

**WILLIAMS:** Good evening. It's May 7th, 2025. The time is now about 4:05 PM. For the benefit of the record, the regular meeting of the Orange County Board of Education is called to order and Darou may we have roll call?

**SISAVATH:** Trustee Valdes?

**VALDES:** Present.

**SISAVATH:** Trustee Shaw?

**SHAW:** Here.

**SISAVATH:** Trustee Barke?

**BARKE:** Here.

**SISAVATH:** Trustee Williams?

**WILLIAMS:** Present.

**SISAVATH:** Trustee Sparks?

**SPARKS:** Here.

**WILLIAMS:** Wonderful. May I have a motion for the adoption of today's agenda?

**VALDES:** So moved.

**BARKE:** Second.

**WILLIAMS:** So moved by Trustee Valdes and second by Ms. Barke. All those in favor say aye.

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

**WILLIAMS:** Okay, so we don't have to do roll call today. We'll just do a voice vote. May I have a motion for adoption and approval of the minutes from the regular meeting of April 2nd?

**BARKE:** So moved.

**VALDES:** Second.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. We will give Ms. Barke the formal motion and second by Trustee Valdes. All those in favor say aye.

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

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. Public comments for a closed session, Renee. Oh, very good. Okay, so it is now about 4:08 and we will be in closed session until about 5:00 PM at which time we will start our meeting.

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

**WILLIAMS:** And we get to honor so many, many wonderful people. Part of our protocol for the Orange County Board of Education is starting our meeting out with reverence to a God and a maker of our country. For this we have Pastor Christina Williams from the Harbor Light Church here in Costa Mesa, who is a prayer warrior, and she's going to start us off with an invocation. And thank you again so much for being here.

**PASTOR CHRISTINA:** Thank you. It's a real honor. I just want you all to know here that we pray for you weekly, so you are covered in prayer by many people. The scripture says in Proverbs 11:13, "A city without wise leaders will end up in ruin, but a city with many wise leaders will be kept safe." Our gracious and living God, we come before you today with gratitude for the opportunity to gather and serve in the vital work of education. We thank you for the members of this board for their time, dedication, and willingness to lead. We thank you for the educators, parents and students and community members who support the mission of learning throughout Orange County. As with this meeting begins, we ask for your divine guidance. Grant each person at this table, clarity of thought, wisdom in decision-making and compassion in their conversations. Give them wisdom to lead with integrity, always placing the wellbeing and future of our children at the center of our work. May this board work not only for academic excellence, but for the safety and flourishing of every student, regardless of background, ability, or circumstance.

May the policies made here uplift our community and create an environment where all students can thrive and succeed. We pray that you would bless the educators and staff who give so much of themselves every day. Strengthen them with patience and vision and bless the families they serve, especially those who might feel unseen or unheard. May this board be a voice for them. We acknowledge the weight of this responsibility and ask for a spirit of unity and mutual respect. Let this meeting be marked by purpose, peace, and progress. We ask all these things with humility and hope in a living God. Amen.

**AUDIENCE:** Amen.

**WILLIAMS:** Thank you Pastor Williams. And let it be said. There's no relationship with our last names.

**PASTOR CHRISTINA:** No, that's right.

**WILLIAMS:** There's no favoritism. So, this is a part of our May meeting that is very meaningful. To give you a little bit of historical background, the Sunburst Youth Academy, that is Los Alamitos station up here, the base. We have some kids. We have some wonderful human beings who display patriotism and love for this country in a way that we don't get to normally see it. I'm going to ask Sergeant Kim, if you can at this time, if you want to bring in the color guard, we'll have Chief Warrant Officer Sullivan give the Pledge of Allegiance and we'll have our national anthem. So, Sergeant Kim, if you want to bring in the color guard.

**SERGEANT KIM:** Color guard attention. Forward march. Color Guard, halt. Right, face march. Color guard, halt. Present, colors.

**WILLIAMS:** Chief Warrant Officer Sullivan.

**CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER SULLIVAN:** Yes, sir.

**WILLIAMS:** Thank you, sir.

**CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER SULLIVAN:** Good evening all. Ladies and gentlemen, if you could please face the United States National Flag and place your right hand over your heart and join me in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**AUDIENCE:** 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.

**DAFNIE:** O say can you see, by the dawn's early light, what so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming, whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight, o'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming? And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air, gave proof through the night that our flag was still there; O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

**SERGEANT KIM:** Forward, march.

**WILLIAMS:** To give it a little bit of background, these are the kids who are at the Los Alamitos Joint military base. And these are kids who are there because they're court assigned because they have been in trouble with the law and individuals like Chief Warrant Officer Sullivan, who operates as teachers and mentors to these kids. As you're going to see a little bit later when we start reading the Memorial Day essays, you're going to come away from today hopefully saying America's a little bit brighter because of them. We have hope. We're passing that baton to a nation of young men and women who love this country, who love what it stands for. And you're going to see a lot of nice things in this early part of this meeting and they're just one of them. So, we're going to get started here. We're going to follow up with our agenda. We have special presentations. The first presentation will be by Dr. Sparks, and it is a presentation, a certificate to the Reagan National Civics Bee winner.

**SPARKS:** Yes.

**WILLIAMS:** Dr. Sparks.

**SPARKS:** Thank you. So, I'll just say a few words and then we'll give Reagan her award and recognition and then I'd ask Reagan to say a few words about the event. So, on March 12, the Nixon Foundation made history this year hosting California's first ever National Civics Bee competition. The event was presented with the Yorba Linda Chamber of Commerce and the US Chamber of Commerce Foundation and the winner. And I was so honored to serve as one of the judges for the event because I serve on one of the committees, the Education Committee of the Nixon Foundation. So, it was very exciting to be among the first judges at the very first event. And our winner was eighth grader Reagan Kemmerer from St. Junipero Serra Catholic High School. And she took home first place. This was, yes, thank you. And we heard 20 students. We got sort of the top 20 that we were judging and then we whittled it down to the top 10 students that night, that evening, and then she emerged as the top student in giving her speech. Reagan, I'd like to give you the certificate of recognition and maybe we'll take a picture. Yes.

But before I do that, I'd love for Reagan to just say a few words about the event and encourage others your age to participate in the event next year. Would you mind?

**REAGAN:** Yeah, all in all, I think that it was just such an amazing experience, especially going into high school. I think that I have always had a great appreciation for our country and I've always loved what it stands for, and I love to be able to live here. And I think that this experience has brought me such a deeper and greater appreciation. Seeing the background and everything that went into building such an amazing country. I was just fascinated by it. It was such an amazing thing to learn about, to read about, to be able to talk to it about my peers who were also studying for the Bee. And with the competition itself, being there, I made so many new friends, I was able to communicate with people who were doing the same thing as me studying all those hours. And I think that all in all, I think it is just such an amazing experience to go through.

And I think I recommend it so much, just take your chance because I have never been the, I get good grades, I've never been the top A student, but I think that this has brought me so much confidence in myself for academics and my education part of my life. And I think that anybody who is just a little bit interested in this topic should just go for it. Because even if you didn't win, even if everybody made so many new friends, we were able to talk about it with each other. And I'm so proud to be able to say that I learned so much and it was such an amazing experience.

**SPARKS:** And Reagan, can you tell the audience how they could participate next year if they wanted to get involved, number one, and what do they have to do and what it entails to be in the competition and how they could find information. And then secondly, if you could let them know what's next in terms of the next event at the Reagan Library and how it plays out in the state of California and then on the national level.

**REAGAN:** Okay. Yeah. So, to enter the competition, you have to write an essay about something in your community that you would like to improve. So, for me, I wrote about public transportation because in my community I think that it could be improved. And then from there they picked the top 20 essays that were entered into the competition. And then you go and you compete. And the top 10 from that competition, now go to the Reagan Library. And that's

considered the state competition because the past one was the regional competition and now we're moving on to state. And from there, only one person moves on to the national competition in Washington DC.

**SPARKS:** And thank you. That was amazing. And from what I understand, this year there are about 40 some states that participated. And next year the expectation is because we talked to the national people who came to our event, and it's expected that all 50 states will be participating next year. So, this is kind of like the spelling bee that maybe you're more familiar with and it's the civics bee. So, it's a very, very cool project and I'm so honored to be a part of it. And we're so proud of you for winning at the Nixon Library.

**REAGAN:** Thank you.

**PHOTOGRAPHER:** One, two, three. Okay, here we go. Ready? 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. And 1, 2, 3.

**REAGAN:** Thank you so much.

**HENDRICK:** Ken do you guys just want to stay here and I'll hand out the next two?

**WILLIAMS:** Yes. Excellent. For Mr. Escobar, do you want to go ahead and give a bit of background?

**HENDRICK:** There we go. So, we are going to do a special recognition right now. Oops, sorry. Juan Escobar come up right now. The board will present you with a certificate and one is being awarded because on April 23rd, he was awarded the Above and Beyond Award from the North Orange County SELPA. And so that's a regional program with La Habra, Lowell Joint, Buena Park, Fullerton Elementary and Fullerton High School Elementary and OCDE. They were recognizing him for his above and beyond performance and his helping our children. We wanted to congratulate him and let the board thank him.

**PHOTOGRAPHER:** 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3.

**HENDRICK:** Thank you, Juan. The next person we'd like to recognize is Jesus Valadez. Come on down. Now you guys all know Jesus because you see him quite often. We think he's very special, but the PTA has also recognized him for his special contribution to their events. He's a huge help to them, and they just wanted us all to know how much they appreciate him and how much he really exemplifies OCDE's staff. So, thank you, Jesus. We appreciate you.

**PHOTOGRAPHER:** Here we go 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3.

**WILLIAMS:** To Juan and Jesus. Thank you so much for just being those very special human beings that are out there making a difference, touching other people's lives. We so appreciate. Okay, next on the agenda, this is a real special for me, and I'm going to make my way over to the side here. So, we began the Jack Hammett Memorial Day essay. Oh, how long has it been now? About 15 years that we've been doing this. Jack Hammett was a very special man, and he was former mayor of Costa Mesa. And he happened to be the Freedom Committee founder and just

an extemporaneously, a wonderful, wonderful spontaneous person, loves people. He was on the Pearl Harbor. What ship was he on?

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** He was a medic.

**WILLIAMS:** He was a medic. But he was not on the Arizona?

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** They parked the USS New Jersey [several inaudible words].

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. So, he was a medic in World War II and he made a difference in the storytelling of our veterans. And these veterans from the Freedom Committee go out in our communities and they talk about what it's like to be in a war, to be in the military service. And today we have the Freedom Committee, ex-president and president. Captain, you're welcome to come up and let's talk a little bit more about what Freedom Committee does and what does it mean. And Scott, if you can come also. The Freedom Committee does have as its mission to bring living history into the classroom by telling stories to all generations from World War II, the Korean War, you're a Vietnam veteran?

**CAPTAIN TIM:** Vietnam captain.

**WILLIAMS:** Vietnam captain right. So, they tell about the memories, they tell about what it means and they share stories that are very meaningful. And you give it the stories to classrooms correct? And then to whatever organization that invites you to speak up. Very good.

**CAPTAIN TIM:** And the students take our notes and write it down and they get history and English.

**WILLIAMS:** I love it. Scott, do you want to say a few words? You come up here.

**FIRST LIEUTENANT SCOTT:** If you knew Jack, you knew he was a patriot and a very passionate patriot. He went into service when he was 17 years old, grew up in Cleveland, Ohio, and they weren't their family, I think the dad was a painter. Things weren't going well for him in school. He joined the Navy. Now, growing up in California, I couldn't figure out how you could go in the Navy in Cleveland, but there's a big lake next to it. And that's where the Navy had their 17-year-old potentially Navy service people. And that's how he learned. And in 1938, he joined the service full time. Spent 23 years in the Navy as Ken mentioned. He was at Pearl Harbor, he was assigned to the hospital there. When the bombers came in in December 7th, 1941, his landlord knocked on the door. Jack got the money from his wife to pay the landlord. Door opens and the landlord says, "I want the money."

And he says, "Oh, by the way, the Japanese are bombing Pearl Harbor." Because most of the people thought it was a Army or military training session. But Jack really inspired all of the veterans to get involved. And I think when I joined in 2010, we had 50 World War II veterans. We had six or seven Korean War veterans, about 20 Vietnam veterans, and then we also had associate members. And it grew from then once we started having the veteran stories converted to a PowerPoint presentation, then the kids could see what the veterans talking about. And we

had anywhere from 100 to 120 people come to our weekly meetings. So, we continue on. Jack promoted me from Vice President in 2013 to president and he was going to stick around for another 10 years, but he passed away at 92. So, he did a good job. So, thank you.

**WILLIAMS:** Thank you, Scott. So as a result, when we first started a decade and a half ago, it's been a long, long time. It started out as honoring Freedom Committee and then it expanded to something for the kids. We actually created an essay. And I'm going to ask Analee, where are you? Please come on up. As we enter into that portion of the essay, we should be talking about it more in detail. But Jack set up this wonderful storytelling, and then he set up this memorial and then we gave this award and we actually honored his children, his daughter, over a decade ago. And it was quite an event. And it's even getting bigger now, isn't it? We have over 100 kids that participated in this essay contest?

**KREDEL:** 124.

**WILLIAMS:** 124. So, it's become quite an event. And the staff, we all volunteered to give a little financial awards and you're going to get into the detail, but I want to thank you for what you do in the community, going out and telling stories. And Captain, thank you so much. And Lieutenant, right?

**FIRST LIEUTENANT SCOTT:** First Lieutenant.

**WILLIAMS:** First Lieutenant, yes. Thank you so much for being here. And we honor our great veterans from World War II, Korean, Vietnam, Cold War, and the Iraq, Afghanistan wars. Okay. Thank you so much again, and I'll leave it up to you.

**KREDEL:** Thank you, President Williams. Appreciate that. And members of the board and Dr. Bean. So, it's my pleasure to be here this evening. My name is Analee Kredel, I'm the associate superintendent and I'm thrilled to be supporting both the Connections in the ACCESS program. And I'm thrilled. I'm deeply appreciated for this opportunity to have our students participate in the 11th annual Jack Hammett Memorial Essay and Art Contest. So, students were invited to participate from a cross ACCESS and Connections, and our students responded to the prompt, what does Memorial Day mean to you? We had 65 submissions from our ACCESS students and in the fourth year, so this is the fourth year we've opened it up to our Connection students and we had 59 submissions from our Connection students. So that's thrilled. And as I said, it's 124 total submissions, the most submissions we've ever had. So that's worth an applause.

So just as a quick reminder a bit about our programs, ACCESS is a nationally recognized alternative education program offering transformative learning experiences and supports to students across Orange County. And then our amazing Connections program serves students referred to us by all 28 school districts with some of the most extensive support needs. So, before we begin celebrating our students tonight, I'd like to introduce our ACCESS and Connections team. And as it turns out, there are so many of you. I had you by name, but there's a whole bunch of you. So, if you work for either ACCESS and Connections and supported students through this process, please stand up.

And I know we had many of our others that weren't able to be here, but please know my heartfelt thank you for this work. And I think as many of you know, I love the Memorial Day essay contest. So today we're celebrating those 124 students that submitted submissions to this event. And so tonight we're going to start off with our first, second, and third winners for the essay contest for Connections. So, our third-place awardee and winner of \$50, Kevin Carrigan, and he is with our Connections program at Golden West College, and his teacher is Joe Arnold. So, Joe, come up. Congratulations. She's going to get it. So, you're going to wait with me for a second.

**HENDRICK:** You want to come down to take your picture?

**WILLIAMS:** Are we going down, picture in the front? You just have to be ready, right?

**KREDEL:** That's right.

**WILLIAMS:** You're doing a great job.

**KREDEL:** Thank you. And Kevin is the winner of \$50.

**PHOTOGRAPHER:** All right, perfect.

**KREDEL:** And our second-place winner is Carven Ang from our Connections program at Harbor Learning Center South. And his teacher is David Van Sutphin.

**PHOTOGRAPHER:** 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3.

**KREDEL:** And Carven. And he has a check in there as well for \$75. And then our first-place awardee and the winner of \$100 is Nana, who is at our Connections at Harbor Learning Center South, and her teacher is Wendy Watts. Nana, she's not here. Okay, I'm sorry. Unfortunately, she wasn't able to be here tonight, but we'll have Christa Paul, will you come up and accept the award on her behalf? We could trust Christa with the money.

**PHOTOGRAPHER:** All right, here we go. 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3. And here we go.

**KREDEL:** There's more. So, then we also had so many entries that we also had three winners in the art contest and our first of our winners for the art contest, a little untraditional, but we had a class project done by Angelica Pulido's class. Angelica come up, she's going to accept the award on behalf of her class, and the art is in the back. If any point you want to check out some of the arts, amazing. It's really well done. Angelica, thank you for supporting your class in this work, and she'll use that money on behalf of all of her students.

**PHOTOGRAPHER:** 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3, and one more. 1, 2, 3.

**KREDEL:** And then our second-place awardee and winner of \$75 in the art contest is Ryan Aval, and he is enrolled in our Connections at Irvine High School and his teacher is Kristin Bartus. Ryan was here, so we're pleased that he made it.

**PHOTOGRAPHER:** 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3.

**KREDEL:** And Kristin, you can stay up there because you also have the first-place winner. So, our first-place winner in the art category was Ari, and he's from our Connections at Irvine High School and his teacher is Kristin Bartus. Come on Ari. Did amazing job, congratulations, Ari.

**PHOTOGRAPHER:** 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3.

**KREDEL:** That's wonderful. Thank you, Ari. Thank you. And now we're going to switch over to the ACCESS side, and I am delighted to recognize the writers of the top three essays from our ACCESS program and our third-place awardee and the award for \$100 is cadet Michael Marquez from the Sunburst Youth Academy and the teacher is Elizabeth Wilson.

**PHOTOGRAPHER:** Here we go. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3.

**KREDEL:** Congratulations. And our second-place awardee and the winner of \$150 is cadet Lyra Montanez, and she is from the Sunburst Youth Academy and her teacher is Jacquelynn Cerbin. Congratulations.

**LYRA:** Thank you.

**PHOTOGRAPHER:** Here we go. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. And 1, 2, 3.

**KREDEL:** And now I'd like to announce our first-place awardee and the winner of \$250 to Rebecca Page and she is from our Mission Viejo program and our teacher is Mike Zanio.

**PHOTOGRAPHER:** All here we go. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3.

**KREDEL:** So as is our tradition, Rebecca, we would like you to read your essay. Yes. Perfect.

**REBECCA:** Okay. This is my essay, what Memorial Day means to me. Memorial Day holds a deep personal significance as a time to reflect on the sacrifices made by countless individuals, including my own grandpa in service to our country. For me, it is a solemn day of remembrance, one that provides an opportunity to honor the lives of those who gave the freedom, the freedom I often take for granted. Growing up, I never understood the weight of Memorial Day. It was often a day off of school, a time for family gatherings, barbecues, and the unofficial start of summer. As I got older, however, my perspective began to shift, I started to learn more about the history of the day, its roots in honoring following soldiers and the countless families who grieve the loss of the loved ones who died in service. The shift in perspective transformed the day into something much more meaningful.

