the very least.

WILLIAMS: I agree.

SPARKS: Wait. Trustee Barke, do you have any input?

BARKE: No, I mean I think it would be, I guess, nice to get an update. I mean, it sounds like from Aracely it's not always an update that we can rely on, but it would probably be good to hear from them, or at least let them know we want to hear from them.

WILLIAMS: Yeah, so I sense there is a consensus. Tim, you haven't spoken up. I'm looking directly at you, my friend. So you get that opportunity now.

SHAW: It'd be fine to talk to them, of course.

WILLIAMS: Okay, so I sense a consensus. So if you can, Aracely, let's bring them, put them on the agenda and let's talk with them.

CHASTAIN: Okay. I will continue here. The charter schools unit has completed the annual school visits and those visits are focused on operations and educational programs. The final reports will go out to the schools this month. We have asked the schools to submit - we typically do this every year - we ask them to submit the preferred month when they want their visit to take place. And we have been able to accommodate the first choice for the majority of schools. And I think we have two schools where we're going to go accommodate their second choice of month in which they want to have their visit take place. Surprisingly, the favorite month for everybody is October and November, but we can only fit so many visits in those two months. So we're trying to get as close as we can to what they prefer. That's all for my update.

SPARKS: Alright, thank you very much. Dr. Miramontes is up. Did you have more? Okay.

HENDRICK: We have more.

MIRAMONTES: Just a couple of quick updates. It's part of the high quality opportunities - thank you - that our students across the county have. Just recently we had National History Day where Orange County students once again demonstrated keen historical analysis while showcasing their creativity at this year's National History California competition, clinching two dozen state championships - schools here in Orange County. Also the Orange County Arts and

Disability Festival, the 48th Annual Orange County Arts and Disability Festival was a huge success. I'd like to thank our OCDE staff, and the staff and students from across the county who submitted artwork and performed this past weekend. Last week I attended the Orange County Civic Learning Institute celebration where we had community members, including Superior Court Judge Hernandez, and we had students talk about and share their projects with civic learning, civic responsibility, which we value and we know is key to our democracy.

And then another one of the big things we finished up last week was our first ever, and it will be an annual thing, the AI student convening where it was students leading students with AI. Last week we hosted over 650 middle school and high schools for our first ever summit led by students and for students. We were impressed by how AI is being used by students in a safe and positive way. Between our future entrepreneurs, innovators, and storytellers and scientists we saw at the AI summit, the artists and performers we saw at the Arts Festival and the Civic Learning and NHB enthusiasts, Orange County is in great hands. In addition, I want to update the Board. Per our conversation last month. I want to update the Board with our 30, 60, 90-day transition plan, which you see on the Board. I believe they have a copy of it. Is that correct?

SISAVATH: Yes, they do.

MIRAMONTES: Perfect.

HENDRICK: I'm sorry, I'm not sure we printed copies. I will send them to them. I'm sorry.

SISAVATH: No, we did.

HENDRICK: Oh, we did.

MIRAMONTES: So this is, let me go back a step here. So this is the 30, 60, 90 Day Plan. Whoops. I'm used to a Mac, not a PC. Let's go back here. There we go. All right, so the ACCESS, the main goal of this was the transition of communication, transparency in action. I know Dr. Williams talked about he had a dozen or so members, constituents that had reached out to him about what was happening in ACCESS. As I explained before, when you move cheese, people get a little upset, right? But you do it for the right reasons and you bring people along and that's what we're doing. That was the intent of this 30, 60 and 90 Day Plan.

The first 30 days we talked about ensuring oversight and the comprehensive understanding of all aspects of our ACCESS to plan accordingly. We created three separate units and a designated point person for each unit for county community schools. That was one of the recommendations. Don't call them, because we asked, we shared this with our staff members at the school sites, County Community Schools, Youth and Care, which are our Otto Fischer Juvenile Hall, Rio and Lyon, which is the Social Services, Orangewood, and then our personalized programs where people have a choice to go into Pacific Coast High School, our College Career Preparatory Academy and our Sunburst Academy. Three point persons have been designated to lead those. Received a lot of positive feedback from staff in the field about really focusing on the specific needs for each of those units. We communicated the vision of finishing the year positively and preparing for the upcoming new year. Nothing new was coming their way. I want to reassure

everybody. We weren't bringing on any new programs or anything like that. We were kind of finishing the year on a positive note. The focus was for the next three months, focus on positive attendance and credit recovery, and then we want to make sure that we have a work in progress. This is still a work in progress to ensure that all sites are equally and fully staffed based on the assessed needs of our sites. Any questions regard in those first 30 days, because we're past those 30 days.

WILLIAMS: When did the first day start?

MIRAMONTES: I want to say March, beginning of March or April.

WILLIAMS: Okay. End of March, 1st of April.

MIRAMONTES: April. April. Yes.

WILLIAMS: Okay, so just a month ago then.

MIRAMONTES: Yeah.

WILLIAMS: Okay. So, your changes you began, and you're in the process, and you wanted to finish the year in positive attendance and credit recovery, and that's all good. And you say this is a work in progress, right?

MIRAMONTES: Correct.

WILLIAMS: Okay, so thank you by the way for sharing this work.

MIRAMONTES: So part of this was, it was crafted and we had our principals, our directors, everybody from the staff actually went through this, and then our directors and staff provided input, and then our directors and our principals came on board, and principals were also part of the conversation and provided input. Then it was our directors, the three unit people, and then other directors within the ACCESS team went out in pairs to each school site, or hub, and they shared the information with staff members at the school sites. So everybody within those three or four days heard the same communication across the county. Right? So they went over this exact plan. Some principals sent this in advance, said, "Hey, we're going to discuss this at our staff meeting." Others shared it the day of, but everybody had gone through that cascading communication. It's really, really important to make sure that people aren't hearing things like Mary's Academy. I would never close Mary's Academy. It's a minor's pregnant program where students are actually housed at the facility. It'd be ludicrous for me to close that, but things get out there. Right? Things get out there. So let me move on. if you'd like, I could talk about where we're currently at. I see your eyes spinning, Dr. Williams, and I'm ready to answer any questions.

