

BARKE: Darou start with a roll call.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Present.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Here.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

BARKE: He's remote.

SHAW: I'm here from Denver, Colorado.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Here.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

BARKE: I am guessing he'll be late. He tried me in the car but I couldn't hear anything, so I'm guessing he'll be here soon. All right, can I get a motion to approve the minutes?

VALDES: So moved.

SPARKS: Second.

SPARKS: What's that?

SISAVATH: Agenda.

BARKE: Oh, does it make, do I have to do agenda first? Oh, sorry. Please, can I please instead get a motion to approve the agenda?

VALDES: So moved.

SPARKS: Second.

BARKE: Thank you. Any discussion? Do we need a roll call vote because of Tim?

SISAVATH: Yes. Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

SISAVATH: And Dr. Williams is absent.

BARKE: Okay, so great. That passes 4-0 and next may I please have a motion for the minutes?

SPARKS: So moved.

VALDES: Second.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

BARKE: Okay, 4-0. Thank you. Okay, now we're going to go into close session for our inter-district transfers and the such and we will be back at 5. Great.

HENDRICK: And we have no public comments for closed session.

BARKE: Wonderful. Thank you.

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

WILLIAMS: Boy did you get quiet and silent so quickly? I'm impressed. Welcome to the Orange County Board of Education as we come out of closed sessions for the statement, for the

benefit of the record, this regular meeting of the Orange County Board of Education will be now in order. And for our guests that are out there, we have been here since 2:30 working on the people's job and the people's duties and our responsibilities. And so, we've already had inter-district appeals, we've had closed session with legal counsel and so now you get to hear probably something that you may seem really bored with and that's a budget related lecture. I'm sorry to say that, but the one thing about it is the individual who's going to give it, you're going to love him. He just shines like the light and the sun. David, come on up and give us, we're going to give you 15 minutes to complete this presentation and we'll complete it at the very end today. So, thank you.

GIORDANO: Thank you. All right, well thank you and good evening again, President Williams, members of the board. Tonight, we have of course our budget study session, which begins preparations for development of budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Thank you, Dr. Williams. I definitely will be as brief as possible to keep these kids from falling asleep on us. Let's go on here. Let me get back to the first slide. We're at the very end. Okay. All right, so each of you should have a copy of our budget book and of course this represents our second interim financial report that the board approved. This was back at our last board meeting in March. If you would, I'd like to just walk you through some of the key information contained in that report. Included on the first several pages of the report, this is B 2 through B 25 is a detailed narrative with graphics that highlights some of the key historical information regarding the Department's operating budget.

The information includes details regarding Department's, federal, state, and other local funding sources, as well as some key expenditure data as well. Also included is some other important information that's contained in the second interim report as follows. Part one or tab one, this includes some of the key planning factors that we use to assemble. The first interim report. Tab two highlights the key changes between the first interim and the second interim report in a narrative format. Tab three highlights the major object code variances between the first and second interim financials. Tab four summarizes the Department's adopted first interim and second interim general fund budgets on the state required SACS form A. Tab five summarizes the Department's multi-year projection and that projection includes the current year and then the two subsequent years as well. Tab six represents the state required criterion standards form, which includes a trend analysis of some key budgetary and financial information.

Tab seven reflects the Department's average daily attendance and this is on the state's required form A. And then tab eight provides a listing of all the Department's funds and then tab nine or form number 10, this reflects the North Orange County SELPA pass through fund, which is used to account for the SELPA's financial activities. And then it highlights some key revenue and expenditure data for all of our SELPA member districts. And so now moving on to tab number 10 or form number 12. This is used to account for the Department's child development activities, tab number 11 or form number 14. This is used to account for deferred maintenance needs, which of course include major facility repairs and major facility replacements. Tab number 12 or form number 17. This is a special reserve fund that's used for non-capital facility related projects. Tab 13 or form number 35.

This is the county school facilities fund. It's used to account for state school facilities funding and then the related construction projects. Tab 14, form number 40. This is a special reserve

fund. It's used to account for capital outlay projects related to our Esplanade property. Tab 15 form 56. This is used to account for the debt service activities on the loan for the Esplanade property. Tab 16 or form number 67. This is used to account for the self-insurance activities on our Delta Dental insurance program. Tab 17. This is a listing of all the entitlements, contracts and grants for the Department, which we update regularly. And it's also posted on our website. Tab 18. This provides information on our holding account. This is object code 4399 and this is used to temporarily account for expenditure activity until all the project budgets have been finalized. Tab number 19. This provides detailed information on all the state and federal COVID-19 relief funding that our Department has received along with all the allowable uses. And then lastly, tab number 20. This contains all the other required state forms, including forms such as our cashflow form and our indirect cost rate form.