To me, Memorial Day is a reminder of the fragility of life and the extraordinary courage of those who put themselves in harm's way to protect the ideals of liberty and justice. I think about the soldiers who never made it back, those who sacrificed their futures, their hopes and their dreams so the rest of us could live in peace. It is a humbling thought, one that fills me with gratitude and respect, why I cannot imagine the pain of losing a loved one in such a way I recognize the profound impact it has on families and communities across the nation. The day serves as a call to remember the freedoms we enjoy did not come easily and they are not guaranteed. It reminds me of the responsibility I have, not only to honor the fallen, but also to live a life worthy of their

sacrifices. Memorial Day is not just about reflecting on the past, but about making sure we continue to uphold the values that these men and women fought for.

While there is solemnity on Memorial Day, there is also unity. It brings people together from all walks of life, united in the collective gratitude for those who have served. Whether through attending a memorial service, visiting a cemetery, or simply taking a moment of silence, Memorial Day fosters a sense of shared purpose and national pride. In a world that often seems divided Memorial Day reminds me that despite our differences, we all benefit from the freedoms and protections that service members have fought to preserve. It is a day that transcends political affiliations or personal beliefs. It is a day to pause, reflect and remember that the cost of freedom is measured in lives. In the end, Memorial Day is more than just a day on the calendar. It's a time to reflect, to honor, and to ensure that the sacrifices of our fallen heroes are never forgotten. It is a day that inspires me to live with purpose and gratitude, acknowledging the debt we owe to those who have given everything so that we may live in freedom. Thank you.

**KREDEL:** Thank you so much, Rebecca, for that very, very powerful essay. We really appreciate it. And then thank you to the board, Dr. Williams and the board for your support, both cabinet as well as the board provided the financial support for this and the reading. And it just really means a lot. So, I think you can see that we've grown and grown and it's just equally, it gets more powerful. So, thank you very much.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.

**WILLIAMS:** Thank you, Analee, for doing a great job there and what a wonderful essay you gave. We so appreciate that. Out of a special request and presidential privilege with unanimous consent, I'm going to move up item number 26, which is our honoring of our Jewish community with the Jewish American Heritage Month a proclamation. So, may I have a motion for this proclamation?

**BARKE:** I'd like to make a motion to adopt the proclamation.

**SPARKS:** I'll second that.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. So, we have a motion by Trustee Barke and a second by Dr. Sparks. Comments?

**BARKE:** Yes. I would just like to recognize the Jewish community in Orange County and beyond. They are a small but mighty group, and so we just wanted to take a moment to recognize them with the proclamation.

**WILLIAMS:** Wonderful. Would you like to read the proclamation?

**BARKE:** If you'd like me to sure.

**WILLIAMS:** Yes. Let's read it into the record.

**BARKE:** Oh dear. I think I'm going to get my glasses for that though. Small print. "Whereas, the Orange County Board of Education will pay tribute to the contributions of Jewish Americans who have culturally enriched the County of Orange; and whereas, the history of Jewish Americans in Orange County has inextricably tied to the greater story of the United States; and whereas Jewish refugees have fled oppression and discrimination for centuries and have sought sanctuary in our nation, State of California and County of Orange; and whereas Jews are an ethnic people who share a culture, language, ancestry and identity, and remain connected through Judaism, the ethnic religion comprising the ancient beliefs, practices, mythologies and laws of the Jewish people; and whereas, American Jews comprise 1% of the Orange County population; and whereas, the Jewish community has helped define the character and values of the County of Orange through its Jewish synagogues, the Jewish Community Center of Orange County, the Orange County Jewish Federation, and private Jewish day schools serving Jewish and non-Jewish families; and whereas, celebrating our community's diverse heritage helps strengthen our appreciation of their contributions and inoculate us against hate; and whereas, celebrating Jewish American Heritage Month provides the people of the County of Orange with an opportunity to recognize the achievements, contributions, and history of, and to understand the challenges faced by the Jewish Americans. Now, therefore, the Orange County Board of Education does hereby proclaim May, 2025 as Jewish American Heritage month." And I have a presentation, I think there's a couple of people in the audience that would like to come receive it. Would that be all right?

**WILLIAMS:** Yes. Let's get a group picture.

**BEAN:** Absolutely. Well if you like me on that side, no, no, right here.

**PHOTOGRAPHER:** Now I got everyone. All right. Here we go. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. All right, thank you.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay, so now we get down to business here. We're going to make an announcement.

**BARKE:** We didn't vote yet.

**HENDRICK:** We actually didn't take the vote yet.

**WILLIAMS:** We didn't take the vote? Okay. We will do the vote right now. Absolutely.

**SHAW:** We had a motion and a second.

**WILLIAMS:** We had a motion and a second. So, there's no comment. We read it into the record. All those in favor say aye.

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

**WILLIAMS:** Okay, moving on. We will be taking a break. There is a reception with cookies and beverages that will be in the break room in the lobby. I will take a five-minute break for

those of you who would like to attend that reception. If you want to attend the rest of the meeting, it's a little laborious and technical, but we'd love to have you join us and I want to give a special readout to Chief Warrant Officer Sullivan and our wonderful people from our charter school, Sunburst. You guys are awesome what you do out there. Thank you for coming and doing the color guard and participating in today's meeting. We so appreciate it.

**BARKE:** And we have 17 public comments when we come back.

**WILLIAMS:** So just as a matter of what we're going to be doing next. We're going to be taking the reception break and then we're going to continue with a consent calendar and then in about five minutes of public comments. If you have a public comment, you will get that opportunity in about five minutes. Thank you so much. Five-minute break.

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

**WILLIAMS:** Okay, we're going to begin our meeting. Renee, do we have any introductions?

**HENDRICK:** No, we have none.

**WILLIAMS:** We have no introductions. I'm going to quickly do a consent calendar. Items number five through 12. May I have a motion for the consent calendar?

**BARKE:** So moved.

**WILLIAMS:** And I will second it. Okay. Consent calendar. Just for those of you who are observing a board meeting, we normally don't discuss it. It's an up or down vote. Okay. We have a motion and a second. No discussion. All those in favor say aye.

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

**WILLIAMS:** Wonderful. Thank you. Okay, we're going to move on to that part of our meeting, which is the public comments. And we have how many public comments?

**BARKE:** We have 18.

**WILLIAMS:** And we're going to give you two minutes each to give us your public comments. And Darou will you give us, or Renee, will you give the rules to our speakers?

**HENDRICK:** You'll get the podium back there. This light, it'll buzz when you have 30 seconds left, but you'll see the countdown there. And so, we would please hold your comments to the two minutes since we have multiple comments besides these.

**BARKE:** And if you want to go less than two minutes, we won't complain about that either. If you just have one thing to say, just say it quickly and run away. All right. I'm going to announce the person that is speaking and the person on deck. Birgitta is first and we have Bianca on deck.

**BIRGITTA:** Good evening board members. My name is Birgitta Vonknipe. I'm a mother of twins. This is one. There's another one. We are enrolled with Suncoast Preparatory Academy, which we absolutely love and we homeschool. As a devoted homeschool parent, I'm here to strongly oppose AB 84. This bill threatens to dismantle the very foundation of parental rights and educational freedom by imposing unnecessary oversight and control over home education. My children thrive in an individualized learning environment tailored to their academic, emotional and spiritual needs. They're doing third grade and they're six. Something that traditional schools cannot always provide. AB 84 would rob families of the right to make these deeply personal decisions and force a one size fits all model on children who deserve better. Moreover, AB 84 violates our first amendment rights by limiting our freedoms to choose an educational path that aligns with our values and beliefs. School choice is not just a privilege, it's a constitutional protection to ensure families can pursue what's best for their children. I made it and under two.

**BARKE:** Okay, we have Bianca next and we have Mercedes on deck.

**CAPTAIN WILKERSON:** All right. Good evening everyone. My name is Captain Wilkerson. I'm the Huntington Beach recruiting company commander. I have four stations here in Orange County. We have one in Lake Forest, Mission Viejo, Huntington Beach and Tustin. So, I know any veterans in the audience. I just want to say thank you for your service. I appreciate the path that you set before us. Before I say anything else, so I would just like to, I have had the pleasure to speak with you all before and do a presentation. I really appreciate that and again, in this forum, I thank you for the opportunity to allow me to speak with you again. Just wanted to bring to the board's attention that we will be having a careers and public service event on 12 September, 2025. We'll be working with high schools in Orange County to not only showcase Army jobs and equipment, we will have other community partners such as police, firefighters.

We'll seek partnership with colleges in the area such as Saddleback and others in Orange County. We've already established a partnership with the Orange County representatives such as Saga Conroy and Mayor Voights. This event will be held in Irvine Regional Park with the focus on our high school students and college students showing and showcasing careers in the public service. As of now, if you all can offer any transportation assistance for the students, that seems to be, I know it's based off of the school districts, what they're able to provide, which I've talked to as well. But any assistance with that, with transporting the students from their high school to the event, that would be greatly appreciated. Or if you just want to come out and see what's going on, we will 100% appreciate that as well. But other than that, just wanted to say thank you again for allowing me this opportunity and to anyone else, we'll be having Army equipment there, firefighters having equipment, police officers, and again, it's just to showcase all the different career opportunities that we have in the Army. Specifically, Army, but the Army has over 200 and plus jobs. But other than that, have a great evening and thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you Bianca. Next is Mercedes and then Judy is on deck.

**MERCEDES:** Good evening, chair and board members. My name is Mercedes and I'm here to talk about my school Learn4Life. I'm proud to share that through commitment and hard work I'm actually graduating this month so I have so many great experiences and one of my proud accomplishments is actually being student council president.

As student council president, I wanted to highlight the incredible support my school provides for me. Reflecting on my accomplishment in the past school years, I've successfully completed six college courses and through the dual enrollment program that we have at school, I know that now that I have a job through the Workforce Innovation Act, I can finally help my family financially. Last year when I was here, I shared that Learn4Life offers a flexible schedule. This allows me to go to school, work on my credits and balance my work schedule. But thanks to this arrangement, I'm helping my family as they maintain demanding work schedule. Learn4Life has been an exceptional school. Ensuring that no students left behind, students are given a second chance it is often unavailable in traditional schools. From community affairs to work, college and career readiness and workforce readiness. I can proudly walk into college and be self-dependent because Learn4Life has truly taught me about being a prepared adult with social workers and tutors available on campus, Learn4Life, rise, everything needed in terms of support. And since joining Learn4Life, I experienced personal growth built on my character and received unwavering support from my teachers. So now that I am graduating, I wanted to come back to share these successes with everyone here. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you Mercedes. Next is Judy, followed by Kenneth.

**JUDY:** I want to thank you for recognizing Jewish American Heritage Month and for your beautifully worded proclamation. I'd like to share the story of the contributions of a lesser known Jewish American, Marvin Camras. In 1954, Mr. Camras received the John Scott Award for scientific achievement. Other recipients of this award include Thomas Edison, Orville Wright, Madam Curie, and Jonas Salk. In 1979, Mr. Camras with the 56th recipient of the Washington Award. Other recipients included Orville Wright and Henry Ford. In the Washington Award program, they wrote, "Marvin Camras is an electrical engineer inventor and physicist who's often been called the father of modern tape recording. In the 1930s, he developed a successful wire recorder and has since been awarded more than 500 patents. Before and during World War II, his early wire recorders were classified top secret by the military and used to train pilots and helped develop sonar for submarines. Battle sounds were recorded and equipment was developed to amplify it by thousands of watts. The recordings were placed where the invasion of D-Day was not taking place, giving false information to the Germans. When the war ended, the public first heard about Camras's work." I want to thank you for giving me the chance to remember and celebrate this exceptional Jewish American, one of whom I'm personally very proud. He was my uncle. Marvin Camras. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you. Next, we have Kenneth, followed by Cherie.

**KENNETH:** Hello, my name's Kenneth McCullough. I want to thank you, guys, for having me speak out. In 2016, Epic Charter School leaders, one of them, Mr. Harris, came into this very room advertising, wanting to promote their Epic Charter Schools from Oklahoma. This is a mugshot to them right here. They have targeted children online taking funding, millions of

dollars' worth of funding. This school board knows about it because they received a 20-page report about what was going on. Okay, going forward in 2021, my mother-in-law abducted my three daughters. These are my three beautiful daughters. I filed it in police report everything. They could not find them. It's been going on, finally I come to find out that later on that the mother had placed them into Epic Charter Schools, but stating that they were at Portola High School the whole time I would go and file, they would say, here's an email to the teacher, they're supposed to be here.

I did a had the police come up to Portola, but they were online. This is a predatory program. Hundreds of kids are being placed on there. Teachers never even came back and got their jobs after COVID. All they're doing is taking federal funding from this program and putting, putting these kids online. And some of these kids are missing when they're talking about kids being missing all over California and other states. It's because of these online programs. They are putting these kids online and you're never seeing them. That's why the enrollment is going down and public in schools and Title I schools and schools that are predominantly black and Hispanic schools because they are putting these kids online and these board members, you guys should be ashamed of yourselves for approving this school. And I'm still trying fighting to get my kids back. But what I did learn was that the mother did have them an Epic Charter Schools. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you. Next is Cherie, followed by Michelle.

**CHERIE:** I'm going to go really fast. I thought I had three minutes. I was here last fall to talk to you about our property at 809 North Main that shared a parking lot. I have a parking easement there with the Orange County School of the Arts and they continue to close off for 18 months, make it impossible between three and five every weekday to come and go freely from there. As a result, I've now lost business. The Orange County Crazy's Comedy Organization has lost students. We've had to cancel classes and it's just to the point where it's unbearable. Just let me give you a little history quickly. In 2010 when they bought that building, they asked to buy my property. I refused to sell it to them. Since then, it has been one long string in my opinion, of aggressive and oppressive and cruel acts of discrimination against us.

I believe they're trying to get us off that property. And I say this after 15 years. My request tonight, and I hate to ask this because I'm friends with a lot of people there, I'm asking you to revoke their charter. They also operate as if they're above the law. They don't pull permits on things. They have parties and events. They have kids painting easels in the parking lot with the cars coming and going. It's just insane and we really can't take it anymore. And now we're suffering and we don't even know if we're going to be able to stay there. So please revoke their charter. And I wonder, doesn't it give you pause to know that five years ago the Santa Ana Unified School District, one of the best in the country and I've taught a lot of places, refused to renew their charter. So, I'm asking you all to please consider it because there's nothing else we can do and we're not able to even function anymore. Thank you very much.

**BARKE:** Thank you. Next is Michelle, followed by Tiffany.

**MICHELLE:** Good evening. I'm Michelle Sapanara, assistant superintendent of student services at Springs Charter Schools. But in addition to that role, I also am elected to serve on the state board for the California Association of Supervisors of Child Welfare and Attendance, CASPA, CASPA supports student services like counseling, safety, attendance and services for homeless and foster kiddos. Last week, Dr. Bean was our opening keynote for our 88th annual state conference. Over 700 members from around the state were inspired by his story of love and hope, the value of education, and the power of resilience. Thank you. In Springs Charter School news, we recently hired a new position, Jose Lopez. He is our new English learner coach. He will work with our Orange Springs and Citrus Springs teachers to support the English language development and academic progress of our English learners. Thank you for all you do to support Springs Charter Schools and all schools in Orange County. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you. Next is Tiffany, followed by Heidi.

**TIFFANY:** Good evening. Thank you for this opportunity to share public comments today. I am here today because I want to express my gratitude to you for appointing Dr. Bean to county superintendent 11 months ago. This is the best thing that could have ever happened for public education and for families with school-aged children in Orange County. I am also here to update you on the current state of affairs at Irvine International Academy and to appeal to you for immediate assistance and engagement. This afternoon unfortunately, I had to email you a formal complaint against Irvine International Academy. The complaint identifies five areas of concern with documented examples. I kindly ask the following of you and of our IIA charter authorizer. Number one, please investigate the recent hiring of Dr. Stephanie Henry, who is replacing Dr. Amy Kernan who announced her retirement. Our community deserves assurance that the hiring process was conducted with the highest level of integrity and that the most qualified candidate was hired.

Number two, please investigate the Brown Act violation cited in the complaint. Number three, please investigate the other concerns raised by IIA community members here tonight. Number four, help us restore the strength to our IIA board. I kindly request OCBE's nomination or appointment of a candidate that is well versed on school leadership, charter school policies, dual immersion and fiscal oversight. Number five, please send a designated representative from OCDE to mentor our IIA board and observe how board meetings are conducted, paying close attention to the interactions between the board and executive director as we navigate our second major leadership change in less than one year. I sincerely thank you for your consideration and support.

**BARKE:** Thank you. Next is Heidi, followed by Ronna.

**HEIDI:** Okay. Hi. First, I want to speak on behalf of everyone at Suncoast and how deeply grateful we are for all of you as our amazing authorizers. Thank you so much for your ongoing support for our school. As a former public-school teacher and now as a teacher of record for Suncoast Preparatory Academy for the last four years, I stand by the conviction the parents should have the right to choose how they educate their own children. After all, they are their children's first teacher. During his February announcement that he's running for California's superintendent of public instruction assembly member Al Muratsuchi vowed to fight to defend

our schools and our students against attacks on public education from the Trump administration. Yet Muratsuchi's signature legislation this year and when heard last week in the education committee he chairs is the biggest attack we've seen on the ability of California parents to secure the best possible education for their kids.

Assembly Bill 84 would give the department he hopes to lead new powers to quash charter schools and force them to become like struggling traditional public schools. Charters are publicly funded, but their success is angered the educational establishment for years. While everyone wants to ensure that charter schools operate the highest level of fiscal probability, AB 84 would trigger expanded audits, invest new powers and state auditors to harass these schools. Charters have succeeded because they're freed from bureaucratic constraints, but this bill would destroy what makes them special. It is a cynical effort that will hurt rather than help them. Please help us support no on AB 84. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you Heidi. Next is Ronna, followed by Windi.

**RONNA:** Good evening board members. My name is Ronna Yelin. I work on the school support team for Suncoast Prep Academy. I want to express deep appreciation for the work you do to support educational choice in Orange County. The thoughtful charter school oversight provided by your board and especially the support you've given to schools like Suncoast Prep has made a meaningful difference in the lives of so many students and families regardless of their zip code and some that are medically fragile. Unfortunately, that kind of success is at risk. AB 84 is an enormous piece of legislation that would drastically reshape charter education in California. While it targets non-classroom-based models, its consequences will ripple across all charter schools regardless of structure or track record. Programs like, like Suncoast, which serve families through personalized, flexible learning could be dismantled by this bill's mandates. It removes tools that help us serve students and adds bureaucracy where there should be collaboration. We hope this board will consider taking a strong stance in opposition to AB 84. Your leadership matters and your voice could help protect thousands of students in Orange County and beyond. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you Ronna. Next is Windi, followed by Anh Lilly.