WILLIAMS: Can we talk about . .

MIRAMONTES: Sure.

WILLIAMS: Can the guys in the booth stop doing that to my mic? I want to talk about these alleged closures because I am seeing emails that get sent to me quite a lot by people who work in our ACCESS schools, telling the board members that you're about to close five school sites, including Mary's Academy, and that you told people that you were going to do that.

MIRAMONTES: Eventually we're going to get to hubs. I've always talked about learning hubs where we have all the resources. We talked at the last board meeting about Tustin Main, and Dr. Williams had asked me, are you going to close that? We aren't planning on closing it, but we also need services that kids can actually meet with. We talked about the clinicians, the social workers, the counselors. You can't do that on Main Street. It's a storefront. If you can imagine a wall here, a wall between here, one classroom here, one classroom here, right off of Main Street. Kids don't have the opportunity to sit with mentors like Steve Kim that was out here. We bring Project Kinship, elevate OC Pathways for wellness. We've got a lot of outside agencies coming in. They can't sit in the same classroom. So we're looking at hubs. Eventually we're going to get to the hubs. It's not all going to happen tomorrow, but eventually the communications, we are going to get to a point like Harbor Learning Center South, Harbor Learning Center North, to have these hubs across the county where there's a hub.

SPARKS: So are you closing the five schools or not?

MIRAMONTES: No, not right now we're not. We will end up . .

SPARKS: Not right now doesn't mean yes or no. Is it a yes, or a no?

MIRAMONTES: So we will get to a point where some of these leases will have to be closed and students will be moved to. . .

SPARKS: So the answer is yes, you're closing these five schools.

MIRAMONTES: The answer is when the time comes, these sites. . .

SPARKS: So the answer is yes.

MIRAMONTES: . . will close. Sure. Yes.

SPARKS: Okay.

WILLIAMS: Okay. So the information that we're getting is accurate. These schools, these five sites are going to get closed.

MIRAMONTES: Eventually.

VALDES: Is Skyview on that list?

MIRAMONTES: Skyview is not on that list. Well, it was mentioned today, but it's not on a list to be closed.

WILLIAMS: So now that we, by the way, thank you for that clarification. You should have been an attorney too.

SPARKS: I come from four generations of attorneys.

VALDES: Okay, so now that we've determined that these five sites are going to be closed, do we have a timeline?

MIRAMONTES: Let me go back to, what five sites were we talking about? Because Skyview is not one of the five. Mary's Academy's not one of the five, so I'm not sure which five we're talking about. I did hear El Modena, right? I heard El Modena independent. I'm sorry, ACT? That's the one at the Boys and Girls Club. Yes. So when we're looking at can we provide hubs, they're located in the Boys and Girls Club. They're independent contract students in the Boys and Girls Club at Tustin. I also heard El Modena was another one. Looking back at El Modena, every single student that gets sent out of El Modena ends up in a contract learning classroom one day a week at the El Modena Learning Center. That's not good enough for our students. To have to go to a community center one day a week to make up credits doesn't make sense. But these learning hubs that are in the same vicinity, we're not asking them to go from Orange to South County. We're looking at how do we provide these hubs within the next five-mile radius or less than that.

..

VALDES: Ramon, how long have these five sites been operational?

MIRAMONTES: I've only been here for a year. I know we renewed ACT last year, which is the Tustin Learning Center, or the Academic Center at Tustin at the Boys and Girls Club. I know that was renewed last year. The principal at the time, Ruth Ramirez, needed space and I think they were already there and so they renewed the contract.

HENDRICK: Can I just clarify a little bit? Probably about 10 years ago, we had close to 80 ACCESS sites, and so we have been consciously looking at sites, and so this is actually not a plan that Dr. Miramontes came up with. This was from Dr. Mijares and Jeff Hittenberger eight years ago to really start looking at what do our sites look like and where can we provide the best services to our students? When a site is going to close, normally those students can be moved to a better site. We're not just closing things and so I think it's important for context to realize that this is looked at very carefully, mapping where the students are, where they're going to. And one of the things that Dr. Miramontes is very disappointed in is some of our sites cannot do all the things we would like to serve our students with. And that's been the big impetus for making some of the move. But this has been years in the progress. I think we've reported to the Board numerous times on this. We went through this with CHOC (inaudible) also and what are the best sites for our students in order to get the services? And so this is kind of on the tail end of that, but I just want to clarify that.

VALDES: I'm just going to tell you guys honestly, based on the emails I'm getting and forwarded, the folks, the teachers, the staff at ACCESS below the management level are just freaking out about all of this. And I mean these are really bad reactions. It started over the last, I'd say five months, and it's just email after email about how they're not being listened to and

how they're not, and how the management is just doing what they want, making decisions unilaterally without discussion. I mean the emails are just repetitive over and over and over again. And I'm not sure what else to say about that except tell you guys that this is seriously happening. Another really disturbing thing that I found was someone at ACCESS is telling Ken, who forwarded the email to me, I think that's how this occurred, that she was ordered not to come here and make a public comment about any of this. And that's really disturbing to me because the public comments are open to anyone.

MIRAMONTES: I would agree.

SPARKS: By leadership, leadership.

VALDES: Leadership is telling these people to not come down here and make public comments. I don't know, I just . . .

MIRAMONTES: And I appreciate that. I'll make sure that our staff, our leaders, know that that's not acceptable. If I may move forward with the next 30 days, so you guys can actually see the comprehensive plan here. So the next 30 days we share the strategic plan related to curriculum instruction and assessments, enrollment, attendance procedures, professional development, building our CT and arts programs and our wellness programs for students that will be in conjunction with staff members, and then promoting ACCESS and CONNECTION programs as the District 94, with procedures, protocols and personnel in place to ensure we have success, provide opportunities for staff to communicate their roles and responsibilities. Right now, people are, because they're floating around to different sites, nobody sometimes knows who to go to. And that goes, again, goes back to not having enough space at these storefronts. Where do we talk to these kids at?

And so who talks to them? Is it a Transition Specialist? Is it the counselor? Because everybody has a role and they want to serve kids, but the places that we're doing it aren't sufficient for those. Create a unit-specific steering committee. Currently our principals are working with their teachers that are interested in becoming part of this committee to discuss and seek input and provide input to management to make sure that they're on board as well. I spoke to the principals - actually I didn't. What happened was after we went through that first, this plan, I received an email from principals and from our directors that talked about all the concerns that teachers had at their staff meetings. And there were a few about, "We don't want to be called ACCESS Community Day Schools." We want to be known as ACCESS County Community Schools. We had others asking about the maximizing 60 credits in a school year.

Why we went to a quarter system? Well, if you're behind in units, you need to do more. We're in alignment with our alternative ed programs across the county now, so kids can actually generate additional units. They're there because they're behind in units, and if you can only do 60 in a school year, you're never going to catch up. So those are some of the things that were comments that we had heard. And then we're going to create a share calendar of integration for the following school year as we start to roll out the devices because our kids - another thing is our kids don't have devices that they can utilize at home. So their day stops - our day schools - it stops when they leave our day schools. Those are some of the things that are currently

happening. Now, the biggest piece is it's the steering committee. Any questions about the next 30 days?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

MIRAMONTES: Yes.

WILLIAMS: So if the first 30 days started April 1st, does this next 30 days start today?

MIRAMONTES: Correct. Some of these things have already started to move. I mean, they're fluid. We were a little bit of the technology piece as an example of, in our CONNECTIONS group, our CONNECTIONS staff has started their parents score notification systems. So we're going to be rolling those pieces out a little bit sooner than later to make sure our parents have the communication, our teachers have the tools and our staff have the tools. They can communicate with parents. Currently right now, it's the old fashioned phone call, but if a kid misses school that same day, they'll get a notification that within 15 minutes of taking roll an email, a text or a phone call will go out to a parent saying, "Renee Hendrick is not in school today." That parent will get that phone call not two or three days later. So those are things that we're trying to automate to make sure that we have those communication piece with our staff members.

WILLIAMS: Quick question. What is on the second slide on the next 30 days? It says Promote ACCESS and CONNECTIONS program as District 94. I'm not familiar with the term "District 94."

MIRAMONTES: So there are 28 school districts in the county. The ACCESS and the Community Day school is its own district. Even though we are a county program, it's its own district.

WILLIAMS: And you call it District 94?

MIRAMONTES: Well, it's District 94 in the books. Is that correct? So in the books, yeah.

HENDRICK: That's our official fund for the county. We're District 94. Each district has a number assigned to them.

WILLIAMS: First time I've heard it.

HENDRICK: It's been that way since before I was here, Ken. So that's just kind of how we're named the financial books.

MIRAMONTES: I realize that some of the concerns were also, "We're not a district, so don't run us like a district." There are some good things that districts do, but there are some great things that counties do. So we understand we're a countywide program, but you still have to have some procedures and protocols, whether it's a county or District 94, you still have to have some of those pieces in place.

WILLIAMS: So we're going to be transferring kids or be closing the Elmo site and the Tustin ACT. How far away are these hubs from these current locations?

MIRAMONTES: Everything is less than five miles. The average is about 2.3 miles.

WILLIAMS: 2.3 miles.

MIRAMONTES: So for example, in Fullerton - Fuller Joint, that was my last place - Buena Park, we had students, if you know where Knotts Berry Farm is, they would travel from Knotts Berry Farm to the alternative ed site that is next to Cal State Fullerton, which is La Sierra High School. That's how far, same thing with La Habra. If you know where La Habra is - Tim would know where La Habra is - La Habra High School if they were in the Alternative Ed program. And that's beyond four and a half, five miles. So we're trying to get them closer. We also know that we have to be strategic because some of the students, because of the neighborhoods that they live in, this is what we hear from our staff members, teachers that know their communities, principals that know their communities, that it may not always work because of the gangs that they're affiliated with. We've been working with probation. Probation wants to keep all their 602 students. Once they finish building, they're constructing their new Youth Regional Center, Central, which used to be off of Grand in Santa Ana.

It should be ready in December and they will have all the 602s. They would like to have all the 602s report there - students, children on probation - to report there. So that is going to need a little bit more space as well. Currently they're all attending YRC North because they're under construction.

WILLIAMS: Yeah, and that's where I'm getting a lot of pushback from the teachers at the Elmo unit. They're talking about the gangs and these kids are very, very vulnerable. They're in a safe environment now but the concern that they've shared is once you change all that, now these kids are exposed to these rival gang members.

MIRAMONTES: You're absolutely correct, Dr. Williams. I had a conversation with principals and you know the Colonel - Colonel Sanchez - and we were having this conversation, and when you go to Santa Ana High School, they're probably four or five gangs right now on that same campus at Santa Ana High School with more students. When you look at the number of staff members that we have to students, once this is all aligned, there's going to be a lot of support at those hubs. So students want to come to school. If they are in the gangs and are on probation, then they would end up going to the YRC where they actually pick them up at home and drive them to school and they're there for a full eight hours. The independent contract students you're speaking about at El Modena, for years, every student there gets, like I said, that option of going to the independent contract. We should offer also, but there's not a facility, the community center will only allow us to use it one day a week. Yes. Mr. Valdes.

VALDES: Under your Next 30 Days tab, in letter E, to share the three-year strategic plan related to, and then it says, and wellness programs for students. What does "and wellness programs for students mean?"

MIRAMONTES: So, well, you met him today, Steve Kim. It's all about mentorship and wellness. That's really what it is. So we've got many partners across the county and trying to align those partnerships with each hub. Right now, it's hard for them to cover the entire . . .