**WINDI:** Hi, my name is Windi and I thank you for your continued support of charter schools and the diverse public education options available to families in Orange County. I want to thank you for authorizing Suncoast. Under the leadership of Dr. Bean, we have seen a shift in the approach of the charter oversight office moving to a more collaborative and supportive relationship while maintaining high standards and accountability. That kind of partnership truly matters. And I'm here tonight to sound the alarm on AB 84, a sweeping and destructive piece of state legislation that threatens not just non-classroom-based schools like Suncoast, but all charter schools in our state. This bill is massive in scope and would impose new restrictions, eliminate key instructional options, and strip away the flexibility that allows charter schools to innovate to meet students' needs. AB 84 undermines the charter schools that your board has successfully supported. I urge you to please formally oppose this bill and continue standing with the thousands of families in Orange County who rely on charter schools for high quality public education. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you, Windi. Next is Anh Lily, followed by Suraj.

**ANH:** My name is Anh a parent of Irvine International Academy. I've never imagined standing here super scary, but I have no choice. The reason I'm here tonight is because integrity and wholesome, authentic non-agenda, non-PR administration led by Dr. Bean that we once trusted is gone. Ed is the problem and principle is lockstep with her. The IIA board has not heard our cries. I'm just a mom. I may not know all the legal codes, but I do know right from wrong and what's happening is wrong. This isn't just poor communication. It's a pattern of misleading and smoke and mirrors. I've already sent long emails to the board, so I'll summarize records, disappear, questions go unanswered. A key financial board meeting was never recorded. The August 9th public interview of Ms. Henry gone off YouTube. Our school site council form submitted, but we were told publicly no one applied but we were in the room.

This isn't mismanagement and it can't all just be coincidence. Under Dr. Bean, we had access, trust and clarity under Dr. Kernan that changed. We've seen American flags removed a bait and switch on a sex ed curriculum and structural changes that harmed our kids like collapsing fifth grade into middle school, which deeply affected my autistic son. Now Ms. Kernan is retiring and Ms. Henry handpicked is poised to take over. We were told it wasn't predetermined, but everything points to the opposite. So tonight, I respectfully ask the board to pause or investigate the hiring of Ms. Henry. Review the patterns of exclusion under Dr. Kernan and help restore leadership that values truth, transparency, parent partnership and trust. And finally, have at least two trusted board members who are on our side, the side of the parents and the students, namely Tiffany Craft. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you Anh. On next is Suraj, followed by Alexis.

**SURAJ:** Good evening. My name is Suraj Shah. I'm a junior at Arnold O. Beckman High School and I serve as a staff representative for the high school youth action team in Irvine, developing events and initiatives for some 15,000 teens. And today I wanted to discuss the importance of civic engagement and giving back to the community. I've created Debate Discovery Kids, which is an international nonprofit organization dedicated to expanding access to speech and debate programs. And our mission is clear to empower students with critical thinking and public speaking skills through the art of debate. And in our work, we've been fortunate to receive grants from various charitable organizations and we've launched initiatives aiming to bring free yearlong afterschool debate programs to schools and community centers. We've seen firsthand the transformative power of these programs and we've developed an interactive workbook to teach the fundamentals of speech and debate.

And our summer camps have engaged over 80 students. And after just 15 hours of instruction in our camps, students improve their public speaking skills and presentation skills by 25%. However, there is a glaring issue. 86% of Orange County middle schools currently lack a speech and debate program. And this gap in civic education is alarming when we consider the importance of teaching young people how to critically think, engage in civil discourse, and confidently express themselves. And in a world where civil discourse is increasingly rare, these are the very skills that will empower the next generation to be leaders and change makers. So today I'm specifically asking for the board to adopt and pass for resolution to simply recognize

the importance of speech and debate. And this would at least bring awareness to the issue. I've drafted a resolution and I can submit that to the county superintendent or the board secretary. I've also received a personal letter of endorsement and support from Irvine Mayor Larry Agran. And he suggested that I come today to speak to you all. But at the end of the day, public speaking, critical thinking and civic engagement are not luxuries. They are necessities. So please support me to give our youth the tools they need to lead with confidence and integrity. I ask the OCBE to have this as a formal resolution. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you. Next is Alexis, followed by Abigail.

**ABIGAIL:** I'm Abigail, I don't know...

**BARKE:** Okay. I don't see Alexis, so go ahead. If she comes back, we'll squeeze her in.

**ABIGAIL:** Okay. Good evening. My name is Abigail Sheahen. I'm a mom to a kindergartner and third grader over at Irvine International Academy. My kids love it there, but my concern is about the sex ed curriculum and how it was chosen. So, I believe they did their best to choose a sex ed that complies with the California Healthy Youth Act. This is from the coffee with the principal where he compared the positive prevention plus, which is the curriculum they chose versus the heart curriculum. And they said that the heart curriculum has inaccurate medical information and I disagree with that and that refutation is on their website, but I don't have time to go into it and I'm also not a lawyer. But there's also online different analyses that both curriculums do comply with the Healthy Act. Another thing that is on here is that prevention plus is not biased yet the heart curriculum is biased.

And I would like to refute that because in the prevention plus curriculum, it does talk about reproductive justice. And that is just a weird term. It's sort of from the oppressed versus oppressor narrative of the far left, progressive ideologies of social justice and critical theory similar to critical race theory. So, this is an overtly political bias. So, if both curriculum options are potentially biased, I would choose to pilot the curriculum that fits the local community and would have the least amount of opt-outs. And now for how the curriculum is chosen, at the beginning of the year, we were told we would be able to take a look at the different curriculum options and choose, but we have not in this and other curriculum chosen. And just to piggyback on what Anh was saying about the school site council, I had put my name in at the beginning of the year and then when we talked about it at the coffee with the principal, he said he didn't get any signups, so he sent it out again, rightly so right after the meeting. And then on the third email when we were supposed to vote on who to choose, my name was still on there. So hopefully an accident. But please, more transparency. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you. Next is Patty, followed by Darren.

**PATTY:** Good evening board. I'm asking that you please follow in the footsteps of Chino, Temecula and Redlands and create a resolution supporting AB 89, ensuring fairness in girls interscholastic sports. I am not sure how familiar you are with transgender students participating and competing against students here from Orange County. We have had a transgender student compete against students here in the county and in my opinion, steal something away from

biological girls. The experience of winning was stolen from biological girls and that is something that biological girls are starting to experience. So, I'm asking that this board please consider creating a resolution and protecting girls in girls' sports. There needs to be a fine line drawn between biological boys and biological girls. There is no reason why biological girls should have to be forced to share a locker room with biological boys simply because they feel like a girl or they identify like a girl. I think that most families should be respected. There's hundreds of thousands of families in this county that are Christian, Catholic, Muslim, and other religions that do not approve of biological boys being in the locker rooms with biological girls. I have spoken to girls participating in track meets and many of them, they want to speak but they don't because they're afraid of being called bigots. They're afraid of people just telling them ugly things in social media. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you Patty. Next is Darren, followed by Valery.

**DARREN:** My name is Darren Parker. I'm a parent at Irvine International Academy. I have two kids enrolled. I really came up here. Just want to express my support for the other parents and let you know that I concur with the opinions and the information that they've given you. Tiffany Craft is one of the most prepared and diligent people you may ever meet. I have read the information that she's forwarded to each of you. I believe it deserves your attention. When we call for your intercession in something like this, we know it's not something that it is kind of a big deal, right? And we don't take it lightly that we're asking you to do that. We would like to see some action taken. We will still try to mobilize the parents. We will still go and talk to the board and try to get some sort of progress going, some sort of communication going that can help us move forward. We love this school and we want to see the positive things. The integrity that was really instilled in under Dr. Bean's leadership remain. We don't want it to go away and we don't really want conflict, but I mean if that's what it takes, I guess that's what we're ready to do. Thanks.

**BARKE:** Thank you. And our last speaker is Valery.

**VALERY:** Greetings. Thank you for the opportunity. I didn't plan any speech, but I do think I need to provide at least my opinion. So, I'm also a parent of IIA. I actually have five children. Two of them are actually going to IIA right now, grade school and obviously Dr. Bean was a very essential in terms of making our decision when we came there. Right now, my concern is about the sex ed program in terms of what I've seen and what the school is actually telling us. That will be the TT and the PP kind of curriculum and when you look at those from my perspective, I think it was a little bit too explicit in terms of some of the pictures that were shown into that. However, there is the heart curriculum, which I believe was done in a way that allows age appropriateness and good academia in terms of how to disseminate properly the information and meets the properly all the laws regarding the CHYA.

But what we're told is that it doesn't, which I found it hard to believe that it has all the checklists in terms of how to meet the laws. It has letters that shows that whatever was sent by the ACLU was provided with a rebuttal. So, I'm just trying to understand whether there is or not a legal case against the heart. If there's none, can call for action to the board. Can you provide the school at

least a confirmation that the heart program can be used as part of a curriculum for our school?  
Thank you very much.

**BARKE:** Thank you. Appreciate it. That's it.

**WILLIAMS:** That's it. Wonderful. This is a natural break in the meeting for those of you who have provided public comments, we will continue. We will be here at the dais and we will continue with our meeting. We're now moving on to item number 13, charter submissions. Are there any charter submissions? Renee?

**HENDRICK:** There is none.

**WILLIAMS:** Very good. Moving on to item number 14, and I'm going to call Aracely to come to the podium to facilitate this charter school hearing.

**CHASTAIN:** Evening President Williams, trustees and Superintendent Bean. This evening, the board will conduct a public hearing to gather input regarding a proposed material revision to the charter petition of the Orange County Academy of Sciences and Arts III. On April 14th, OCASA III submitted a request for a material revision to its charter seeking approval to establish a new location within the boundaries of Capistrano Unified School District. Before opening the floor for public comments representatives from OCASA III will have up to 10 minutes to present their proposal to the board. I now invite representatives from the charter school to the podium.

**KAPIL:** So, let's imagine a place where students, their parents and teachers come first. A place filled with authentic learning, academic rigor, done the right way, a community focused on individual student growth, a school where growth and achievement outpaces that of traditional public schools. That place exists and it's called the Orange County Academy of Sciences and Arts. President Williams, distinguished trustees, Dr. Bean, County staff and community members. My name is Kapil Mathur and I'm the founder and executive director of OCASA. Tonight, I'm pleased to present you with OCASA's material revision to our countywide replication plan that will allow more families to join our community.

So, OCASA is a mission-driven nonprofit organization which operates two highly qualified schools that are accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. OCASA is a joy-filled student-centered collaborative community that inspires growth through a personalized learning experience. The purpose of this first public hearing in our material or vision is to demonstrate community interest in the proposed charter school. It got a little bit late, some of our younger kiddos and families did have to leave, but we do have many of our supporters here in the room tonight and more watching the live stream at home.

So just a brief history about us OCASA was founded in 2015 by a group of educators and parents who wanted a different way to approach education. We incorporated as a nonprofit entity and obtained the 501(c)3 designation by the IRS. That was nine years ago that our first school was authorized by a unanimous decision of this board. We welcomed our first students in August of 2016 and our petition was renewed unanimously four years later for the fifth year. In the summer of 2020, our second school opened with a goal of expanding the program through 12th grade.

This year we'll be graduating our second class of 12th grade students. We have 100% of OCASA graduates who have been accepted to college and we're very proud of that.

Now, one of the great things about living in Orange County is that we are fortunate to live in an area with outstanding school options, both traditional, public and charter. OCASA is among the very best of these high-quality schools. The slide that I'm showing up here now is the data from the 2024 California School Dashboard. In English Language Arts OCASA had a color achievement color of blue, which is the highest color with 12.8 points increase year over year. We also achieved the highest color, which is blue for achievement in math with 19.9 points of growth.

This academic performance is actually higher than the data that I showed you last year when you first approved the OCASA III charter petition. Now how are we able to achieve these results? We focus on two things. First, maximizing student growth by improving students' academic and social emotional performance and providing them with robust learning experience. And the second way that we do this is by being the school of choice for families, students, and our teachers. We bring in new families with community outreach, making sure that everybody knows that we are free public and open to all. We retain students and families by providing a high-quality program and offering strong opportunities for parent involvement. We also make sure that we are an excellent choice for our high-quality staff, nurturing and supporting their needs through a competitive compensation and benefits, a comprehensive professional development program, and providing a career path where they can stay within our organization to fulfill their professional goals. We have also launched a teacher residency program where aspiring teachers can earn their teaching credentials while working at OCASA and we offer a master teacher program where our top staff members are eligible for multi-year contracts and increased compensation.

Here's a little bit of detail about how we improve student performance. We do this through our personalized learning model. At OCASA III, which is our newest school. This personalized learning model will be enhanced by the ethical and prudent use of artificial intelligence. There are multiple assessments where we establish the skills that a student has and what their opportunities are for growth. Then in consultation with the education team, the parents and the students, a personalized learning plan is developed for each student identifying their goals and supports provided to each students. Finally, we supplement our core resources with personalized learning resources such as leveled readers and adaptive technology tools to target the specific areas of focus for each student. Over the first few years of OCASA III, this process, which we're currently doing manually, will be enhanced by the use of AI. For example, we may be able to use AI to create level readers based on an individual student's Lexile score for a topic that that Lexile score is not readily available.

As an organization, OCASA is focused on operating with transparency and integrity. We have a number of agencies including this board, the Orange County Department of Education and others that provide general fiscal and programmatic oversight. We also have oversight from the El Dorado Charter SELPA and our local school district. There are other agencies that have oversight on specific programs such as our federal charter management organization grant, our career technical education grant and our afterschool safety and education grant. Each year we go through independent financial audits, which are submitted to the state and the authorizers. We

have eight fiscal audits to date for eight years. None have required any restatements of our financials. We operate clean and we will be operating more lean.

We are compliant with the Brown Act, the Political Reform Act in Government Code Section 1090. Our conflict of interest policy has been approved by the Orange County Board of Supervisors. We are active members within the California Charter Schools Association, the California PTSA. We are actually the only charter school that is a member of the California PTSA and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, which has accredited our existing schools. We use world-class back office and legal support teams to make sure that we're compliant with the evolving fiscal employment special education and education code changes. Our parents love us. Here's some quotes. "The teachers are not only experts in their field, but their empathy and leadership is felt consistently." "OCASA Charter is being operated more professionally and efficiently than most of the educational programs that I've experienced." "OCASA seems to be five steps ahead in all aspects of education." And, "We need more schools like OCASA."

So, what we are requesting in our material revision is basically three things. First, we've updated our petition from last year to include any changes in codes and regulations regarding the operation of charter schools to make sure that it is compliant with the current set of codes. Second, we want to add the Capistrano Unified School District to the list of potential areas where this countywide school can locate. And finally, we've provided documentation for the award of a \$6 million federal charter schools program charter management organization grant. We are the only Orange County based organization selected for this highly competitive funding opportunity. And additionally, we have provided documentation for our first large philanthropic grant from the Silicon Schools Fund, which is supporting OCASA III specifically with a \$600,000 grant for the next year. And my last slide is to show you why we do what we do and that is our kids and our students. The program is inquiry-based and focused on student interest. There is a robust arts curriculum. Our parents are partners in events and activities. Our instruction is done primarily in a small group format, focusing on hands-on activities. We have a wide variety of specialty classes and real-world learning opportunities through our field study programs. And that's my time. Thank you.

**CHASTAIN:** The public hearing is now open for 15 minutes of comments. Trustee Barke, please call for the first speaker.

**BARKE:** All right, first speaker is Roderick on deck is Paul. We'll be giving you each two minutes.

**RODERICK:** Hello. We were a homeschool family who after five and a half years were looking for the best fit in a formal classroom environment for our child who had demonstrated an aptitude in academic ability. We researched, then interviewed at seven schools. This included both public and private schools, a one-on-one tutor and a private girls' boarding school in the United Kingdom. We were concerned about her first attending too large of a school that she might find it overwhelming. We liked, but felt the boarding school in the UK too much of her first leap experience. We were disappointed when at two local private schools we were only able to meet with the intake marketing personnel rather than the teaching faculty, which we felt very

important. In visiting OCASA, not only were we able to meet faculty and discuss our child, but we could see and listen to their enthusiasm, commitment, and inspiring personalities.

Also, not only did OCASA want to see our child's homeschooling academic record, but due to her testing results, they agreed to give her an English grammar, writing and mathematical assessment and then recommend at what grade she would most likely flourish at OCASA. To date, it is fair to say that based on her effort and OCASA's approach to inspirational teaching that in an advanced grade our child is proving not just an exemplary student by grade level results, but has also received classroom energy and peer group support and compassion awards. As a parent, I believe OCASA fills an important niche and opportunity in the community. Their approach to teaching means students like our child not only have the ability to credit themselves, but to OCASA to a society and by association to you, our board of education for your wisdom and your vision. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you very much. Next is Paul, followed by Natalie.

**PAUL:** I first want to thank all of you for your ongoing support of OCASA. I'm relatively new to working in education and I had no idea how it all worked, so what you provide is greatly needed and greatly, greatly appreciated. I want to tell you a little bit about who I am and why I felt compelled to come here and why I asked to speak on OCASA's behalf. My name is Paul D'Ambrosio. I am an eighth-degree black belt grand master instructor. I have owned and operated martial arts school in South Orange County for 27 years. I've been teaching kids and families in this area. I had to close my school in 2022 and I didn't know what I was going to do. I'm too young to do nothing. I'm 61, but I didn't want to start another business again. It's a lot of work.

I didn't want to do that. I have a brother and sister-in-law that are teachers and they told me that every day they're scrambling for substitutes. So, I took the test and I became a substitute teacher and I would get placed and I got placed at OCASA and I noticed instantly that it was different there. It's going to sound silly, maybe the kids were happier, they were less stressed out. There was joy, it was different. It felt different and I thought, what are they doing? As a substitute teacher, you can't have much of an influence on kids. So, I became an instructional assistant for a year and I worked in the classroom because I wanted to see what it is that they do. With these small groups and hands-on, every teacher knows every kid's name. What they're doing there is remarkable and our kids need it and the deck is stacked against our kids in a way that it never has been before. And OCASA has figured out a way to teach kids where they are. It's remarkable. And since I only have 13 seconds, I want to say this too as just as an organization, it's a great place to work. For me, I was a substitute teacher and because I have a skillset where I thought that I could help, I was able to move up. There's opportunities for growth, opportunities for development. It's an amazing organization.