VALDES: Are one of those partners CHOC Hospital in Orange?

MIRAMONTES: Nope.

VALDES: So I'm particularly concerned with a statement that CHOC made recently regarding a \$750,000 grant that they got from the State of California and they're real proud of these wellness centers that they've spread around Orange County, which have been promised are just safe spaces when a student is just, has some anxiety, and now they are openly talking about bringing in clinicians to start training school staff and it's right on their website. I'll read it. "The \$750,000 will be spent over the next two years and will place CHOC clinicians at schools to train counselors to run evidence-based group sessions for kids who have experienced violence, accidents, physical abuse injuries, domestic violence." My concern is a little less of the mental health aspect, that you may get past me, but how much is CHOC going to be doing medical services in schools?

MIRAMONTES: None that I know of. In my previous district, I had two wellness centers. Mr. Shaw actually visited both of those sites and it was staffed by a counselor and we also had interns because interns always are looking for places to go to. So we had an intern in both those sites and a counselor. We have one wellness center in our ACCESS schools and it's not being utilized. And the reason is, is kids are there for four hours a day and to pull them out of those four hours, it's about credit recovery. If we pull them out, it makes it very, very difficult. It makes it very, very difficult to actually collect. Students want to be there, they want to work on their units, they want to get their credits, and our teachers want to work with them as well. We have to really protect that 8:00, or 8:30 to 12:30 time, and really make sure that's valued and saved, and then if we can provide wellness enrichment enhancement opportunities through partnerships like the one we heard today, Project Kinship, after school, after hours, that's what we want to do.

VALDES: What Steve does, I view that as a Big Brother type of message.

MIRAMONTES: Absolutely.

VALDES: That's just a friend who's trying to help out someone who's, let's just say turned the wrong path. That's why I brought him down here. I was very moved by his presentation a few months ago, and I thought, what CHOC is sort of being very proud about on their website sounds to me very different. So I guess my question is, has CHOC contacted you about this \$750,000?

MIRAMONTES: Not that I'm aware of, what you're referring to, and it wouldn't be in ACCESS. You would have first dibs at allowing students in our ACCESS and CONNECTION programs to allow that to happen. Whether they have partnerships with districts within the county is a different story. But you're responsible for the District 94 students

VALDES: Right.

MIRAMONTES: That's who you'd be responsible for.

VALDES: Okay.

MIRAMONTES: And then the last 90 days as well, we look at finishing strong and celebrating our successes. We're visiting sites to improve school beautification and climate at our hub campuses. We're communicating those procedures and protocols with our district partners. They are reluctant to send us students when they see some of our facilities. When we walk parents into some of our facilities they're also reluctant to say, "That's your school? That is a school?" I've heard that over and over from our district partners. As a matter of fact, I think we had a local school district, a large school district nearby that brought their board members to see Pacific Coast High School and Harbor Learning Center South to see what we can offer. They don't send a whole lot of students, but there's a need to send more students, and there's a need to look at younger students, seventh and eighth graders specifically, because that's where it starts.

But when they specifically want to see two sites, because they've been to other sites, Tustin being one, ACT being another, and they're like, "We don't feel as board members comfortable sending our students to these sites." And so I'd love to expand the program in speaking with our superintendent. I know they're chomping at the bits. I had a superintendent call me today and said, "I really need this middle school student to be moved." Great kid, great grades, just not making the best choices. So there's a calling out there to look at, but again, it's the facilities that they also look at and they have to sell their parents on it as well. Once you get in there and they meet our staff members, our teachers, it's a great relationship that we have across the board. So we also want to ensure that all contracts are approved for the following school year, that we're aligning it with our vision.

We're promoting ACCESS programs with our district and communities. People are talking about the good work that our staff members do. It's unfortunate that you're hearing. . . I have an open-door policy. I've met with a couple of people upstairs. I've met with a couple people out in the community. They're like, can you come out here? I've met with them, I've explained things to them. It makes sense. Actually, one person said this is the best plan they've seen in 27 years. I don't think it's a great plan, but I think it's simple and it's clear and concise, and I think that's what we needed to make sure we did. As this transition phase moves forward, I'll come back next month if you'd like, and present where we are and where we're moving to. I don't have the facilities right now to close those other sites that they're talking about.

I don't have the facilities right now to be able to move them to a hub. We're working like our charter school partners, we're looking for facilities to be able to do things, to be able to support students with a comprehensive campus that has all the services that the most vulnerable kids in the county have. And if people are emailing you, forward the emails to me. There's not a retaliation. I've never ever been known as somebody who retaliates, or our principals or staff members shouldn't be the same way. The good old boys club is done. We're going to move forward and we're going to do what's best for students. And then last, revisit our structures within our Ed Programs Division to ensure all students and staff are successful. If staff members need

something, we need to be able to make sure that they have them. That includes safety procedures because as they walk through, some of our campuses are a little bit safer than others. So we're working through that right now.

SPARKS: Well, to your point about retaliation and people feeling comfortable to speak to you, that's the whole point. They're coming to us because they do not feel comfortable speaking with you. And this is literally dozens and dozens, emails, phone calls, we're all getting a lot of teachers who are very upset, feeling like everything that they've been working on for the past many, many, many, many years is being unwound and that they're not being listened to, and they don't feel comfortable talking with you about their concerns. They feel like you haven't been in the classroom for more than 20 years and so you don't really understand their concerns and you're not listening to their concerns. So that's what we're hearing.

MIRAMONTES: Sure. I can appreciate that.

SPARKS: And we're hearing not just one-offs. We're hearing a lot. Phone calls, emails.

MIRAMONTES: I can appreciate that.

SPARKS: Because they feel like we're at least listening.

HENDRICK: Can I just kind of clarify a little bit? The programs, it's great that they're emailing you, but the Superintendent, County Superintendent is when that operates programs. We do have a lot of mechanisms in place for employees to voice their opinions. We have an HR Department that hears grievances and things all the time. We have monthly meetings with our associations and a lot of these people fall under the bargaining group. And so it would be great for them to share those concerns with us because it's really not an area where you guys could do as much for them. Right?

SPARKS: Right. We told them we would be a voice for their concerns because they feel like all those mechanisms aren't hearing their concerns. That's what I'm hearing.

HENDRICK: I feel like they feel like they have a public view to say that, and so that's great if they feel that, but we can't address those issues unless they're sharing them with us, and they have mechanism to do that, and I have a list of people to do that. We can't address them unless they're speaking to us. They could do it anonymously if they're afraid of something. There's a lot of methods for them to do that. And so as you're sharing with them, you should help redirect them, us back to them. We can't fix the problems if they're not reaching out to us.

BARKE: I just ask so that it'll go on record just listening to all of this, what is the formal mechanism for an anonymous comment or feedback? How does that happen?

HENDRICK: They can send something through our HR Department, or they could go file a grievance either with or without their union representation, whatever they choose. This is since. .

BARKE: Is that anonymous? Sorry to interrupt. Is that anonymous?

HENDRICK: That would not be anonymous. So we could set up an anonymous hotline. We've had one before where people could do that. I get anonymous letters all the time, believe it or not, from staff, and it'll say, "Can you please check X, Y, and Z?" so we will look into each one of those items.

BARKE: Because it sounds to me like maybe we should set up some type of anonymous hotline. Somehow the people could say what their concerns, without any retaliation or fear of retaliation or whatever. Because obviously whether there is or not, there's perception and perception is what counts. So I think it would be important to get something . . .

HENDRICK: We could definitely look at that. But also, I just want to reiterate, there's been a lot of change in this last year for the team, and so that creates some concern for everybody and we're very sensitive to that and we're working through that. I think we also need to realize there's a lot of people that are supportive of the plan. I hear just as many people that are supportive of the plan. You're not getting to hear those, and so I think trying to look at those things is important. And I think also, I think one of the points that we don't look at is there's been a lot of positive things that have happened in ACCESS because of our teachers. Dr. Williams, I'm not sure if you get a chance to read all those essays. Those are probably the best written essays we've had in many years. Our attendance is actually the highest it's been in many years. There's a lot of good things happening and I think that that's the piece that's getting overshadowed by some of this.

SPARKS: And I've gotten some positive emails as well, but the ones that we're focusing on, the people who don't feel like they're being heard, and so sharing that with you all I think is important because as you move forward with whatever plans that you hope to move forward . . .

HENDRICK: And you can share those at any time, you don't have to do it just at a Board meeting,

SPARKS: Making sure that maybe you hold some focus groups with them, there's some feedback mechanisms, whatever you have, that gives them a voice as in the idea and planning that you're moving forward really quickly.

MIRAMONTES: Yep. That was the idea with the steering committees, that you could ask your principal to be a part of the steering committee. I guess there was a steering committee before. It was called something different, but this is specifically for what we're doing right now. We have not changed our curriculum, we have not laid anybody off, and I've gotten emails saying, "They're going to lay off all these people." March 15th came and went. It's not the intent.

SPARKS: In fact, they said that you're hiring a bunch of people is what I've heard.

MIRAMONTES: We are repurposing administrative positions, but we're also going to process for the first time in a long time, we get to hire teachers and I'm excited about that. When I met with every single principal and they talked about the vacancies that they had on their campuses that they've been running with subs for a long time, but they just couldn't fill them, meaning they weren't given the authority to fill them. I sat with every principal and went through their staffing

sheets and their needs for the upcoming school year. For the first time in a long time, we're going to be able to hire teachers in our ACCESS program, and our teachers are aging out. That was one of the things we talked about. In the next ten years, we probably have 50, 60% of our people retiring. We need to make sure we get - there's a recruitment process for hiring the best teachers there.

SPARKS: Any other discussion?

WILLIAMS: I just have couple thoughts. So I think this is a hard discussion, but it's a good discussion. It's an open and honest discussion. I think you're doing well. You're taking a lot.

MIRAMONTES: I appreciate that. I think that I'm . . .

WILLIAMS: I think that you're taking a lot of pushback and comments, and you're a gentleman about it, and you're displaying a lot of the leadership. That's good. So we're just like the humble servants. We're in between what you guys do at the administrative level. The Superintendent is the employer. We are not the employer. We recognize that. I want to thank you for taking this time to share this plan with us. In the past it really is not so obvious and overt, and so I appreciate that. Like District 94, I've been here 28 years, never heard that term before. None of you have heard that term before because it's the first time that we've had anyone talk about planning . . .

MIRAMONTES: And I was told let's not refer to it as a district, it's a county program. So yes, we're referring to it as a county program, and Dr. Mijares and I have had conversations throughout the process. I'm keeping him abreast of things that are happening, so he and I have had conversations about things that we're doing as we move forward.

WILLIAMS: And as Trustee Valdes and Sparks have shared, we've been inundated. I spent two hours this morning on just talking and communicating with staff. Somehow they got my phone number, they got my email, and they're calling me and I'm trying to be gentle.

MIRAMONTES: I don't mean to interrupt you, but if you got two hours this morning, I hope it's not between that window when we should be teaching, because we're trying to save that time for students. But no, I hear you. And as Mrs. Hendrick said, Deputy Superintendent Hendrick said, "Reach out. I've got a phone upstairs. If you hear it, give me a call. You don't have to tell me who it is, but you can say, 'this teacher's saying this', is it true?"