**BARKE:** Thank you. Next is Natalie, followed by Dot.

**NATALIE:** We are good. Great, good evening. My name is Natalie. I am a parent at OCASA. I like OCASA because it nurtures my child's growth and potential as well as a diverse organization that challenges students to explore different forms of art. My daughter enjoys her classroom

setting and teachers, she enjoys learning from her Spanish music and STEM classes. We as a family all enjoy all the benefits of all the class trips, the opportunities that OCASA provides. We also look forward to the rest of the programs offered by OCASA as our daughter continues to grow academically there. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you. Next is Dot followed by Jessica.

**DOT:** Good evening board members. My name is Dot Blanchi and I'm a parent at OCASA. First, I want to say thank you for all the support over the past years, if you can believe it's been almost 10 years and I really appreciate everything that you've done to help the school grow and serve our students. I'm here tonight to ask for your approval of the revision of our petition. As a parent who's been with OCASA from year one, I've seen the difference the school makes. I currently have two kids at our schools and they have really benefited from the supportive environment, the strong academics and the teachers and staff who truly care. When I was thinking about what to share tonight, I asked my kids what they liked about going to OCASA. That's the one right there. My youngest, who's in fifth grade, gave me the usual responses.

I like my friends, everybody's nice, we have lots of field trips, but then he added something that really stood out. He said, "The teachers challenge you to your level." That one sentence sums it up for me. OCASA meets kids where they're at and helps them grow. That's something special. And because OCASA is not just a place that kids go to school, but they are engaged in school. This is why I'm here tonight. I ask for your approval of the revision of our petition. Thank you again for your time and your continued support.

**BARKE:** Thank you. Next, we have Jessica with Skyler finishing up for us.

**JESSICA:** Good evening board members and Dr. Bean. Thank you for having us. My name is Jessica Newburn and I'm the director of school development at OCASA and as a long-time charter educator, I want to share just a few highlights of working at OCASA. One, the people that we have on our team and we employ at OCASA are truly amazing and committed to students and their wellbeing. They work extremely hard. They go above and beyond to provide a personalized experience for all of our students and they really bring their whole selves to work. When I visit our schools, I see the projects and learning opportunities that our teachers and staff put in front of kids and it's pretty incredible. Second, it's really a collaborative place. People really want to work together to improve and to provide the best support possible for students. And related, we're always looking for ways to get better. At this time of year, we're setting plans for the coming school year and we're all focused on continuous improvement. We believe that focusing on our growth is important and always focusing on student growth is the most important. And I think these attributes have made OCASA successful so far and will help it continue into the future. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you. And last is Skyler. Thank you.

**SKYLER:** Hello. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today in support of OCASA's material revision. My name is Skyler Daviss and I'm a member of OCASA's governing board. I joined the board with longtime experience in the charter sector, first with education pioneers, then in

managing data and assessment with Success Academy Charter Schools, and now as a staff member with the California Charter Schools Association. As CCSA staff, I was able to visit the elementary campus and I was particularly impressed by the personalized learning approach, the unique offerings for students, the visible joy from staff and students. I also enjoyed hearing directly from teachers, the available PD and the data orientation and dedication to continuous improvement. As both a longtime resident of Orange County and a CCSA staff member. I'm an advocate for honest accountability as well as quality options for California families and I'm proud to support OCASA, especially in this next phase of their journey.

**BARKE:** Thank you.

**CHASTAIN:** The public comment period is now concluded the Orange County Department of Education staff report, including recommended findings, will be published by May 16th. The board is scheduled to hold a public hearing and take action on the material vision on the June 4th meeting. And just as additional information, I should have probably included this in the beginning, but OCASA III hasn't opened yet. They're slated to open in the fall with TK through eighth grade as their grade levels. Thank you. President Williams, I now close the public hearing and return the meeting to you.

**WILLIAMS:** Thank you. Okay, so we are on item 14, the new location and material revision. Any questions by the board members, Tim?

**VALDES:** I do.

**WILLIAMS:** Oh, you do? Yes sir.

**VALDES:** Mr. Mathur, come back up. First off, you never cease to, I'm always impressed with your presentations and your complete command of the subject matter that you present here. So, I wanted to say that. You mentioned, or you showed in the slide up there that those growth numbers, and I think I mentioned this to you last year, that use of, I know that term means something to you, but I don't know if it means something to everyone. So, I want to kind of put this in a way that I think everyone would understand. Okay. So, what is OCASA's math test pass score for the whole school as it relates to the state testing?

**KAPIL:** I don't have that particular number off the top of my head. I will have it for you next month. The data that I showed you on that slide is not my data. That's the California Department of Education's data. So, what they do is they look at every school and they look at their CAASPP testing scores, their CAASPP scores, they look at the attendance data, suspension and expulsion, and they have a five-color rating system with blue being the highest. And then they will publish how many points above the standard is the average student, and that's the number I don't have off the top of my head. But then they also publish how much did that student population grow from the prior year? So that's the growth number.

**VALDES:** And when you say growth, to me that means just numbers. Explain your use of the word growth to everyone.

**KAPIL:** I think it's more of a philosophical answer. So, we as adults have decided that third graders should learn multiplication and we've created the math standards that say by third grade they should be introduced to multiplication and that should be mastered in fourth grade. There's nothing biological that says, hey, you are now eight years old and so now you can do multiplication. There's actually a lot of science behind it. You have to have that fluidity with single digit addition and subtraction. You have to understand that multiplication is a series of single digit edition problems that mathematicians are lazy and they made a different symbol for that. What we do is we look at what is that roadmap of learning and then we use qualitative and quantitative assessments to determine what skills have you mastered and how can I use that to help you master the next skill.

So, you may have two kids who are in third grade who need to learn multiplication. One may be great at single digit edition. You can do 2, 4, 6, 8 all day long by adding. Another may be great at skip counting. They're on the playground and they're jumping on the spots 5, 10, 15, 20. What we do is as the educators, we look at what do they already know and how do they know it, and then we teach them the things that they need to know. So, the growth is where are you today and where are you compared to yourself next year? It is not, I'm not one who believes that just meeting the state standards is the most important thing. The most important thing is that every year of a young person's life, they are progressing at the pace that works for them.

**VALDES:** I appreciate your answer, but for next month, please do me a favor. Okay.

**KAPIL:** Yes.

**VALDES:** Because just speaking for myself, I get criticized by a fair amount of people who contact me directly or who put post blog messages about this board and myself about the way we approve charters that the local districts don't want. And I like to see the charters come down here with their test scores so that I can turn to the test score and say, this is why I continue to approve these for our Orange County kids. This is my answer and I really don't have a better answer than that. That's the answer. So, if you could come down here with your actual numbers as it relates to the state of California, that's what I would like to see.

**KAPIL:** Absolutely.

**VALDES:** The question I have for you is now you have two campuses now, right?

**KAPIL:** Yes.

**VALDES:** Okay, and how many students do you serve?

**KAPIL:** We serve about 400 students.

**VALDES:** Okay, and you want to go into San Juan Capistrano, right?

**KAPIL:** Well, the Capistrano Unified School District, which covers more cities than San Juan Capistrano.

**VALDES:** And do you have a location picked out?

**KAPIL:** We do.

**VALDES:** And how many students do you plan to serve at the new location?

**KAPIL:** So, the capacity of the new location is 125 students. We have between 50 and 60 that are signed up, currently registered. It will likely grow in future years, but this is part of a countywide school, so the plan would be to open locations under this petition in any of the five school districts, the four that have already been approved, and then if you approve Capistrano, then we could open locations in any of those school districts, which cover many, many cities.

**VALDES:** Okay. All right. But this location that you're thinking about is 125?

**KAPIL:** Correct.

**VALDES:** Okay. I'll see you next month.

**KAPIL:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Isn't the school campus you have done there in Capistrano Unified? It's not in Capo already?

**KAPIL:** It is. So, our two existing schools are under two different charter petitions, so our first school was approved by this board as on appeal from Capistrano District. Our second school was approved locally by Capistrano, and so this is, we're asking for the countywide petition to also cover Capistrano so that we can open a campus of the countywide school. In the petition, there is a whole discussion on the justification for OCASA III being a countywide school and this would be part of that. There are a lot of operational efficiencies and many other reasons why it makes more sense to grow enrollment in the countywide petition as opposed to one of the locally approved petitions.

**SHAW:** Got it. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Just want to thank you for expanding choice in Orange County. You are, I think the first school I visited when I was running for office.

**KAPIL:** I do believe so, yes.

**BARKE:** Dr. Sparks and I came and visited you and just thrilled to see what's going on. I think Tim and I, was it, Tim and I that visited a few months ago and the school is still thriving and many little happy faces running around, and so I love to see that and I love that parents have choice and a unique curriculum when they go to OCASA, so thanks for all you do. Appreciate it.

**KAPIL:** Thank you. Trustee Shaw also presided over our fifth-grade promotion last year, which was wonderful.

**SHAW:** Well, Kapil calls, what can I say? And I live in La Habra. That's a bit of a drive down there, but.

**WILLIAMS:** Very good. Again, Kapil, excellent presentation. I echo many of my colleagues' thoughts. Appreciate everything you do. You have a wonderful school. Those test scores are amazing.

**KAPIL:** Thank you, sir.

**WILLIAMS:** Very good. Any other questions for item 14? Barring none. Thank you, sir.

**KAPIL:** Thank you very much.

**WILLIAMS:** We're going to be moving on with our meeting. We're going to item number 15 and Aracely.

**CHASTAIN:** The board will now conduct a public hearing, gather input regarding a proposed material revision to the charter petition of College and Career Preparatory Academy. On April 11th, CCPA submitted a request for a material revision to its charter seeking approval to establish an alternative at graduation pathway for students aged 19 and older, reducing the total credit requirement from 220 units to 155. Before opening the floor for public comments, Representatives from CCPA will have up to 10 minutes to present their proposal to the board. I now invite representatives from the charter school to the podium.

**JUDEH:** Thank you so much. Good evening, President Williams. Superintendent Dr. Bean, the esteemed board. My name is Fatinah Judeh. Sorry I'm tall, but I have a loud voice. It's okay. My name is Fatinah Judeh and I'm proud to serve as the College and Career Preparatory Academy principal. This is the Orange County Department of Ed's K-12 charter serving students aged 16 to 25. Thank you. I'm honored to be here tonight to present a material revision for CCPA. We really believe that this proposal will expand pathways for our adult learners. Before I begin, I want to express my gratitude. So, this September CCPA will celebrate its 10th year anniversary and I want to thank you. You've supported CCPA from the very beginning. That milestone would not have been possible without your leadership and vision, so thank you so much.

I want to talk about the pathway. Our students currently, yeah, our students currently, they're on one pathway. In order to achieve a high school diploma, they need to earn 220 credits. And when I started serving in this role August of 2023, one of the things that kept coming up when I was speaking to our team, to community members, to school districts, to workforce partners, to our external partners as well, was the reduced credit. We were losing a lot of students to competing educational programs, specifically looking at K-12 charter schools and high school diploma, GED programs at the community college. Our team started looking into that, our team at CCPA because it was worth exploring, although we've done great. Like I said, it's going to be 10 years in September, so I'm grateful for your support and the wonderful support of our team. We've been challenged to increase enrollment, so we looked into it and our school counselor, Megan Szilagyi, she took the lead in researching and doing a comparative analysis of reduced high

school credit models that would be aligned with the expectations, the mission and vision of CCPA and academic rigor.

What I want to emphasize is that this pathway, it's not replacing our current pathway. Our current pathway will remain for our students that are 18 and younger. So that's 220 credits for our students that are 18 and younger. What we're proposing is adding a pathway for our students that are 19 years and older, so 19 and older. And why are we focusing on students that are 19? Well, what we're noticing is that when students enroll in our program, they're very different than our 18-year-olds. So specifically looking at students that are 19 to 25, they're coming to us working full-time, they have families, they have responsibilities at home. And so, although when we look at our elective credits, and that's what I'm going to talk about, there was no reduction in any of the core subjects. The only thing that we did is, and again thanks to the leadership of Megan, we looked at elective credits.

We reduced 65 credits, as you know, as a high school student, 75 credits is the average. That's the amount of credits that you earn for 220. What we did, we took out 65 and we retained 10. And because if you think of what it is to take an elective, our students 19 years old, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, they have those experiences, right? They're working, they're participating in their community, they're managing their budget. And so again, this was to facilitate a pathway to attain a high school diploma. We intentionally left the 10 elective credits. And I think this is very important. This piece is because we want to give them an opportunity to enroll. We've established dual enrollment opportunities at CCPA with our local colleges and we're expanding that next year. And so, we left 10 credits because if you enrolled at the community college, you can earn elective credit. It was a way to incentivize them, but also to give them the opportunity to take some of the robust CTE or elective credits that we have available at ACCESS.

I want to talk about the process because I think that's critical. And so, this was not an impromptu decision. This was something that there's so much thought and heart and intention and research that went into it. Like I said, it started by engaging our partners. That's what we did. We engaged our staff, our team, our teachers, our paras, everyone at CCPA, including our workforce partners. And so, it started with that and we decided, you know what? We're going to pursue this reduced enrollment. Again, like I said, Megan took the lead in coming up with this model of 155. We then met with our teachers. And so, I want to recognize everybody that was involved in this process. We held a series of collaborative meetings with our teachers who are here in the room, our paraeducators, our managers for CCPA, as well as our academic record technicians, our senior admin assistant, everybody was involved.

This very much was a collaborative process. And in the words of Dr. Bean, it's important if you're going to make a decision, you must include those that are going to be most impacted by that decision. Our teachers also took the lead in talking to our students about the credit reduction and what that would mean for them. After we did that and we kind of landed on a 155, we engaged our leadership team with the leadership of Analee. Thank you, Analee. And again, we landed at the 155. After that, we then proposed this to, so it did involve community because we then proposed this model to CCPA's advisory committee and they approved that in December. After that, we had legal, of course, look at our petition just to make sure that the petition was in legal compliance. And here we are. So just some graduate analysis.

It wouldn't be a CCPA presentation if we did not talk about data. What we did, we asked ourselves in our office, what impact would this credit reduction had on students 19 to 25? And what we noticed when we looked at the data, 12% of those students, 12% would've graduated had there been a credit reduction. And when I talk about students no longer being in our program, it's for a myriad of reasons. They disenroll because there's stuff going on at home and they really can't focus on a high school diploma or they're working full-time. A lot of our students work 40, 50, 60, 70 hours a week, two jobs. They're supporting their family at home if they're not meeting, as you know, we are an independent study program. And so, if they're not meeting independent study requirements, we're very diligent about engaging in tiered re-engagement. And if they don't engage after a series of engagement approaches, then we have to move forward in disenrolling students.

And so that's 12%. And I want to emphasize that this is not just a statistic, it's lives changed and futures reclaimed. And so, by reducing the elective requirement, we can provide a clear more direct path for graduation for adult learners. Graduation pathways, I wanted to give you a visual because it's important to keep in mind that we did keep our current pathway. We're just adding a pathway for students 19 and over. The 220 high school credit requirement will remain for students that are 18 and under because we do believe it's valuable that our 18 year old's still take 75 credits in electives. They're still young and they can benefit from those opportunities. Whereas looking at our students that are 19 to 25, again, they're engaged in the real world. And so, for them leaving that 10 elective credits will incentivize them to engage in dual enrollment or take some of the other elective credit requirements that are available to them.

And the most important thing that I want to emphasize here, if you look at the credit requirements, we're still maintaining rigor. And so, we retained all the academic core subjects. You look at history, math, English, everything is the same. The only thing we're taking away is the 65 credits, which I can tell you I've been at CCPA for a year and a half, almost two years. It's been a barrier. I can't tell you how many meetings we've had with our students during what we call our student intervention team meetings where we're looking at their credits and they have 50 credits left. And it could be very discouraging for students, especially if they're 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25. Justification. I mean, there's so much. I could go on and on honestly, but the justification for it, actually, I wanted you to see, okay, I don't know why that's missing, but okay, you saw the required courses justification.

It's what I said before. I mean, our goal is really to reengage our students. That's what we're trying to do at CCPA. We really value continuous improvement. I mean, this is what we do. Like I said, when I started, I was very privileged to work with such an amazing team. We're constantly talking about what can we do to improve our program. And so, we really believe that this is going to help us be more competitive and enroll more students because we can have an impact on these students, which again, will have an impact on our society. I hope you would consider please this proposal. I really appreciate your time. Thank you so much.

**CHASTAIN:** The hearing's now open for 15 minutes of comments. Trustee Barke, please call for the first speaker.

**BARKE:** All right, and we're going to go ahead with, well, 15 minutes. We have 12, so I guess we better do a minute each. Is that right? Did we have 12? Is that what I counted?

**HENDRICK:** She was saying how many minutes.

**BARKE:** I think we'll do one minute each to get through. Otherwise we can't get through all of them in the 15 minutes allotted. All right, so we will start with Alan and then Christine will follow Alan. We don't allow that, do we? Do we allow deferral?

**WILLIAMS:** Wait, no.

**BARKE:** No, I am sorry, but we don't allow that. I'm sorry, but you can do a me too if you want. Just right after.

**CHIEF WARREN OFFICER SULLIVAN:** First. Okay. All right. Good evening ladies and gentlemen of the board. My name is Chief Warren Officer Sullivan, and I serve as the director of California Job Challenge. I'm going to speak expeditiously to get my minute in. CAJC, our mission will not be possible without the continued partnership and unwavering support of the College and Career Preparatory Academy. I'm here tonight because I care deeply about the future of California's youth and believe in the power of education to transform lives. I fully support this credit reduction proposal not because of lowers expectations, but because it reflects the reality and rigor of what our students have already accomplished. CAJC students meet the standard of all eight core components that govern our residential phase, including academic excellence, leadership, followership, service community, and job skills amongst others. These are not just boxes checks, they represent character growth and effort well beyond the traditional NC classroom model. Our students don't just attend, they excel, they rise, they overcome. This proposal also levels the playing field. Take Los Angeles Unified School District, for example, students there graduated with two 10 credits. Our students are held to a 220-credit requirement. The result they stay in class longer, delaying entry into the workforce and falling behind peers who have faced fewer barriers. That's not equity, that's a penalty. So please, let's give them the credit they deserve and the reduction that they duly have already earned. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you so much. Okay, Christine, and following Christine, it looks like I have three Delgado Garcia and Jonathan all coming together after Christine.

**HALL:** I'm Christine Hall and I'm a teacher with CCPA and I'm here to represent my students who aren't here. My students work graveyard. My students care for their ailing parents. They take care of autistic siblings. My students are working two jobs. My students work hard and I can check their progress and I can tell where they fell asleep while testing if the system goes idle. My students are working on electives and they want to get to college, they talk about it. They have dreams, they have aspirations, but they have a lot of obstacles and getting 155 credits for graduation would help them out. So, thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you. I'm glad you spoke. You spoke very well. I loved hearing that. All right, so Delgado Garcia, and Jonathan.

**JONATHAN:** Good afternoon. My name is scholar Jonathan Delgado Garcia. We are not typical students. We have already completed the demanding experience of the National Guard Youth Program following by the intensive career focused training provided by a California Job Challenge. These programs have not only fulfilled many of the personal development goals that traditional elective courses aimed to address, but they have also equipped those with real world skills, certifications and a clear pathway towards employment or further education and training, reducing the graduation credit requirements from 220 to 155 by lowering the number of elective credits while keeping the core academic standard intact recognizes and honors the time, effort, and achievements we've already made. It aligns our duration criteria with our non-traditional path and acknowledges alternative ways. We have demonstrated readiness for life beyond high school. Most of us came into this program feeling hopeless, like the system had given up on us or that our past had poor graduation forever out of reach. But programs like California Job Challenge and CCPA have given us a second chance. So, by lowering these standards, it'll make it easier for us in California Job Challenge to continue on and graduate high school.

**BARKE:** Thank you. Next is Gianna, followed by Jose. Has Gianna left?

**BARTHOLOMEW:** Sorry. Okay, I didn't hear that right. Hi. Just to piggyback on what some people said. I mean one thing is lowering credit requirements. It would help students get out of schooling faster, especially when to get back on track. If they've been out of school for a while. They'll have more job opportunities when they finish school sooner. They can also pursue higher education sooner. Lowering credits can allow students to tailor their coursework to specific interests, career goals, making education experience more engaging and relevant. There's also comparable adult school programs that are 160 to 180 and we're offering 155. We are really a great program and I think it'll really benefit our students 19 and older. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you. After Jose, we have Rob.

**JOSE:** Good afternoon. I'm scholar Jose Paniagua and I'm currently attending California Job Challenge and enrolled in the College and Career Preparatory Academy and the Long Beach City College. Like I mentioned before, I'm currently enrolled in CCPA where I plan to finish my high school diploma. But I believe credit requirements should be reduced not only because it allows flexibility for students. For instance, reducing elective credits allows students to focus on core subjects or vocational training that align with their interest and career goals. This approach can be particularly beneficial for students aiming to enter the workforce or pursue technical education directly after high school. Some districts reduce credit requirements to enable students to graduate earlier, thereby allowing them to enroll in college sooner. This can be advantageous for students who are academically prepared and wish to advance their education with unnecessary delays. Early college enrollment can lead to cost savings and quicker transition into higher education into the workforce. Thank you for your time.

**BARKE:** Thank you. Following Rob, we have Alexis on deck.

**SIMONSON:** All right, good evening, President Williams, esteemed board members and Superintendent Bean. In the interest of time, I had a speech written, but I just want to basically nutshell it into a couple of different areas. Number one being what's best for our kids. And I

really think it's best for our kids. By the time they get to the end of it all, they finish their requirements, their core requirements, it's better for them to choose their path. I mean, I'll give you an example. I have a student that needed 35 elective credits and she's slugging through there and all she really wanted to do is finish those elective credits so she can enroll in cosmetology school and where she had a passion and something she really wanted to do. So, I think they're just really better served to make the choice at that point and do something they're passionate about and further their career and their life. And many of them have kids. So, I really feel like in my heart it's the best thing for our kids. Second aspect is what's best for the program. And we all know there's a million schools popping up everywhere that offer high school diploma programs. And for us to be competitive, I think we need to lower the graduation requirements so we can be there and continue to thrive. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you. Alexis. And following Alexis, we have Heidi.

**ALEXIS:** Hello. Good evening, members of the board. My name is Alexis Olden. I'm a 24-year-old mom and a returning student. I'm here today to speak for the students like me, students who didn't have the best start in life, but who wanted to make the choice to come back and finish strong. Growing up, I was kicked out more than once, and at one point I had to choose between surviving by going to work and staying in school. I chose work, but after having my daughter, my fiancé and I spoke and I said I would go back and finish and show her that no matter how you start, you can still win in the end. When I re-enrolled, I did not have many academic credits left, and once I finished those, the only thing left in my way was my elective credits. Credits I didn't reflect whether I was ready to graduate or not, just whether I had enough hours attending at the school.

That's why I believe reducing it to 155 credits rather than 220 credits would be very beneficial. It gives students like me who have worked so hard to overcome so much a chance to finish and get started in the next chapter. Lowering the credit requirement doesn't mean lowering the value of a diploma or even lowering the academic success classes that we actually need to take. It is giving a helping hand to the students like me who are ready to start the next chapter of life. Thank you for listening and for considering what this change would mean for so many of these students.

**BARKE:** Thank you. Following Heidi is Ashley.

**SAUVEY:** Good evening. My name is Heidi Sauvey. I'm a teacher at the College of Career Preparatory Academy. Alexis is one of my students and we took this in great concern about we won the rigorous and college career ready program. We didn't want to skip out on that, but we know that as our adults, they're living their electives. They've already had that past, they've had the experience, they're volunteering their communities, they're volunteering the schools. They are actively coming into these board meetings and making a difference in people's lives. So, I think reducing the 155 will get them back on their feet a little bit faster and just get them started on that next journey that they can't wait to get into. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you. After Ashley finishing. Oh, we have Laurie after Ashley.

**MONTES:** Thank you, board. My name is Ashley Montes and I have the honor of being the coordinator for student programs and services here at CCPA. I fully support adding an additional pathway that reduces the elective credits for adult students, 19 and over. Their life is their elective credits. They're taking art when working with their kids on their school projects. They're taking consumer math while working in their jobs. They're taking public speaking when advocating for their families. They want to learn and get their education at this age because there is an underlying motivating factor, not because they want to go to prom or have a bake sale for their football team, but because they want to advance at work. They want to make a career change, they want to inspire their children. They now know what they want in life and I hope to help get them there sooner. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you. Next, we have Duyen and followed by Neiman.

**MARTINEZ:** Hello. I've been teaching for ACCESS for 25 or more years. The reason I bring it up, I want to bring another facet of this issue and that's the teachers at CCPA and the people that work for CCPA I've worked with because we're all under the umbrella of ACCESS. The one thing that we really do very well in ACCESS is we develop relationships with our students. When I have students that look like they're on their way to becoming their own adult, they're barely coming to school, they would do well at CCPA and I can move them along to the next step. They have a choice and it's not an adult decision to join a program that has more credits necessary than others. So, by lowering the credits, we could at least have some continuity in our students. We can continue with our relationships and we can continue with what we do really well in serving these students. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you. And last speaker is Neiman.

**PHAM:** Good Evening board and Dr. Bean. My name is Duyen, and I am a paraeducator at CCPA. On a daily basis, I work with students and recognize some of their struggles. I wrote a paragraph, it's kind of long, but I just want to shorten it within one minute. So CCPA is a young adult school serving students from 16 to 25 years old. These students have life responsibilities such as working a full-time job or supporting themselves or their families. They decide to go back to school because they want, simply because they want a better future. We should acknowledge these students' life commitments besides school and reduce their required credits from 220 to 155 for students of 19 and older. I can attest that lowering the number of credits does not mean that the program is less rigorous. CCPA will continue to follow statewide curriculums allows students to choose different course delivery methods online or papers based on their preferences. And last but not least, provide ample of resources from learning to personal necessity to mental health for all CCPA students to succeed. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you.

**NEIMAN:** Hi. Good evening board. My name is Neiman. I'm a case manager with the WIOA youth program here in Orange County, and it's my pleasure to speak in favor of the proposed credit reduction for 19-year olds and as one of CCPA's primary WIOA Title I workforce partners. I've worked with a lot of individuals who could benefit really greatly from this credit reduction. And one really quick anecdote that I want to share is that, we had one participant who

was a 23-year-old who had worked at Chick-fil-A for a couple years and he worked his way up to a supervisor position. And when he was up for the manager position, he was denied because he didn't have his high school diploma. And so, you can imagine the frustration you might feel if you are 23 years old and you're reaching the height of your professional career. And so, having a reduced amount of credits is a great benefit to these students who have families who have jobs. And we know as workforce partners how linked together career motivation and educational motivations are. So, the better we can link them together, the better their career paths. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you.

**CHASTAIN:** Public comment theory is now concluded, the Orange County Department of Educate report, including recommendations and findings, will be published by May 16th. The board will hold a public hearing and take action on the material revision request at the June 4th meeting. President Williams, I now close the public hearing and turn the meeting back over to you.

**WILLIAMS:** Very good. Thank you. Aracely, okay, let's get you back up here. There's a lot of questions here. I'll start from, is he paying you overtime for, no, okay. I'm just kidding Dr. Bean.

**BEAN:** Pass the resolution now we can make that happen.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. I'll start and then we'll work my way to the right. So, the proposal to reduce the credits from to 220 to 150...

**JUDEH:** 155.

**WILLIAMS:** 155, is that allowed by law?

**JUDEH:** Yes, it is. Because the state minimum. That's a great question. So, for everyone in our audience, yes. The state minimum in California is 130. That's correct. 130.

**WILLIAMS:** So, a lot of these students who will be in this program are adults. For instance, Alexis, 24-year-old mom, she had a baby. I think she left.

**JUDEH:** Yes.

**WILLIAMS:** I assume she did have some high school credits.

**JUDEH:** She did.

**WILLIAMS:** And are those applied towards the 155?

**JUDEH:** Absolutely. Yes. That's what we do. We have a very wonderful onboarding process for our students. And so, every single student, when they enroll at CCPA, one thing that we do, again, I'm going to mention the counselor again, she's not here, but she does evaluate every

single transcript and absolutely any high school credit earned. As long as it's legit, legit transcript, it's definitely applied to the 155. Yes. Or even the 220.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. So, the example of the young man who was going to be higher up in the administration or in...

**JUDEH:** Chick-fil-A.

**WILLIAMS:** Chick-fil-A thank you. So that person didn't get to be the manager because he didn't have high school degree. He was 23 years of age.

**JUDEH:** Yes.

**WILLIAMS:** So, he would be able to now get that high school degree. And it's the diploma that we give?

**JUDEH:** Absolutely. Yeah. Again, because the state minimum is 130, there are programs, like I said, we have competitor programs. Programs we've actually lost a lot of students to competing charter school programs and they're at 130. And those students definitely are in a high school diploma program. But for us, like I said, it was so important for our teachers, for our staff, for leadership team looking at Analee, that we maintain rigor. And this is why we kept all the core the same because we want our students to be successful. We believe that we can facilitate pathways, post-secondary pathways for our students. We believe in our students. We believe in critical thinking skills, writing, math, all those skills that you need to be successful. And so, we kept all the academic core and we only removed 65 credits in electives and retained 10.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. So, the 155 units that they will now be eligible for this high school diploma, why haven't we been doing this before?

**JUDEH:** That's a great question. And so, this is why I love our CCPA team. We are very much focused on continuous improvement. We did look at the data we have. I mean, you can see here, look at this room. We have a wonderful relationship with our community agencies, with our workforce partners, California Job Challenge. Just want to give a shout out to Chief Sullivan. Thank you so much for being here. Scholars appreciate you so much. But we have a very transparent communication and this is something that came up and we decided to pursue it. And I just want to thank leadership because they supported us in this proposal. And like I said, it took a year for us to be here and so that's why I'm very grateful to everyone for their support.

**WILLIAMS:** I want to thank you for your leadership on this. This is very important I think for our communities and for our adults who are working. Just like that Chick-fil-A example, the young man couldn't become a manager. That's not good. So, this is going to be a great program. I think I could support this. Mari?

**JUDEH:** Thank you so much. Thank you. Dr. Williams.

**BARKE:** Well as you know, I love your program. You are an incredible leader. Going to your graduations is so heartwarming. I love that public comment I heard tonight. It was so real and just so applicable and you've done a great job, you've done your research and I can't imagine why we would not approve this. It just, to me, it's a no brainer. I wouldn't give it a second thought. So, thank you for the amazing presentation. Appreciate it.

**JUDEH:** Thank you so much.

**BARKE:** Appreciate everyone in audience too who has stayed here this late through a long meeting to speak to us.

**JUDEH:** And it's so important for me to keep saying, yes, I'm very privileged as a leader because I get to work with such an amazing team. Our teachers are phenomenal. Counselor. I want to name everybody. Our senior admin assistant, academic record technicians, our paras, our partners. Did I miss anybody? Just everyone we get to work with. And so, thank you so much. I really appreciate your support, honor to be here.

**SHAW:** Just to be clear, it says that this will provide an alternative pathway, but there's still other pathways. Am I right?

**JUDEH:** That's correct. So, there will be two pathways. There's going to be for students that are 18 years and 18 years old and younger, we're going to keep them at that 220. They will not have access to the 155 because we do believe that for 18-year olds, it's valuable. They're still young and so they should earn 60, 75 credits in electives. But we're specifically focusing on students that are 19 years and older. So, for those students that are 19 and older, that will be their pathway. So, we're adding a pathway just for students that are 19 to 25.

**SHAW:** Got it. All right. Thank you.

**JUDEH:** Thank you.

**VALDES:** Boy, I hate to pour cold water on this, but this is really troubling to me. There was a comment about lowered expectations. That's what this looks like to me. There was a reference to LA Unified, this is Orange County. This isn't LA Unified. I don't really care what happens in LA Unified. Can Fatinah, right?

**JUDEH:** That's correct.

**VALDES:** So, can you relate this a little bit to me? So Sure. When I graduated college from Rutgers University, I had to get 120 credits and that was calculated as an hour per class. So, if it was a three-hour class, it was a three-credit class. And if I was in class for four hours, then it was four credits and it was 15 per semester, 30 per year. And that's how you get to 120. How do you guys calculate 220?

**JUDEH:** Okay, great question again. The way we calculate credit in ACCESS is every 75 hours is five credits. Every 75 hours is five credits.

**VALDES:** Every 75 class hours?

**JUDEH:** That's correct. Well, we are an independent study program and so it's not really class hours, it's more work product. It's the time that you take completing your work. We are purely an independent study program. There's no class time that's calculated into that. So, in other words, if a student is assigned five credits, let's say English 10 A, it would approximately take them about 75 hours to complete that course. That is the way our ACCESS program calculates credit. And traditionally that's how it is at district as well. 75 is the average.

**VALDES:** Okay. So, what are the course subjects that would remain in this alternative pathway?

**JUDEH:** All of them. I can pull it up. Would it be possible to pull up the PowerPoint? I'll happy to share that. That's again great questions.

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** You might want to also share that you've also kept four years of English.

**VALDES:** I would like to know what is left, what's part of the 155?

**JUDEH:** Yes. Sure. No, and I apologize if I did not make that more clear. And so, when you look at 220 credits we have, do you see all those required courses? See all those, see all the English, the math, the social science, do you see all those courses?

**VALDES:** Yes.

**JUDEH:** We kept that the same. We did not touch academic core. The only thing that we did, so right now when you look at the 220 high school credit model, there's 75 credits in elective. So, what we did is we just removed the 65 credits. So, we left 10 in elective credits.

**VALDES:** So, give me an example of what you consider an elective.

**JUDEH:** That's a great question. Art, you can take an art class.

**VALDES:** Okay.

**JUDEH:** What else? Like a CTE course, financial course. Consumer math, yeah, languages.

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Work hours.

**JUDEH:** Yeah, there you go. Yeah, we do work hours count.

**VALDES:** Work hours is part of the elective?

**JUDEH:** Work hours count. So, the way, if you look here on the side, there's sort of a myriad of ways students can earn elective credit, community service, 75 hours. Looking at that model, you can definitely do it through work. That is a very valid experience. We have course contracts for

vocational experience and that includes working. So again, if you show us a pay stub that shows how many hours you've worked or a timecard.

**VALDES:** So, showing a pay stub can get you credits in the program as it stands now?

**JUDEH:** For vocational, vocational, 75 hours of work hours because it's very valid. I mean there's coursework attached to that, but that's considered vocational experience. So, 75 hours of work. Yes, you can definitely earn five credits in vocational work experience.

**VALDES:** And there was some mention about competitors, right?

**JUDEH:** That's correct.

**VALDES:** So other schools in that adult category?

**JUDEH:** Yes.

**VALDES:** Right. They're offering 130. Are they calculating that 130 the way you're calculating the 155?

**JUDEH:** Yes. Absolutely. So, I'll give you an example. I don't want to mention any charters by name, but there is a competitor here in Orange County, which is literally apples to apples. So, it's a K-12 high school diploma program that serves similar 16 to 25. They are at 130. And what they've removed, which we did not remove, is that fourth year of English. They've also removed health and they've removed all the elective credits. Zero elective credits. We've kept all our core, like I said, I believe in academic rigor. I believe in Dr. Bean's 5-3-1 plan where he's focused on academic rigor and continuous improvement. I want you to see this. It's more of a continuous improvement model. We're not lowering expectations. We're going to maintain the rigor at CCPA through the core, through these core classes that you see through dual enrollment opportunities. The only thing we're doing is just taking out 65 credits in electives. No core, everything remains the same.

**VALDES:** I'm going to call around a little bit on this. Maybe I'll talk to Dr. Bean on this. Maybe I'll call you on this.

**JUDEH:** Absolutely.

**VALDES:** I want you to know how I'm thinking when I sit here and I get elected, and I am doing this for the benefit of the kids.

**JUDEH:** Of course.

**VALDES:** I want to make sure that the concept of for example, grade inflation that's going on in LA. That that does not happen here.

**JUDEH:** Of course.

**VALDES:** The kids who graduate who have a high school diploma from this program need to know how to write, need to have basic math skills, need to multiply. We're setting people ready for a work environment, their next career, going to college, et cetera. That's very important to me.

**JUDEH:** Absolutely.

**VALDES:** I think I'm going to call Dr. Bean on this. I might call you on this.

**JUDEH:** Of course. Absolutely.

**VALDES:** I think I'm a little bit more on the fence on this than my other colleagues, but maybe I can be convinced on this. Okay.

**JUDEH:** Can I share one thing that might sort of just I want you to think about? So, there's a district, and again, I don't want to mention districts by name, but there's actually two districts that they have alternative education programs, which are continuation schools. And believe it or not, they've reduced their credit requirement. So, they went from a 220 to, I think one district that I know personally because I used to work at this district, is now at 175 at this continuation school. And they don't serve adults. They only serve high school students. And you know why they're doing this? Because this is the 21st century. It's not about credits, it's also about experiences. And they recognize that there are certain students that are alternative. So why sort of pigeonhole them to a 220 when there's other ways that you can earn those experiences? And the way I see it, it's like an earlier way for them to get into college and career.

That's how I see it. So rather than sitting there taking course after course, 75 hours after 75 hours in elective credit, let's have some real-world experiences and let's facilitate the path into college and career. That's how I see it. Two districts that I know, pretty high-profile districts right now, they're continuation schools, not adult or reducing credit. So, I'll end with this if they're doing that, how do we not do that when we serve adults 19 to 25? I think if we don't make this change, I really don't know if we're going to be around another decade. I'm going to say this, looking at the data, looking at CCPA, looking at how we've really struggled to grow and to increase enrollment. If we're not competitive, I don't know if we're going to be here in a decade.