WILLIAMS: Yeah. I think probably as Mari indicated that some sort of line, communication tool, anonymous, because I've always stressed in my communications with staff that I always keep my conversations private. I would never reveal who you are but I appreciate your contacting me because we're sharing this all with you, and I know I appreciate that these are difficult. The other item that has not been brought up is you brought on a consultant, Mr. Navarro, who is not really someone who is favored by myself personally. He called me a liar in public during one of our charter school appeals but a great majority of the individuals who are complaining to us are talking that he is an acting administrator. He is making face-to-face contact with staff, making administrative decisions. And it doesn't sound like he's a consultant in the

traditional sense where he's making recommendations. He's actually making personnel communications and direct face-to-face communications. So that strikes me as odd.

MIRAMONTES: So let me clarify that. Fred Navarro was here before I got here. He was brought on by Dr. Mijares. He was brought on to work with the county with whatever needs they had in Ed Services. As you can recall, Christine Olmstead left, Jeff Hittenberger left. It was Dr. Mijares and a big gap in between. Fred Navarro was brought on before I was brought on. Fred has been guiding, supporting and coaching administrators. One of the things that I noticed right away is at that director, that principal, even the assistant supe level, there was not a lot of guidance provided there. You got promoted within ACCESS and you were given the keys to the school. There wasn't an onboarding and an ongoing coaching model within ACCESS. So we only know what we know. Some of it good, some of it not good. So I had Fred move into working with some of our newest administrators at the school sites.

That's where he started coaching, guiding, and supporting. He does not have the approval to move personnel. He talks to principals about what their needs are. Like I said, I met with every principal. Fred sat at the table, so did Analee, sitting at the place there. Analee signs everything, all the approval levels at that level for ACCESS. She's been signing everything off. She has the approval and the authority to move it forward to myself. And she's asking principals, directors, "Do we really need this? Does this make sense? Why not try something different?" So she has the approval and the authority to do so, just like she's running CONNECTIONS, she's doing the same process with our ACCESS group. The other thing that Analee is doing that Fred's not doing, this is where I have that other level, that layer in between, is she's planning and directing principals, planning and directing with directors. Again, some of these people have been promoted from within and they don't understand the complexity of the jobs. They're given a set of keys and you figure it out on your own. Fred's been coaching, guiding, and supporting principals, and the feedback that I get from principals is, I heard it today, "Without Fred Navarro, I would've been sinking." I appreciate the work that he's done. He won't be with us for very much longer. We're just trying to get through this 30, 60, 90 Day Plan. Fred will go away.

WILLIAMS: So what I just heard you say, there was no coaching model in place and Fred came in and provided that coaching model since he's been here? So there's been no coaching model in the previous decade then?

MIRAMONTES: Not that I know of. I've only been here for a year.

WILLIAMS: Just hand over a set of keys to people and they get promoted, and there's been no coaching or modeling?

MIRAMONTES: In my district in Buena Park we actually provided a coach to every principal, on top of a district support person to be able to do so.

WILLIAMS: Okay.

MIRAMONTES: Any other questions?

SPARKS: Trustee Shaw, do you have any questions?

SHAW: No.

SPARKS: Okay. All right. Thank you.

MIRAMONTES: Thank you.

SPARKS: All right, we'll sort of skip over the legislative updates because I kind of touched on it a little bit and I'll have more to report when Tim and I have our week, or three days, in Washington DC next week. Yes. You have something else to add?

HENDRICK: I do. I'm sorry. Dave has the Esplanade report really quickly.

SPARKS: Oh, Dave, sorry.

HENDRICK: I'm sorry. It'll be quick.

SPARKS: He already spoke.

HENDRICK: Yeah, we'll give him twice this time. It's good news. So, there you go.

SPARKS: All right.

GIORDANO: All right. Well thank you. And again, good evening, Vice President Sparks and members of the Board. I just want to give you a quick update on our third quarter report for our Esplanade property, which of course is located adjacent to our Kalmus site. So this report covers the months of July through March of the current fiscal year, 2023-24. And again, the good news is the occupancy rate for the property still remains high. It's sitting at about 93% currently, and that's as of the end of the third quarter period, which closes March 31st, 2024. Both are operating revenues and expenditures, again, budgeted conservatively, and they're trending better than projected. So we're well positioned for the current year. That concludes the third quarter Esplanade report. Any questions?

SPARKS: Thank you. Any questions? Okay, we'll move on. Thank you. If we have no committee reports, we'll move on to board member comments which. . .

WILLIAMS: I have a committee . . .

SPARKS: You have a committee Report?

WILLIAMS: Tim and I are on this legislative-type of committee and we are following legislation. There's a Senate Bill 1380 by Senator Dodd, which would broadly bring new restrictions upon charter schools that are approved by this Board. So I, I've sent, Darou I think sent this out and it's in our red packets and it's going to be on our next meeting as an official resolution. I just want to bring that to everybody's attention so we can actively oppose this up in

Sacramento. I know Thomas Sheehy is going to need to have some official Board action, so Tim and I are going to put this on for the next meeting we have.

SPARKS: Okay, wonderful. President Shaw, do you have anything else to add to that or to the SB 907 that we've been involved with?

SHAW: Yeah, I was very discouraged that I learned of SB 1380 just after we had our executive committee meeting, so we didn't get it on this agenda unfortunately. Of course, there's thousands of bills and we don't know about all, and I've probably just been paying so much attention to 907. I didn't clue into that in time, so I apologize. Monday, two days ago, I flew up on the 6:45 AM flight out of Ontario Airport so I could get here super early in Sacramento to testify at the Senate Appropriations Committee. That was my third committee meeting, speaking on Senate Bill 907. It was officially held on the suspense calendar. I believe at some point here in a couple weeks, Senator Newman, as the author of the bill, will be having to make a decision about the bills he has on the suspense calendar and which bills are really his priority.

Of course, the State is low on money as we've been hearing about. Each legislator, if I understand the process correctly, might have so many bills that have passed policy committee that they're being held in appropriations and they don't have enough money, of course, to fund everybody's bill, so you kind of have to do battlefield triage there. I told the Senate Appropriations Committee that we felt that 907 was unnecessary and obviously a costly bill. I guess we'll just see what happens on that. I was actually with Senator Newman for lunch today and I invited him to my hotel room here to participate in the meeting and he said he might come. I had my door propped open. He hasn't shown up yet, so I guess we'll see what happens with that. Did you want me to do my other board member comments right now?