**VALDES:** Okay. All right. Thank you.

**JUDEH:** Thank you so much. Thank you all.

**WILLIAMS:** You were not excused for Fatinah.

**JUDEH:** I'm sorry. Yes.

**WILLIAMS:** I want to go back to some of these questions. This is a very fascinating subject. So, you can get a high school equivalency degree by taking an examination, correct?

**JUDEH:** That's correct. GED.

**WILLIAMS:** And tell us about that because this sounds very similar in that sometimes these kids will pass this examination, get a high school diploma, right?

**JUDEH:** They don't get a high school diploma. Actually, they get like a certificate that's considered a high school equivalency. And actually, this is something that we are exploring as well. Yeah. Students have, there's alternative ways to finishing high school. I don't want to say diploma because you get high school equivalency. When you look at test prep for GED, there's about four courses. And because there's four sections in the GED in each course speaking about credits is worth 10 credits. Math is 10, English is 10, science is 10, and history is 10. In order to take a GED exam, if you really want to be prepared, if you look at the community colleges that offer GED, that's what they're taking. They do what's called test prep, and then you take the GED exam. Exactly. That is an alternative pathway to finishing high school.

**WILLIAMS:** So that's a certificate compared to a diploma?

**JUDEH:** Yes, absolutely.

**WILLIAMS:** But colleges and universities recognize that certificate as equivalency, correct?

**JUDEH:** Oh yeah, absolutely. I know so many people that I know that went to law school with the GED, I mean you can get into community college and then after you go to community college, you can then take some of your gen ed courses. You can transfer to UC, Cal State.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. So, the state of California then requires a minimum of what to get that high school diploma?

**JUDEH:** 130, that is the state minimum. So, we are seeing some charter schools that are going with that model, which like I said, that's not a criticism. It works for them, but for us exactly, we are Orange County Department of Ed, we represent Orange County Department of Ed. And so, for us, it was really essential to maintain that academic rigor, which is why we did not touch core and we even left 10 elective credit so that we can incentivize students to take career technical education courses or dual enrollment courses at the college.

**WILLIAMS:** So, I find this is very interesting because you and I, Dr. Bean have talked about creating this medical pathway for students or adults who are maybe 20, 22 years of age where they get an we really need a lot of healthcare providers. They get an MA, which is a medical assistant, and then they can go and move into an LVN program and then to the RN program. I'm talking with a lot of our community colleges where these trustees are very interested in this concept and we haven't got going yet. We're going to start doing this. But this would be good for that individual, that 23-year-old who maybe wants to become an RN.

**JUDEH:** Absolutely.

**WILLIAMS:** They get their high school diploma, they can move into an LVN RN program. And I think I can get excited about this.

**JUDEH:** Absolutely. I think it's going to create more opportunity. And like I said, we really believe in CCPA. We've seen, I mean I know you've attended our graduations. The program has had a transformative impact on students and we want to continue to have that impact. And in order to do that, we need to facilitate these pathways to earn a high school diploma for our adults. And again, 19 to 25-year olds.

**WILLIAMS:** Yeah. Great job, Fatinah.

**JUDEH:** Thank you. Thank you so much.

**WILLIAMS:** You are excused if you want to go down unless there's any more questions.

**JUDEH:** Okay. Thank you everybody for your time. Thank you. And by the way, just really quickly before I leave, we did prepare a booklet for you. Please check that out. It contains letters of support from our teachers and our students. Thank you for your time. Great questions.

**BARKE:** Thank you for the great presentation.

**WILLIAMS:** Yes. Oh boy. It's now 7:40. We just want to continue on my dear board members?

**BARKE:** Yep.

**VALDES:** I went to the restroom during the public comments.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. So, we will continue on with item number 16. I'm going to ask for David Giordano for items number 16 and 17. These are public hearings and then we'll move on to staff recommendations. Thank you all for coming, by the way, to listen to that item. We do appreciate all your comments.

**GIORDANO:** Thank you. Good evening, President Williams, members of the board. I want to thank you for allowing the superintendent to conduct this public hearing for public input on the California School Employees Association proposal to the superintendent. And this is for the '25-'26 school year. At this time, I'd like to open the public hearing and ask Ms. Hendrick if we have any public comments regarding this item.

**BARKE:** I don't believe we do.

**GIORDANO:** Nothing. Okay. Hearing no comments, the hearing is now closed.

**WILLIAMS:** Agenda item number 17.

**GIORDANO:** 17. Again, good evening, President Williams, members of the board, I want to again thank you for allowing the superintendent to conduct this public hearing. And this is for public input on the superintendent's proposal to the California School Employees Association, again for the '25-'26 school year. At this time, I'd like to ask Ms. Hendrick if we have any public comment cards regarding this item? Hearing no public comments, that hearing is now closed.

**WILLIAMS:** Very good. Thank you, sir. Okay. Staff recommendations. Item number 18. This is approval of a revised board policy 200-8 regarding ethics training. I'll make the motion. May I have a second?

**VALDES:** Is that for purposes of discussion?

**WILLIAMS:** Yes.

**VALDES:** I will second your motion for purposes of discussion.

**WILLIAMS:** Very good. We always will do discussion after a primary motion and a second. Yes, sir. What are your questions?

**VALDES:** So, Mr. Rolen. Oh, okay. This is taking our existing board policy on ethics training and clearly changing it to a two-year model. The five trustees up here would be doing the two hours of ethics training now every two years, right? Instead of after every four years getting elected?

**ROLEN:** Correct?

**VALDES:** Right. I guess the question that I have, or the concern that I have, this is also not a yes vote for me, is what is the state mandate, number one. And number two, I've done, for example, the ethics training twice since I was appointed in August of '22. And the only option I have is what is on the attorney general's website. It's the same class. I took it the second time just to finish the requirement. It was the exact same topic. Everything was exactly the same. I remembered it from when I did it the first time. And the question that I have is, why would I want to do this? Why would I want to take that class every two years if that's my only option?

**ROLEN:** Well, this agenda item was prompted by a question from Trustee Barke about the state mandates for ethics training. And we realized that our board policy was not compliant with the state mandate. The revised policy is simply bringing up to speed with the state mandates.

**VALDES:** Oh, okay. So, this is the state mandate?

**BARKE:** Yes.

**ROLEN:** This is the state mandate.

**VALDES:** Oh, okay.

**ROLEN:** And policy just hadn't been revised in nine years.

**BARKE:** And as a side note, there are some more robust courses if you want to take something more interesting. They are available in person courses. As a matter of fact, California Policy Center offers one. So, there are courses out there if you don't like this, only one that's offered if you want more entertainment with your ethics.

**SHAW:** It is so thrilling though, really? Why would you, oh...

**ROLEN:** For the question that's coming? Yes. Everybody is up to speed on their ethics training on this board.

**VALDES:** All right, so this is a state mandate. The mandate is every two years. And I just got to find some other way to be entertained for two hours other than the attorney general's website.

**ROLEN:** That was just too easy. The joke is below me, but yes.

**VALDES:** Okay.

**ROLEN:** And we also did want to reflect the board's commitment to professional development in the board policy. We added just a little bit because the board has its own professional development policy and we wanted to reflect the board's commitment to constant growth.

**SHAW:** The clerk of the county clerk reminds us when we have to do this. Is that correct?

**VALDES:** I get those emails.

**SHAW:** I'm always nervous. I'm going too long before I've taken it again, but I think we usually get an email from the county clerk, right? No?

**BARKE:** I don't think we do.

**HENDRICK:** I think you just [several inaudible words].

**SHAW:** That's the 700? So how do we get reminded when we need to take this?

**ROLEN:** We're going to take care of that.

**SHAW:** I can't remember what I had for breakfast, so don't let me forget to do this.

**ROLEN:** You had a bagel Trustee Shaw.

**VALDES:** And actually, if the staff can give me another option besides that website, that would be good too.

**ROLEN:** As you wish.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. Motion a second. Any other questions? Bar none. Let's go ahead and vote on this. All those in favor say aye.

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

**WILLIAMS:** A board member is absent. Motion passes. 4-0-1. Okay, moving on to item number 19, which is adoption of resolution 15-25 authorizing the exemption of the County of Orange zoning requirements for the Rancho Sonado site. May I have a motion for that?

**BARKE:** So move.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. Motion second. I will second that. Okay, David, there may be a few questions. So currently there are restrictions in what we can do and not do. And the whole purpose of this is just to be able to build the site and not break any laws or zoning.

**GIORDANO:** That's right. Yeah. Were we actually going through the Department of State Architect like we would on any typical school project. When you look at all the DSA requirements, they're very extensive. We have to go through them for design all the way through the construction process. There's a Department of State Architect that would be signed to the project. If the board were to approve the exemption exempting us from the Orange County zoning requirements, we'd still be required to go through the Department of State Architect for review. What this would allow us to do is not have to go through that zoning requirement process, which would cover most of the same things that we're going to be doing through Department of State Architect. The challenge would be going through this process requires us to go through the planning commission and it takes, what we're hearing is it takes about a minimum of six months and it could take upwards of a year or longer to go through that process. Speaking with the project team, the project manager, the architects, this is the recommendation.

**WILLIAMS:** I see. And so, Government Code Section 53094 allows us to be exempted from this if we pass this resolution. Is that correct?

**GIORDANO:** That's correct. Two thirds of its members by vote. Yes.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. Any other questions?

**BARKE:** Not for me.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. Stay up there, David.

**GIORDANO:** All right.

**WILLIAMS:** We're going to go to the next item number 20. Okay. So, barring that, there's no further questions. All those in favor say aye.

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

**WILLIAMS:** Motion passes 4-0 with one person who is not here, Dr. Sparks. Moving on to now item number 20, which is a resolution and for request for proposal. Is that correct? With C.W. Driver for the Rancho Sonado project? Renee. Okay, very good. May I have a motion?

**BARKE:** So moved.

**WILLIAMS:** Second. Okay, I'll second it. Any questions? David, could you, or Renee, could you give us an update on what's going on here with the [several inaudible words]?

**GIORDANO:** Absolutely. And so really what this is, it's a request to approve the pre-construction services agreement with C.W. Driver. And this is for pre-construction services. Really what it is, it's to construct the base, the road, the access road leading up to the base camp and also the connection of the utilities for the Rancho Sonado site. And so that along with, it's also going to include a review of the design documents as well. And so that's all part of the pre-construction services. But what we did is we brought in, we first issued an RFP for services and there were, I believe 14 different contractors that submitted prequalification packets. We reviewed all the prequalification packets and we were looking at where all the requirements that we highlighted in our request for proposals. From there were, I believe a total of nine pre-qualified contractors and only six of those were actually selected for interview. And when we went through the scoring process, C.W. Driver was actually the company that was recommended by the review committee. They were actually, they interviewed the best, and when you look at their price proposal, it was actually the lowest cost too. It was a very easy decision for the committee.

**WILLIAMS:** You see their name quite a bit out there. C.W. Driver?

**GIORDANO:** Yes.

**WILLIAMS:** Is that an individual or is that a large corporation?

**GIORDANO:** That's a great question. It's a very large corporation. Yeah. Multimillion-dollar corporation.

**SHAW:** You don't list the I've sat on — microphone's on, right? Yeah. I'm just looking at this. When I've sat on the Orange County Transportation Authority Board, we had lots of procurements for things like this. And it's laid out very differently here than I'm used to seeing there. But you don't show us how the other bids came in, right? I'm not seeing that in the...

**GIORDANO:** Yeah, as far as the bids go, those were all actually reviewed internally.

**SHAW:** And you're not giving them to us as part of our board packet?

**HENDRICK:** This is a request for proposal, not a public works bid, which is different. A public works bid requires the open package you have to rate, it's the lowest bidder, right? And RFP is basically you're allowed to use a matrix. We could give you that information if you'd like, but it basically ranks it. You don't have to pick the lowest bidder, you have to pick the one with the different service that has the best services.

**GIORDANO:** In the April 2nd meeting, our last meeting, all that information was actually included as part of the packet. All the rating criteria was in there.

**SHAW:** Right, but you're not showing us. I was just making sure I didn't miss it somewhere. It's nowhere in here how they scored on the different criteria?

**GIORDANO:** No, yeah, you're correct. It's not included in there. We could definitely provide that information.

**SHAW:** I just was a little curious how they all stacked up, but I'll take your word for it.

**WILLIAMS:** For the future. Why don't we get that in our packets? Tim's...

**GIORDANO:** We can do that.

**SHAW:** I mean sometimes, obviously amateurs can always understand price, so everyone can see that sounds like these were the lowest price, so that's a good thing. But when it comes to more nuanced things, if it was the resumes and skills of the people working on the project, that sort of stuff, it's not always the lowest price, it's the best, necessarily the best way to go on a contract, on an RFP.

**GIORDANO:** Absolutely.

**HENDRICK:** We can email those to you if you'd like the rankings.

**SHAW:** Sure.

**WILLIAMS:** Very good. Any other questions? Barring none. Thank you, David. Okay, so I have a motion a second. No further questions. All those in of item number 20 say aye.

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

**WILLIAMS:** Opposed. Absent is Dr. Sparks, the item passes 4-0-1. Moving on with board recommendations item number 21. And since this is Dr. Sparks and myself, this is a little project we've been working on for a few years. I will make the motion for this and then we'll have a discussion.

**VALDES:** I'll second for discussion.

**WILLIAMS:** We have a motion and a second. I want to first of all thank Dr. Bean and Renee for being a part of this overall vision that we've had for quite some time about adding to the professionalism of what we do here at the board. This is a lot of work for what we do and sometimes I feel very inadequate in that I don't have enough of me to do it. I'm a full-time physician and this is something that's a passion as for all my colleagues, education is something that we care very passionately about. This was originally, it started out as a resolution and then Dr. Bean and myself met a lot of information was given about different options. And again, I think Renee and Dr. Bean had a tremendous impact upon the final outcome of this board position. With this is board action to create this board liaison position and the process, I'll be

more than happy to talk about, but I don't want to occupy too much of the time. I'll add to the questions if there are any that do come up. Jorge, Tim?

**VALDES:** Not on my part.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. We've talked about this a lot in the past. Okay. The idea is going forward is that Dr. Bean is going to take the lead for us in putting this out in the public square. And Renee, if you can help me out here, you have to post this on a certain site?

**HENDRICK:** Yeah, we'll post it on Edjoin is what we use, which then feeds out to every Indeed and all those different job boards. We will then take the applications and help screen those. And then I think the plan was that we would have panel interviews similar to the general counsel where we could have as many board members as possible, but segregate them so that we don't violate any Brown Act.

**WILLIAMS:** Right. The vision when Dr. Bean and I talked about this was to have two rooms, much like we did for the superintendent and the GC decision, and have two board members and maybe a staff member be present so we can kind of screen out who we'd like to see in this and then we get together and make that decision as a board more formally here at another meeting. Dr. Bean, if you want to add to that discussion and that vision.

**BEAN:** No, that's right. We'll follow a similar path that we did with general counsel and then you would bring the candidate up for discussion from those interviews that you have. You'll choose your top interview and then bring it up for discussion at the board to approve.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. So, it's a process and it would probably be what by June that we'd have all of the candidates and we start the interviewing sometime that month?

**HENDRICK:** Depending on what the recruitments look like. Our recruitments are running about four to six weeks right now, so possibly could do it by the end of June. I think originally you had said starting in July, so.

**WILLIAMS:** Might be in July. Okay.

**HENDRICK:** Okay. But we're ready to get it posted.

**WILLIAMS:** Very good. Any other questions?

**BARKE:** Well, I've already made the comment, so I don't know if you want me to repeat them. I won't be supporting it, but I'm supportive of everyone who wants to support it. But my own personal reasons are I feel that the places I go, they want me to attend as a trustee, that they don't want someone coming in my place. Some examples are recent charter school visits, exit interviews at charters, a gala, a soiree. This last weekend I handed out little medals at the Orange County Run. And I think the fact that a trustee was there, as a matter of fact, one of the founders said, next year I want all five elected officials here. And I said, good luck. I feel I was elected as a public servant and I contemplated the time I would spend in the field for as far as the

administrative. You guys do a great job and I appreciate that. And I won't be supporting it for my own reasons, but I understand that you have different needs than I do.

**WILLIAMS:** Very good, thank you. Okay, any other comments or questions barring none. All those in favor say aye.

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

**WILLIAMS:** Against?

**BARKE:** Against.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. And abstain or absences, Dr. Spark. So, the item passes 3-1-1. Moving on the board item number 22. Okay. This is a policy that I've been wanting to make for quite some time and the origins of this policy, first of all, I'm going to make the motion for item number 22. If I can have a second.

**BARKE:** I'll second.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay, we motion a second in discussion. Let me give you a little bit of background. When I first came on the board in '96, it was troubling times. It was very early times in this board in developing where we have matured to many years later. But I was not allowed to put anything on the agenda. I was not allowed to put an item. It was very restrictive. And the way the politics were at that time is that I was oftentimes stifled and not able to represent what I thought were my constituents. Fast forward many years forward, I mean many years later things changed and I actually became president of the board. I've always felt that the executive committee should always represent the board. And that didn't happen very early in my career or my years as a trustee here. In departing, and this will be my last year as president on the executive committee. I thought it was very important that we just reemphasize that the executive committee is there to represent the board and that's very, very important in that they give even the minority members. When I was a minority member, I didn't think I was given the respect or the ability to represent my constituents. I think this just updates our board policy. And Greg, if you can help come up and articulate more as you help me to refine this board policy and to give your thoughts for my board members.

**ROLEN:** I think you did a fine job with your synopsis. This has been a passion project of Dr. Williams for some time. What we were really seeking to do is clarify the role of the executive committee for the public because sometimes it's not known. You'll see in the policy it's replete with references to the government code and the education code, which talk about the parameters of board authority. And this executive committee model allows us to act within the parameters of the law and be flexible when necessary. So, this is a clarification any more than a great policy departure, but it has been a passion project of our president for some time.

**WILLIAMS:** And I think there's a lot of nuances if you look at the paragraph 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 and 6. But I think the spirit of this resolution is that the whole purpose of the executive committee is to represent the best interests of the entire board in all matters and work towards

consensus boardsmanship, and even the minority board involvement and obviously full transparency and openness on governance items. It may not be that major of a change in what we've been doing, but I just wanted to clarify that as a board policy. Any other questions?

**SHAW:** Well, I appreciate that Ken. I spent the last several years on my city council very regularly on the losing end of a four to one vote. I was the one. So, I appreciate your sensitivity to those who sometimes are on a board but not often getting their way. And it was really stifling as well. On my city council I wasn't able to put things on the agenda there either.