SPARKS: Not quite yet. I just want to make one additional comment to the legislative. So Tim and I also went up to the Senate Elections Committee regarding SB 907 and we were able to work with Tom Sheehy, the Sheehy Associate Group, and they're doing a really fantastic job making the argument of why fiscally, this is a very expensive bill that would really, in a year where our finances as a state are down the toilet, it really would be fiscally irresponsible, costing more than a million dollars. And they seem to really listen to us. There was some good dialogue going back and forth. Tim had the opportunity to talk to the Appropriations Committee on Monday. I really think that Sheehy and Associates are doing a really wonderful job of working also with Greg Rolen, our attorney, on really getting all the proper data to show why adding two board members packing the court is really not a good idea for Orange County, singling out Orange County relative to all the other 58 counties across the state. Why not have good legislation include all the counties? Why just Orange County? These are some of the questions we've been asking, and why move the election from primary to the general, which would cost hundreds of thousands, so it would have fiscal impact all the way around. Those are the arguments we made. People seem to be listening and I guess stay tuned.

SHAW: I should have mentioned too Dr. Sparks, I really wanted to acknowledge Senator Janet Nguyen, who made very thoughtful comments I thought at the Senate Elections Committee, as well as Senator Scott Wilk and Senator Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh at the Senate Education Committee, that each made I thought very strong points and helping us make that argument.

SPARKS: Wonderful. Wonderful. Thank you. So now we'll go to board member comments and we will start with you, President Shaw.

SHAW: Okay. Well I did hear, I was going to mention anyway, but in our public comments there was discussion about the Superintendent and of course we received word last week about Dr. Mijares retiring effective June 30th, and as our public commentor indicated, I believe we should have a transparent process. We already have up on the website for those who haven't seen it yet, the criteria to apply to be the Superintendent if you want to be considered for appointment. I understand you have to be a resident of Orange County, a registered voter in Orange County, and you have to hold an administrative credential, which is a lot of work to get. Most people don't have that, but for those who do, everyone's welcome to apply. We're hoping to get resumes and applications in by May 10th. I know we're giving a couple of weeks, but you can send that to an email here, contactatocbe.us, so your resume, up to three letters of reference, and just send that in an email to contactatocbe.us. The rest of the timeline will be looked at, but for now anyway, we can begin the process of taking applications. I'm sure that in my time here on the Orange County Board of Education, the vote on who we're going to appoint as Superintendent is likely to be the most significant vote I cast as a board member so I'm sure we're taking this very seriously and want to have a transparent process and get a good pool of applicants.

I also was curious about the comments asking us to have a student trustee. I know that is a process in a lot of local high school districts, having a high school student. That was an intriguing thought I had not thought of for a county board, and I was just going to maybe ask the staff, or Mr. Rolan, if you want to give me information, is that something that county boards of education across the state are known to do or is that not really a thing? I just would like information on that. I thought that was an interesting suggestion.

ROLEN: I represent county boards who have student board members.

SHAW: Oh, that is a thing?

ROLEN: Yes.

SHAW: Okay.

ROLEN: It is a thing. Yes.

BARKE: It's a new thing from what I understand. Just in the last year, I actually was, somebody approached me for comments on that months and months ago.

VALDES: The public comment was a student board member who had voting rights. Is that a thing too?

ROLEN: No, no. And I want to make it clear we don't have a woodshed.

SHAW: If I can share a quick anecdote on that, Jorge.

ROLEN: I can close session. I'm going to look at this issue more closely, but the boards I represent, they don't have voting rights.

SPARKS: Yeah, I don't think they do.

ROLEN: But I'll look into it.

BARKE: Okay.

SHAW: If I can share a quick anecdote on that. When I was working for Senator Huff, we had a group of students come in wanting to have student trustees with voting rights, and I remember him saying, "We don't believe in no taxation without representation, but I don't believe in representation without taxation." Thought that was a very, very good line. If you're not being taxed, you don't get to spend taxpayer money. Okay, last I wanted to also acknowledge and speak to the speakers that we had on antisemitism issue. And I know some of my colleagues went to OCSA specifically to speak there with some of the things that have been going on. I just wanted to acknowledge, I've been watching TV and you see these institutions of higher learning that are no longer institutions of higher learning. They look more like war zones, and it's very unbelievable that we'd live in a time when that can be possible.

I wanted to acknowledge our speakers and express as a member of the Board how disappointed I am to see so much hateful things being said. As my screen might indicate, for those who don't know me, I did live in Washington DC, I went to George Washington University, and one of the experiences I had there that was really one of the most impactful moments of my life, was visiting the Holocaust Museum there in Washington DC, and if you haven't been to something like that, it really leaves a mark on your soul. Having walked through that, I remember just walking out of there feeling like how could anybody treat Jewish people so poorly and so horrendously and I as an individual want to stand up and just say that I am disgusted with anyone who's spreading hateful things about Jewish people. I hope we can immediately nip that in the bud and not allow that to happen certainly at school, where all children should feel safe to attend. So those are my comments.

SPARKS: Thank you, President Shaw. I'll turn to my left. Trustee Barke, do you have any comments?

BARKE: No, I would echo a lot of what President Shaw said about the antisemitism, the hate, the unsafe. I fortunately don't watch TV, but I hear way too much from people who do watch TV and it's very disappointing, and I'm sorry, and I appreciate those who come here and share their experiences and their concerns and their support and yeah, we're living in scary times.

SPARKS: Thank you. Trustee Williams.

WILLIAMS: I was going to share with the Board about the meeting at the Orange County School of the Arts, but I think Jorge wants to start out.

SPARKS: Okay. Yeah. Trustee Valdes, would you like to start?

VALDES: Yeah, I guess since I was the one who initiated that, I should be the person who initially discusses it. Last month we had about ten Jewish students who appeared here for public comments. I can tell you on behalf of myself and my colleagues, the comments were alarming to me. If you are going to come down here and make public comments like that, without question, this trustee is listening and I know all my colleagues are listening. I said last month that I would ask for a meeting at OCSA and report back. That meeting did occur. I had a meeting with Teren Shaffer, Greg Endelman, Michael Ciecek of OCSA, who is the principal, Abbe Levine, who is the Assistant Principal of Disciplinary Actions, and Steven Wagner who is a board member. So there were five people there in addition to myself and my colleague, Dr. Williams.

We had, I think, a very fruitful discussion. I also want to mention that after the meeting, I did have multiple conversations with one of the parents of one of the students who was here during this past month. She provided me an Excel spreadsheet of the incidents of antisemitism that she was able to compile. She's an attorney, so she did a very good job. Her daughter also wrote up, I think it was a four-page writeup with pictures of some of the things that she has noticed around the school, so I had a really good bit of documentation for that meeting. I presented it to the five persons at OCSA who were there.

I believe that the incidents that these folks are claiming are real. There's just too much documentation to deny that. They're absolutely real. I feel very, it's disappointing for my Jewish constituents to have to be in that situation, but my purpose at the meeting is, what is the school going to do about it? I can tell you that I thought the reaction of the OCSA administrators was very, very sincere. They were not brushing these concerns off in my view at all. They showed me multiple communications that happened, that occurred after that recent article in the *Evolution Newspaper*.

I asked the staff here about OCSA's complaint procedure. I was provided the complaint procedure. I was told by the administrators that that complaint procedure is handed to every student and parent every year and that a parent needs to sign off on it. So OCSA does have a complaint procedure for this exact type of harassment. I believe the administration does take it seriously. They told me that they have disciplined six students in this year alone for antisemitic statements and harassment of other students. These included five-day suspensions. They have also taken the step of, they are sending, every tenth grader this year is taking a trip to the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles. I found that to be extraordinary.

So to my Jewish constituents, I believe you, we are certainly here for you. I think I'm going to call upon all the other students at the school to recognize this and support our Jewish community throughout this very trying time. I also want to send a message to, in particular, a teacher at OCSA named Lana Sawalha. She came up numerous times in my Excel spreadsheet, at least a dozen times. So this is my message to Mrs. Sawalha, "Ma'am, you may think what you are doing is within your rights and it probably is, but I can tell you that the actions that you are taking around the school, the statements you are making at the school are very hurtful. They're very damaging to the other students at OCSA. And like I said, while the things you are doing are probably well within your rights, perhaps a teacher at such a distinguished school probably shouldn't be doing them. So I would ask you to please self-reflect on the things you are saying and doing at the school to help all of our Jewish community through this very trying time."

SPARKS: Thank you. Trustee Williams, anything to add?

WILLIAMS: Boy, that's a real hard act to follow, Jorge. You articulated what happened very well. I can only express the same passion that Jorge did about the spirit and perhaps some underlying foundations to some biases and prejudice against people of certain faith. I do believe that our meeting had sincere people. There were the principal, two vice principals, there was executive director and one of the board members was present, and I felt that they took everything very seriously. In fact, their attorney, Maggie Chidester, sent the Board a transcript of every public comment that was made at our meeting last week. So it didn't fall on deaf ears for the families who are here from the school. The Board knows about it there. They take very seriously the events that happen. There is this great spiritual darkness that is in this world. When we look at what's happening in Columbia, UCLA, it is a sad world. It's a hard world and I do believe that it's prejudism, it's systemic antisemitism, it's people who are paid agitators and the community of faith, the Jewish community and such, are being targeted by these agitators.

WILLIAMS: As far as what's going to happen, I'm hoping that there will be changes. The staff promised changes. There was an organization called Groundswell that they were going to be having an event with. They held off on that because of certain controversies that were brought to their attention. So I think that's positive they are going to make a trip out to the Museum of Tolerance, I think as Jorge expressed. My only words to our good friends, "Thank you for sharing with us what happened. We share your pain, we share your sorrow, we share the difficulties that your community is facing." And that's it.

SPARKS: Okay. I just want to echo what many of my trustees have been saying. We are, our hearts, we send you all love and light and we're with you and here to support in any way we can. We're so sorry to hear all of this strife that you're having to listen to and deal with, and we will do everything we can to help and support. I'd like to sort of end the meeting by really honoring Superintendent Mijares. We got the news of his retirement last Friday, I believe it was. He served for many, many years, I think since 2012 here as Superintendent, but for many years in Orange County as well as Superintendent in Santa Ana, and up and down California, and has been just dedicated to educating K-12 students for his entire career. Particularly worked with disabled students earlier in his career, so he's had a soft spot in his heart for all students.

I just want to acknowledge his service to our community and express sorrow on behalf of all the Board. We're really sorry to hear the news of what he's been dealing with and what he's been going through. No one would wish that on anyone. I know he's a strong person and he's persevering. He has a lot of support and love around him, but I wanted to on behalf of the Board, send our love and light to him. He's probably not watching these meetings anymore, but if he is, we express our love and strength and light and prayers. I actually want to dedicate this book. It's one of my books that I write on called *Conversing with Cancer*. Now that we kind of know what he's going through, so I signed it, and I'd like to give it to him if you could make sure he gets it.

And for his family, each chapter is opened with a poem that is either written by my co-author who is a poet, or she found a significant poet to lead each chapter, and then the chapters are kind of organized around patient provider interaction in the cancer context and how that can play out. So it might be of help to his family as they go through this very difficult time. Sorry to end on

sort of a note, but I wanted to honor him the best way that we could here on the dais and thank you all for your support of him while he goes through that difficult time. And with that, I will adjourn the meeting and see you all next month. Thank you.