**WILLIAMS:** You weren't?

**SHAW:** No, you needed a second. And even information items I proposed sometimes to put on the agenda, they wouldn't even do that. It wasn't even an item to vote on a policy decision, just they didn't even want to hear my information.

**BARKE:** Silly them.

**SHAW:** Yeah. Well darn. But I appreciate the spirit in which this is done, Ken.

**WILLIAMS:** Yeah, it's really a concept of boardsmanship, something that we don't always see in school boards and there's a lot of yelling back and forth and diplomacy and being a diplomat is certainly sometimes lost in being in public service. So that's the spirit is recognizing the minority, recognizing that everybody who is elected on this board has the ability to put items on the agenda and should be respected. Okay, thank you Tim for your kind words. Any other words?

**BARKE:** No, I appreciate the policy as well.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay, very good. Okay, we have a motion, a second. All those in favor say aye.

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

**WILLIAMS:** Motion passes 4-0-1 with the absence of Dr. Sparks. Okay, moving on to item number 23. This is submitted by Trustee Valdes, so I'll let you have the honors of...

**VALDES:** So, to my colleagues I would say it's about, and before I begin, I want to say first I want to talk about this and then I'm going to make a comment to the IIA parents who are still in the audience because this is related. A couple of months ago, a parent from a charter school in Orange County, and I've decided not to mention the charter in particular, through Trustee Barke contacted us. I sort of took the lead on that. I seem to be the one who always gets into these curriculum issues, but so the parent contacted me, I got an email, I asked for the materials that were handed out in the classroom at this very well-known high school in Orange County, and I was told that they had a global studies class and the materials included clear concepts of oppressor, oppressed definitions of Republicans and Democrats, critical race theory concepts.

It was about 10, 15 pages of it in this class. And it was at that point that I said I think we as a board need to have a policy on the topic of what is curriculum that we find acceptable, and I don't want to be the curriculum police. I've said that many times as I've sat up here since August of '22. But there needs to be, in my view, some parameters of what I'm willing to approve with respect to a charter school. It was subsequently suggested to me that instead of a policy, it should be a change to the MOU sent the contract that the charter sign when they get renewed. So, myself in conjunction with Mr. Rolen put page 75 together in the packet. And this is a paragraph that would be added to the MOU itself that a charter would sign. And there are limits on what acceptable curriculum, the change in the MOU would place a limit on the acceptable limits of the curriculum of the charter as they get approved.

And I've been told by Mr. Rolen that we can't be monitoring throughout the process or through after we approve them. The only time we could really take action on a charter is at the time of re-approval, which is fine and I understand that limitation, but I'd like to put this into the MOU and it's essentially saying you can't be teaching, be telling kids that they are going to be compelled to adopt identities as either victims or oppressors solely based on their skin color and other immutable characteristics. You can't make a student question whether they were born in the wrong body and whether to view their parents and their reality as enemies to be blamed. You can't have a student be imprinted with anti-American subversive, harmful and false ideologies such as, but not limited to critical race theory.

I am not comfortable in authorizing a charter if they're just going to teach all these concepts. I like giving people choice, but in my view, they have to be good choices and those are just not good choices. Now I have, so that's what's on the page. I have, after I submitted this as an agenda item, I came up with some other ideas and I wanted to talk to you guys publicly about them. We could go a little bit further if you wanted. And referring to gender transition plans behind the knowledge without the knowledge of parents.

And I also think it may be important to include some limit on distributing classroom materials that the executive director and the principal are not aware of or were never approved because that is how I see this happening. Oftentimes it's a rogue teacher, the rogue teacher decides to go on his or her own, the administration may or may not know about what's going on and then all the parents complain to us. So that's something I would consider as well for as an addition to the MOU. I don't know if Mr. Rolen has any comments on my two little potential additions, but anyway, those are my thoughts and that's why I put this on the agenda item for discussion today. Oh, in reference to the IIA parents, I got your email. I've heard everything that you've said tonight, and if you call Darou Sisavath, I will make an appointment with you on Monday and please come here, sit down. I can't really talk about hiring process, but I'd like to hear what's in the curriculum. Okay.

**SHAW:** Just so I understand, we're saying that this is language that will be included in every charter renewal. What you're proposing here on page 75, is that the idea?

**VALDES:** It would be in the MOU that the charter signs when they get renewed, correct. Mr. Rolen?

**ROLEN:** Correct.

**SHAW:** Okay. So, as they just come in, this is what we're saying?

**ROLEN:** The idea is that the MOU is what the charters would sign, either renewal or approval and they're agreeing to this language or not. You realize that sometimes we use the MOU when we do a conditional approval or we sometimes use the MOU during a complete approval without conditions, just to set forth some pretty clear parameters that aren't included in the petition.

**SHAW:** I completely understand and agree with what Trustee Valdes is suggesting here I guess having guardrails. This does feel unusual, I believe. I don't know that when charters have come in before that we, correct me if I'm wrong, but do we set curriculum guidelines like this anywhere else or is this sort of a new thing?

**ROLEN:** It is a novel concept. Sometimes we don't even have the curriculum when we approve a charter.

**SHAW:** Right.

**VALDES:** I just view this as this is an ongoing problem and parents keep complaining, I am here for parents and kids and if parents and kids are going to complain, then I'm going to get involved and that this IIA issue is not the first time I'm going to sit down with somebody and I just would like this to stop. There's certain parameters on the curriculum. I think they're at the very far edges of what I would like to see in a charter school. I don't want to be the curriculum police. I don't want to tell Samueli how to teach their classes when I toured their campus. And I noticed that there were no textbooks in the school. None. Everyone has a laptop computer and that was really novel for me. Because I grew up, well, my high school was in the 1980s and I remember a backpack that was 10 pounds, 20 pounds of textbooks walking to and from school. So, I don't want to tell educators how to educate kids. That's not my, I don't feel that's my job, but I feel like these are the things that cause the parents to complain and there needs to be some guardrails on what we approve.

**WILLIAMS:** Jorge, I can support the concept. Maybe some of the language can be changed. Like for instance, eliminating of the illegal DEI mandates. I think you can actually specifically list Title VI of the Civil Rights Act that that's in violation of that. So that would may be something to include or expand upon to mention Title VI.

**VALDES:** Like I said, Dr. Williams, I put this on for discussion so we can talk about it. If we want to make amendments, I can bring it back as a discussion item and we can vote on it the month after. We don't, for the public's benefit, we don't get an opportunity to talk like this unless we're up here. The Brown Act prohibits us from having this talk. This is our talk. You're seeing it live.

**SHAW:** The sauce is making [several inaudible words].

**WILLIAMS:** I think this also has to do with the understanding and the concept of parental rights and enforcing FERPA and the pupil rights amendment. We have a US Supreme Court that just reviewed this case with the rights of parents and their kids being socially transitioned this week. I think it was Monday. I'd like to see something expanded upon to include the FERPA, which is the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act and the Pupil Education Act. I think that would kind of tie it in and make it concrete with some actual laws that are existing. I'm not a lawyer, I'm just a primary care doc and I put hair on people when they don't have hair.

**SHAW:** Hey, someone's got to do it.

**BARKE:** No comment.

**SHAW:** Could I make a suggestion, Dr. Williams?

**WILLIAMS:** Yes.

**SHAW:** I know we have staff who kind of have work on curriculum here at the Department. I think from what Trustee Valdes has written here that the intent is probably pretty clear and they can understand that. But would it be possible to have staff at the Department kind of look at the laws and look at the language and maybe come up with a, help us with an MOU at the next meeting, or help us agendize this? I think this is a great start and the intent is clear. Would that be appropriate to do?

**WILLIAMS:** Yeah, well, it's Jorge's item, so he can do whatever he wants to. I support him in his efforts.

**BARKE:** I'd love to make some comments as well. Oh, go ahead.

**VALDES:** No, please, please, please.

**BARKE:** So, I love what you do and I love that you're going to talk to IIA and I love when somebody complains to me. I can sick you on them. I love that. I love your advocacy for parents. I don't want garbage taught in Orange County. I don't, but I want to be legal also.

**VALDES:** Well, this was approved by Greg.

**BARKE:** Well, okay.

**SHAW:** That ain't worth the paper it's written on.

**VALDES:** I did run this by him before I just put it on.

**BARKE:** I just want to make sure that we're not in violation by telling charters what to teach. I know I've heard talk before from the Charter School Association. I think I'm absolutely in supportive of teaching everything within the law, whether it's FERPA or whatever, new laws, old laws, as long as we're staying within the law. But I think in some cases maybe they just need to

come to us when they have these issues and that I'm not sure that we legally can or should tell a charter what to teach because they are a school of choice and if they're teaching crap, people should walk away or can walk away unlike certain schools. I just want to make sure that we are staying within the charter law. Let me just see my notes. I made some notes as I don't believe it's our role to micromanage, as you said. But at the same time, I want to make sure that we are, and I think we need to do our due diligence when a school comes before us that we're going to approve a school that we're comfortable that is going to teach appropriate curriculum. And if they don't or there is a rogue teacher, I mean, I think even by doing an MOU, you still can have a rogue teacher and that's where we act as a liaison to help parents where something rogue might be going on.

**VALDES:** I just feel Trustee Barke that with respect to what I'm comfortable in approving. First off, there's a whole lot of stuff that I didn't put in here.

**BARKE:** I can only imagine.

**VALDES:** And I really feel like I limited it to the very far parameters of where I get most of my complaints. And so, it isn't really telling the charter what to teach, it's what I'm comfortable in saying, I'm not going to support you if you are going to teach this. And I really do feel that I'm limiting this to the very far parameters of just what I'm just not going to vote yes on.

**BARKE:** I think that's fine.

**VALDES:** Charter comes here and they teach this. I'm not going to vote yes on that charter.

**BARKE:** Since you are the lawyer in the room. Is it our position to tell charters what they can teach? Can we do that? Is that appropriate?

**ROLEN:** You, I know Trustee Valdes intended to put me in a difficult position about rendering legal advice in public, but I don't think you did. He tried to put me up against the wall here. There is a field of law that sets boundaries around what the board can and cannot do. The board at approval and renewal can make a determination, can make findings about what an unsound educational program is. There's no parameters on that. What Trustee Valdes is attempting to do is to tell the public, what he views as an unsound educational program. You've all received an attorney-client privilege memorandum that I'm not going to discuss publicly about what we believe the parameters of when the board can exercise that authority. And this is, like I said, a novel concept that is testing that authority.

**BARKE:** And what do you think the charter school's position would be on that? The Charter School Association, and...

**ROLEN:** It is probably beyond my scope to comment on what they might think. It calls for speculation, but they rarely like us telling them what to teach and how to teach it.

**BARKE:** Okay. All right.

**WILLIAMS:** If I can just piggyback upon what I've already said in your comment about approving charter schools. If you were to approve a charter school that would have a social transition program, you would probably say no. Right? So, you're just defining what would a school could do?

**VALDES:** Look, the code says I get to decide what a sound unsound education is. If a school was teaching demonism and they openly come here and they tell me that they're going to have a demonism class, I don't care what anyone else thinks. I'm not going to agree that that's a sound educational program. So, I'm just defining what I feel is sound and unsound.

**WILLIAMS:** Exactly.

**VALDES:** And Greg has told me it's not defined anywhere, so I've decided to define it.

**WILLIAMS:** I agree with that. That's a good governing policy and perspective. Okay. So, what do you want to do next with this?

**ROLEN:** We're probably going to include demonism in the...

**VALDES:** Well, you've made a request for us to go a little bit back to the drawing board and put some more statutes in there. And I'm certainly willing to do that. I can do that over the next month. And I think what I'll do is I'll come back next month with a redraft of this and we can keep talking about it until we're all comfortable with it.

**WILLIAMS:** Well actually what you can do, what I would recommend is that you come back as an action item. If there is some debate or concern about it, we can always lay it on the table for redrafting and bring it back.

**VALDES:** Okay.

**WILLIAMS:** We can talk about this for quite some time. But I think for me, this is pretty simple. I align myself with your philosophy and governance. I probably couldn't approve a school that taught demonism either. I don't think I can approve a school...

**WILLIAMS:** What you do in law school is you try and create examples by using the most extreme positions and then you can define what your law is going to be or your position is going to be by using an extreme. So that's just an extreme position. But I think the point is clear. I'm not going to approve a charter school that has a demonism class. I'm just not going to do it.

**WILLIAMS:** Copy that.

**ROLEN:** And we also found out that you were an exceptional law student.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. So, you're going to take this back to the drawing board and come back next month.

**WILLIAMS:** It was always intended just as a discussion item. Like I said, I don't know if the public is aware, we don't get to talk about this and this is our discussion. We just had it and you guys all saw it. I'll come back, I'll work with Greg a little bit more on it and I'll bring it back next month. Okay.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay, great. Any other questions, comments before we move on?

**BARKE:** Thank you for your diligence in protecting our children. I do appreciate that.

**WILLIAMS:** Yes, very good. Okay, moving on to item number 24. This is asking for approval of the Sheehy Strategy Group agreement and that is in the packet there.

**BARKE:** I'll make a motion to approve.

**WILLIAMS:** Thank you. And a second?

**VALDES:** Second.

**WILLIAMS:** Second by Trustee Valdes. Any questions, comments?

**BARKE:** I think they're doing a great job of keeping us up on what's going on in Sacramento, especially as it affects us, which unfortunately, because we do protect the children, we often have bills that we need to follow. I really appreciate their work and would love to approve their contract.

**WILLIAMS:** And if I can just add to those comments and tell me if I'm wrong, but we're probably one of the only school boards that is actively participating in the legislative process in both Sacramento and Washington DC. Influencing legislation, taking positions and having a representative there that looks after the rights of parents, the protection of the innocence of children, those type of values. I appreciate your support and I assuming that you will vote in the affirmative for this action.

**VALDES:** Oh, I think Sheehy does a really, really good job for us.

**WILLIAMS:** Yes.

**BARKE:** And really protects us. I mean they're after us every year. This year it's SB 249. Last year it was 907 and I can't even remember what it was three years ago.

**SHAW:** This item is just it's an inflation of 5%. A 5% inflation.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay, very good. Okay, barring no further discussion, all those in favor of item 24 say aye.

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

**WILLIAMS:** Opposed? None. Abstentions, Trustee Sparks is not present. Action item passes. Moving on to item number 25. That is the legislative platform.

**BARKE:** And do you want to over that?

**WILLIAMS:** Tim or Mari?

**BARKE:** I think Tim will do it for us.

**SHAW:** Okay, thank you. So, okay. We heard a number of public comments today regarding Assembly Bill 84. That's clearly an effort by the chairman of the Assembly Education Committee to make life more difficult for charter schools. And obviously this board as a charter authorizer and we are a board that values, the great work done by our charter schools and supports the concept of school choice. We had already actually prepared to take a position on Assembly Bill 84. Now I believe this is sort of a new format that Sheehy actually set up for us. This is how, I guess we're trying to have it appear in our agenda packets from now on. But our legislative committee, which is composed of myself and Vice President Barke, we're going to suggest that our board take a formal position opposing Assembly Bill 84. So, we were on the same wavelength weeks ago. We...

**BARKE:** Well, and we realized it really attacks the non-classroom base. That's who it's really going after. And we appreciate the non-classroom base that we have and we know that there's a moratorium, so we really have to protect what we have.

**SHAW:** So, it would be my motion that we as a board oppose the Assembly Bill 84.

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

**WILLIAMS:** We have a second in a motion. Any further discussion? I think this is an excellent bill to oppose. This is absolutely going to destroy charter schools and especially our virtual schools. So good job you guys. I want to thank Mari and Tim for just being on this committee. That's a lot of work for what you do.

**BARKE:** It is our pleasure. We love going to Sacramento and testifying and sitting next to people who really don't like us.

**VALDES:** Especially in the middle of the summer.

**SHAW:** They just love seeing us coming down the hall.

**BARKE:** Oh yeah, they do. They love when we come up to that table and sit right next to them and talk about their bills.

**SHAW:** I think I'll have more to say at the legislative updates. Is that...

**WILLIAMS:** Yes.

**SHAW:** Okay. But for now, we'll just do the Assembly Bill 84.

**WILLIAMS:** Correct. It's a board action item. Okay. We have a motion, a second to oppose Assembly Bill 84, barring no further questions. Those in support of the motion say aye.

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

**WILLIAMS:** Opposed none. Absence is Trustee Sparks. The item passes 4-0-1.

**HENDRICK:** Dr. Williams, could I just add also that you also received the full listing of bills in case you wanted to talk, it was in your binder if any of those interest you talked to Mr. Sheehy's company about, but that's all the different bills they're tracking.

**SHAW:** I think I was going to mention that at the legislative update.

**HENDRICK:** There you go. Sorry to steal your thunder.

**SHAW:** It's okay.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. Great job you guys. I mean it's 8:30. We've only been here three and a half hours. If we just have a little bit more to go, no potty breaks?

**BARKE:** No, let's just go.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. So, we have a communication, Renee, in regards to the \$10,000 increases. Do you just have to announce that?

**HENDRICK:** Yeah, we just have to announce that. But I also wanted to explain that this is, we've talked for the last couple of years, the compensation study classification and compensating compensation study that was done for classified and management employees. This is the culmination of all of that. Our policy requires us to show you salaries over 12 months. These not only include the increase for any increases they had for that, but also if we had a COLA in that year. It includes both of those in these numbers and it's over a 12-month period.

**BARKE:** I would like to ask, what about Dr. Bean? Does he fall into this? Is he getting these increases as well?

**HENDRICK:** That's a really good question. Not only is he not included in this compensation study, but he wasn't included for the cost of living increase that the rest of the employees got also. Management employees got a 2% increase this year. He did not receive anything because the board needs to request that.

**BARKE:** Okay. I think that's something we should request or talk about. Also, I know that he is driving much more than previous superintendents for various reasons, and I want to also make sure that we're adequately compensating him for his mileage, his car, all of that. Is that something we should talk about here, put on as a future item or how? I don't know, Greg?

**HENDRICK:** If you'd like, we can bring back a survey of class 2 counties and other superintendents since the time he's become superintendent. The superintendent's position has fallen quite a bit below other district superintendents and in the class 2 counties I just looked at. I believe he is one of the lowest. So, we can bring all of that back for the board to make a decision and then a couple of different options maybe on either a vehicle allowance or other options.

**BARKE:** So, are you guys comfortable adding that as an action item for our next agenda? Can we do that?

**WILLIAMS:** Absolutely. I think that's a very good idea. I would support that. So that would be a task that you would undertake Renee?

**HENDRICK:** Right. Greg and I can work together.

**WILLIAMS:** And you'll bring something back to us and some recommendations based upon the survey of the various superintendents in the state and the car allowances and whatever it is normal. So, Dr. Bean is paid the lowest right now? Is that what you just told us?

**HENDRICK:** Of the class 2 counties? I believe there was one little tiny county that was a little bit less. The district superintendents, he's in the bottom mid, mid to bottom. But again, some of those districts are few thousand students.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay.

**VALDES:** Can I make a comment about some of these, the lists that I see, and Renee, I brought this up before the meeting with you, but I want to talk about this again. I guess the only concern that I have is what I'm looking at is four pages of administrators that are getting some nice salary increases and I see one teacher and two paraeducators, which I sort of think are maybe teacher's assistants.

**HENDRICK:** Teacher assistants. Remember para educators don't work full time, so it would be harder for them to get to that 10,000 limit because they only work five and three quarters or six hours. Teachers were not included in this study.

**VALDES:** But why is there one teacher then?

**HENDRICK:** Because he received, so the policy says, and the code says anybody who receives an increase more than 10,000, that was a brand new teacher. He went from a paraeducator to a teacher. So that was his increase for that promotion.

**VALDES:** Oh, I see.

**HENDRICK:** We're supposed to show you anything above that 10,000.

**VALDES:** This is just a list of administrators. This is not a list of teachers?

**HENDRICK:** Teachers. Well, there would be if they qualified.

**VALDES:** What did the teachers get?

**HENDRICK:** The teachers. We negotiate the teachers...

**VALDES:** No offense to everyone in this room, but I'm really more focused on what the classroom teachers get.

**HENDRICK:** So that's part of our negotiations. But I will tell you that our teachers are in the very top quartile one and two in the county.

**VALDES:** Okay. All right. I like to hear that. All right.

**BARKE:** Hey, while we're talking about teachers, I want to make a shout out to the teachers of the year. I read that about the six teachers of the year and thank you for celebrating them and I look forward to celebrating...

**SHAW:** Dr. Bean was on the front page. He's famous.

**BEAN:** I want to show you their pictures in a few minutes.

**BARKE:** Yeah, I look forward to celebrating them later this year, so that's exciting.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay, so we're going to bring back something for Dr. Bean at our next board meeting.

**VALDES:** Can I ask Renee to put an agenda item on what you just mentioned about the teacher salaries and being on the top quartile?

**HENDRICK:** I just want to be very careful. Because we have collective bargaining agreements and the board is not actually part of the collective bargaining agreements. That is the superintendent's purview. We really don't have...

**VALDES:** For all you teachers, I'm looking out for you.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay, that's good. Charter school update, Aracely.

**CHASTAIN:** All right. Thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on the charter school's authorized by the board. In your red folders, you'll find the spring 2025 updates, which include two key components of financial report based on the '24-'25 second interim reports and an academic update using data from the 2024 California School Dashboard and CASP data. Starting with the Dashboard results. I will just go through this as quickly as I can here. The California School Dashboard is an online tool that reports how some reports how school districts and charter schools perform on various academic and local indicators. Performance levels are reported where there are at least 30 students in both the current and the prior years. The colors

you see are based on two factors, distance from standard and participation rate. The summary report you have tonight shows the overall Dashboard data as well as the percentage of students meeting or exceeding standards in English language arts, math and science.

Charter schools generally and all schools aim for green or blue ratings across all of the categories. Several schools perform notably well in ELA and mathematics. Irvine International Academy, Orange County School of the Arts, Orange County Academy of Sciences and Arts and Orange County Classical Academy are some to note. Turning to the financial update, you have all of the data there and some of the analysis and Explore Academy and Orange County Academy of Science and Arts have received formal requests to submit fiscal stabilization plans. We will continue to closely monitor their debt levels, cashflow and long-term viability. Those notices were sent out April 10th. They have been given five weeks to respond with their fiscal stabilization plans or whatever information is required. Explorer Academy did request an extension. We have given them eight weeks until June 6th. Additionally, I just want to let you know that all schools have had their required annual visits for the year and staff is finalizing the annual oversight reports and those are slated to go out on Monday. We do provide a binder of those reports for the board to review, so you'll see those in your board chambers the next time you come together. The superintendent also gets one of those, as does our deputy superintendent. And on a positive note, the 2025 California Distinguished Schools were announced in March, two charter schools in Orange County received this recognition, Irvine International Academy and Oxford Preparatory Academy Saddleback Valley. That concludes my report. I'm happy to answer any questions or provide additional information at your request.

**SHAW:** I was looking at our website and it has, we'd asked to have the Dashboard information posted, which was there and it's cool, but I think it was for just our 28 school districts.

**CHASTAIN:** Correct.

**SHAW:** I didn't see it for our charter schools.

**CHASTAIN:** Yeah, when you requested that for the districts, Dr. Bean said let's do that also for charter schools. We sort of try to follow that same format for you here, but if you want it posted, that would be your discussion.

**WILLIAMS:** I agree.

**SHAW:** Oh, I thought we had said that, but maybe we didn't. Yeah, I think it would be great to have this as well, if that's what my colleagues think.

**BARKE:** Yeah, agree, absolutely.

**SHAW:** I mean then you can really kind of one shop, see how our traditional school districts are doing our charter schools to kind see what's what.

**HENDRICK:** I think we just might need to put some language because it's a little confusing. Some of them are gray because they may not have students in those categories, so they just have to do a disclaimer or something on there.

**CHASTAIN:** Correct. They may not have 30 students that tested or they also, we have some new schools, so they may not have two years of data. And so that's what you'll see that's grayed out is schools that only have one year of data and schools that don't have 30 students.

**SHAW:** Got it.

**WILLIAMS:** So just let me ask the question again. We're going to be putting the charter school dashboard on our website then. Does everybody agree with that?

**VALDES:** Yes.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay, good.

**SHAW:** I think where we have it is the board website for the schools for the 28 school districts. Right. I think that's where it is now.

**HENDRICK:** I think it's both.

**BEAN:** It's both.

**SHAW:** Oh, is it on both. Oh, okay. And we'll just put this on both too. Got it.

**WILLIAMS:** Very good. Okay, moving on. Announcements, Dr. Bean.

**BEAN:** All right, we're going to speaking of Teacher of the Year. I think one of the big highlights of my tenure so far, 10 months has been a few of these events that I want to talk about. One is, just love this Connections night that we had at the Angels game. Had the opportunity to attend this with over 350 students. It's just wonderful time to celebrate with families and staff during an Angels game. And I think we won that night, so that was good.

The other thing is our ACCESS art contest is on display. If you'd want to go and take a look at that at Norman P. Murray Community Center, it'll be on display from the 21st to the 19th, so that's wrapping up soon. And then also the Tobacco Use Prevention Education. That's just a part of this whole ACCESS art showcase. One of the highlights, as I was mentioning earlier of my 10 months so far has been the, or was the Teacher of the Year surprise visits. It's pretty cool because our staff, they go on a bus, a yellow bus, and they go to six different sites, six different schools. I followed with my car, my vehicle. But when you get there, there's district staff and school staff waiting for us. And then we go in and quietly surprise these teachers. Of course, I have to be very dramatic about it, right? I mean, we're giving them not only a wonderful apple trophy for being one of six Orange County Teacher of the Year, but we also give them a \$25,000 check.

**BARKE:** It's amazing.

**BEAN:** Very amazing.

**BARKE:** And their families are there too. Right? I saw in the photos that their families are there.

**BEAN:** The families come and they're invited.

**SHAW:** If you ever had me 25,000, I'll probably cry too.

**BEAN:** Exactly. Or have these reactions. So, this is Erin Bro at Capistrano, San Clemente High School. She's amazing. There's a board of trustee back there. You probably recognize her.

**BARKE:** Yep. Lisa.

**BEAN:** And that's her dad back there. And then we have Jeanette Aguilera. She was expecting just three days prior to this. They brought her in because they had a long-term sub. They brought her in just for this, but she still had no clue. You can see she was completely surprised, very emotional as we presented the check. Megan Lee, wonderful. Again, at Anaheim Elementary School, you see the Superintendent Jesse there and then a board of trustees. It was just amazing time. And then Catherine Zacaair, this is actually is an interesting, this is given to Fullerton College, Junior College. She's a French teacher and her students were able to, had the opportunity to share why she's such an amazing teacher. She connects them actually with potential internships in jobs in France. That very first couple weeks that she has these students. It's just fantastic. And then Darcy Blake, Junior High School at Fullerton School District. Incredible teacher that's been there for a very long time. I think 35 years.

**VALDES:** You really drove all the way around the county there.

**BEAN:** We did. South Orange County all the way to North Orange County. It was an incredible opportunity, incredible time. I was really exhausted. I can't imagine how emotionally draining this could be for many of our teachers. Very excited. But it was, oh, oh one more. Tracy Havens, Tustin Unified, also a wonderful teacher. And just to hear the staff and the district staff speak on behalf of these teachers. It was amazing. It was a great day. And then, so I'll give you a quick update. In these superintendent updates, we give you updates about the five key initiatives or the 5-3-1. Today's update is just going to be around school and student safety. I wanted to let this board know that I've been meeting with and working with key county leaders to align our work and to lead conversation around improving school safety for all of our 28 districts. I've met with Sheriff Barnes several times. We're going to be engaged in ways that we can support their programs, gang prevention programs, drug prevention programs, et cetera. And DA Spitzer, he also, their offices, have you heard of GRIP?

Right. GRIP is their anti-gang related program. Unfortunately, the county and the state is pulling back support for some of these programs. And these programs are in our districts. We're talking with DA Spitzer and even Sheriff Barnes about how we can support some of these programs because we can support programs that explicitly support our students across our county. And then had a wonderful meeting with Chief Brian Fennessey from OCFA, where we can talk about how we can support our school districts with mitigation and prevention so that we don't have

what LA experienced with their fires. As you can see, we are really serious about student school safety and have gotten all the key leaders of the county involved working with the Department of Education. And their response to me has been, wow, this has been needed a long time coming. And they're very happy to engage in this support with OCDE.

And then of course, I'll end it with this highlight there we are at Angel Stadium, Sheriff Barnes DA Spitzer, Chief Probation Officer, Daniel Hernandez. And we had a chance to talk to 1,600 students who worked their way to actually attending this wonderful event where they got to meet Angels players, hear about the GRIP program from us, hear inspiring stories and whatnot. And so, it was a great time. I'll just end it with this. Leaving the stadium, the students were eating a complimentary barbecue lunch and I was just going through it, just meeting students. And on the way out we had a bunch of students wanting to take a selfie. That's me right there. And then right before we left, a bunch of students started lining up for me to sign their Angels jersey, which it was pretty funny.

**BARKE:** So sweet.

**BEAN:** Anyways, so I just wanted to share that update with you that...

**SHAW:** You're easily mistaken from Mike Trout though.

**BEAN:** Yeah, I know. Exactly. I bet. Just as well as he does. So anyways, we have a great time and it's really all about putting students first.

**WILLIAMS:** Thank you Dr. Bean. Any questions from the board for Dr. Bean?

**BARKE:** No. Great job. Thanks for being such an amazing leader in Orange County.

**VALDES:** Great job.

**BEAN:** Thank you.

**WILLIAMS:** Renee. Any deputy superintendent report?

**HENDRICK:** I do. As a reminder, we have another board meeting next week, May 14th, starting at 3:00. And that is to conduct the inter district appeals. We still have 11 appeals, eight hearings for that time period. Your packets will be delivered on Friday. And then we've had a request...

**VALDES:** Does that mean we have 19?

**HENDRICK:** No, you have basically you have eight hearings.

**VALDES:** Okay.

**HENDRICK:** There's some that are siblings. We've combined them together. Yes.

**WILLIAMS:** Renee, if you can get with Greg, I think there's going to be a closed session item.

**HENDRICK:** To add to that?

**WILLIAMS:** To add to that. Yeah.

**HENDRICK:** Okay. And then we've also had a request. We had moved the board meeting to Monday, June 2nd, and we have a request from a couple board members to make that 1:00 instead of 5:00.

**BARKE:** June 2nd.

**HENDRICK:** And so, I need to know...

**BARKE:** I can do that.

**SHAW:** Okay. There's officially a conspiracy afoot between you guys, my employer and someone here, because I will once again be out of town that day. I will be in Washington DC but we will do the old post the agenda in the hotel lobby routine, I guess. And I'll be the face on the screen, but I can make that work.

**BARKE:** Yeah, that'll be 4:00 PM your time.

**SHAW:** Yeah, 4:00 PM on the East Coast.

**BARKE:** Okay. Yeah, that works for me.

**VALDES:** Is there a reason for 1:00?

**HENDRICK:** I think...

**BARKE:** Lisa had something.

**HENDRICK:** Sparks has the graduation.

**BARKE:** Yeah.

**VALDES:** All right. I'll do it for her.

**HENDRICK:** Are you okay Ken?

**WILLIAMS:** You have to call Jackie.

**HENDRICK:** Okay.

**WILLIAMS:** Yeah, I'm sure I'll be fine.

**HENDRICK:** Okay. And the submission deadline for the June meeting is May 19th. The board packet delivery is May 28th. And remember we have the two board meetings in June. That's all I have.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. Next is the legislative update, Tim.

**SHAW:** Great. Do you mind? Okay. So, there's a few things. We've previously taken positions on quite a number of bills in the legislature, so I thought I'd report on a couple of them. Assembly Bill 600 was a bill we're supporting actually that would allow parents to opt their children out of specifically transgender lessons if they didn't find that appropriate for their child. And in a shocking turn of events, that bill appears to be stalled in the legislature. Who would've seen that coming? But that was one. We had Senate Bill 64 by Senator Grove. Our board officially took a position to support this bill that would be quite revolutionary, really allowing it's entitled Education Expenses School Choice Flex Account Act of 2025. In a nutshell, the money could follow the student wherever the parent might be sending that student. The ultimate of parent empowerment, really, that bill failed in the Senate Education Committee.

**BARKE:** Shocking.

**SHAW:** And another shocking turn of events. I did want to acknowledge Senator Choi of Orange County was one of the two yes votes and Senator Ochoa Bogh. But those were the only two yes votes in Senate Education Committee.

**VALDES:** Thank you Dr. Choi.

**SHAW:** Yeah. So big shout out to Dr. Choi. Vice President Barke and I were in Sacramento for the hearing on Senate Bill 249. That would once again alter the County Board of Education's elections. And we hold nonpartisan office and I always try to approach it that way, but in Sacramento things are partisan. I try to avoid speaking in these terms. But there's the Democrats and the Republicans in Sacramento, there's a lot more Democrats than Republicans of course. If you're going to get your bill passed or you got to get Ds on board. In that committee, it was the Senate Elections Committee. We actually did persuade one Democrat to abstain.

**BARKE:** Yes.

**SHAW:** So that is kind of a victory. So that Senate Bill 249 passed three to one to one. Once again, Senator Steven Choi voted no. And Senator Ben Allen abstained, he was a democrat who abstained. But the other three voted yes. So that bill is moving forward as well. On it goes. So, let's see. Was there anything else I was going to report on...

**ROLEN:** 868.

**SHAW:** 868? Oh, is that the other county? Okay.

**ROLEN:** [Several inaudible words]

**SHAW:** Yeah. So, there is another bill that would have the effect of moving our elections around, but this bill would've moved every county election from district attorney to sheriff to everybody would all be consolidated in the November election, which would be wildly expensive for the state, I believe so. I believe...

**BARKE:** And it would be intense voter fatigue. That ballot would be so long that I think maybe they're after that voter fatigue by the time they get to the Board of Education.

**SHAW:** I believe that bill stalled out though on April 30th. It says hearing canceled at the request of the author is that...

**HENDRICK:** I think it became a two-year bill.

**ROLEN:** That became a two-year bill, which is a consideration if it's not going to get out of a committee. They asked for reconsideration the next year and that's the way bills effectively die. It was a lot of the work we did on that bill. We found out that it would've impacted 592 elections in the state of California. Move 592 nonpartisan elections including this one. So, we're thankful for the two-year designation.

**BARKE:** Yes.

**SHAW:** Yeah. No bill dies the first year of a legislative session. It just becomes a two-year bill.

**ROLEN:** It can die if they don't get reconsideration. It's perfunctory for them to get reconsideration.

**SHAW:** Right.

**BARKE:** Well, and the good news is if the bill went through it would affect 2026 by being a two-year bill now it won't be in effect until 2028 or 2030.

**ROLEN:** Or ever.

**BARKE:** Or ever. Hopefully yes. Ever would be good.

**SHAW:** Okay. I think that was it.

**WILLIAMS:** Very good. Board member comments.

**BARKE:** I just have a couple of comments. I was showing you guys earlier, this really cool medal. I even brought one home. I got to hand this out. There were 6,500 Orange County students who ran a mile on Saturday morning in the very, very, very wet weather. And they were amazing and so excited. And they have a couple of goals. The Orange County Run. One is to get all five of us out there next year. And I think they'd like you, Dr. Bean as well. And the other is to take it from 6,500 to 10,000 kids. And I said 10,000, why not 20? We've got 500. Come on. We can't get 20,000 kids to run. It's what they do is the kids run the first 25 miles in their PE

class at school and they come and run the final mile of their marathon and then they get this really, really cool batch.

So that was super fun despite the weather. And the one other really fun thing I did was I went out to Nova Academy in Santa Ana and I did exit interviews. I think it's the third or fourth or fifth time I've done it now. And it's so amazing to talk to these seniors who are leaving Nova and the experience they've had. And a lot of these kids are some of our most vulnerable kids being raised by grandparents. Just really bad circumstances. And they make it to Nova and one who spoke to us, she's getting two AA degrees when she graduates with her high school degree and that's two free AA degrees, which her family couldn't really afford. So just so exciting to see them. If they don't get an AA degree, they've earned units towards it. It's dual enrollment. So really just heartwarming to talk to these young adults who dress up to talk to us. It's two of us and one of them. And they get to share the goods and the bads and their accomplishments. It's really exciting and I love doing it and I would encourage any of you guys if you want to do it next year with me. Super fun.

**WILLIAMS:** Any other comments? Okay, barring none, Mr. Brenner, we have closed session public report out and Greg, you're going to report out from closed session two.

**BRENNER:** Good evening, Board President Williams, Board Vice President Barke, members of the board and Superintendent Bean. This is the report out for closed session number one at today's regular meeting. All board members were present. The board held a discussion with counsel and staff with respect to that closed item number and took no action other than to approve Epstein Becker Green invoices as follows. Number 1183972, 1193627 and 1196963. The vote was five in favor, zero against. And that's the report out for closed session item number one.

**ROLEN:** Closed session item number two, the board received an update from its real property negotiator. No action was taken.

**WILLIAMS:** Very good. May I have a motion for adjournment?

**BARKE:** Oh, can I just mention one other thing? Sorry. Dr. Bean, Allison was out there from your physical ed department and she was amazing. She was totally in her element. Just so excited. I meant to thank you. It was just like the perfect person to be out there that morning. Yes. I want to do a shout out. Sorry, I'm finished now.

**WILLIAMS:** That's okay. Motion for adjournment.

**BARKE:** So moved.

**WILLIAMS:** Second.