This slide just highlights some of the key components of the State Standardized Account Code Structure, which we refer to as SACS. And of course, you're used to taking a look at the two-digit fund and then also the four-digit object code numbers, which are of course are defined by the state of California. And again, that's what you're used to seeing when you take a look at our SACS reports in the budget book. However, there are a total of eight other state and locally defined fields that are included behind each of the financial transactions. And these fields include the following. So first we have the four-digit resource code and this field identifies federal, state and other local funding sources that have specific restrictions on how those dollars can be spent. Example of one of those programs is our Title I program.

We also have the one-digit project year field. And this identifies projects whose reporting year is different from our fiscal year. We have the four-digit goal field and this defines specific instructional goals and objectives such as regular ed, alternative ed, or special education. The four-digit function code field identifies detailed activities or services performed for each goal and objective such as instruction, instructional supervision, or pupil related services. We also have the three-digit school field and this identifies schools with the unique CDS codes such as our juvenile court program and also our special schools programs. We also have a four-digit manager code and this identifies the respective manager that has oversight over the budget, the four-digit cost center field. This is what the Department uses to track some of our locally defined projects and programs. And then lastly, we have the three-digit site code field and we use this to track our major programs like our ACCESS program and our special schools program.

So next just want to provide a quick overview of the current U.S. economic outlook. And this is based on UCLA's December forecast. We know the university's forecasting headline inflation will peak at about 3.3% in 2025. Good news is that GDP growth has continued to remain strong, although the university is forecasting that GDP growth will dip to a low of 1.1% by the end of 2025, and that's before increasing to 2.6% by the end of 2026. The university is also forecasting a pause in the federal funds rate until the end of 2025. And currently the effective federal funds rate stands between 4.25% and 4.5%. And it's expected to increase, or excuse me, drop slightly by the end of 2025. On the unemployment front, the unemployment rate in the U.S. has been on the rise, expected to peak at 4.3% and that's before falling to 4% by the end of the forecast period in 2027.

And unfortunately, though California's unemployment rate is projected to outpace the nation and expected to rise peak to 5.5% in 2025 before falling to 5% by the end of the forecast period.

Here's just again, this is a quick review of some of the key highlights contained in the governor's proposal for next year '25-'26. And again, this proposal represents the start of the budget cycle for the state of California for next fiscal year. So first we know again, the governor's estimating a state budget surplus of approximately \$17 billion as well as healthy reserve levels for next year. And again, this is largely due to an improved economic outlook as well as strong state tax collections in the current year. Department of Finance is now estimating roughly \$17 billion more in state general fund revenues. That's over the three-year budget window. This is since the estate enacted the budget for '24-'25.

It's also important to note LAO's office is projecting revenues to come in lower than the Department of Finance again by \$10 billion over that same three-year budget window. However, the LAO does state that Department of Finance's revenue projections appear to be reasonable. And they also state that the proposed state budget is roughly in balance. As you might recall, it was only about a year ago that the state was facing one of the largest budget deficits in the history of the state at about \$50 billion. Both the LAO and the Department of Finance are pointing to the value of the \$28 billion in budget solutions that were built into the budget, the '24-'25 budget for next fiscal year '25-'26. Unfortunately, those were one-time solutions and so when you look at the out years, '26-'27 beyond, they have a structural deficit they need to address.

Next, we're going to take a look at some of the governor's key revenue assumptions. Here's a chart again, highlights the changes in state revenue estimates that impact the Prop 98 guarantee. And over this three-year budget window fiscal years '23-'24 through '25-'26, state revenue is up for about \$17 billion. That says as of the governor's January proposal, and that's when compared to estimates, it's contained in the State's Budget Act for the current year. And again, important to note, LAO's revenue estimates, again roughly \$10 billion lower than the governor over that same three-year window, which of course poses risk to the state budget if those revenues don't come to fruition.

This chart just highlights the impact the governor's revised revenue estimates on that Prop 98 guarantee for schools. Due to the improved revenue outlook, the Prop 98 guarantee has been revised up since state budget adoption by 3.9 billion in the current year '24-'25 and then 3.2 billion in the budget year '25-'26. So, a total increase of \$7.1 billion over the three three-year budget window. Unfortunately, though the governor is proposing another controversial maneuver concerning the Prop 98 guarantee and that's for the current year and we're going to talk about that here in the next slide. This chart just highlights the governor's proposed maneuver regarding the guarantee for the current year. So based on those improved tax collections guarantees has been revised up by 3.9 billion in '24-'25. However, the governor's proposing to appropriate the guarantee at 117.6 billion instead of the currently calculated level of 119.2 billion or \$1.6 billion below the Prop 98 guarantee.

And the governor is citing inherent risks in development of the state revenue projections as the reason for not appropriating the full amount. Governor states that if the revenue is due materialized, the funds would be owed to schools under the Prop 98 guarantee as settle up or one-time monies in 2026. Here's a look at the Prop 98 guarantee for next year. Governor estimates the guarantee is up only modestly higher or about \$2.1 billion above the LAO's office estimate for next year. And you'll know both the Department of Finance and the LAO both

estimate that the '25-'26 guarantee is going to come in lower than the current year Prop 98 guarantee.

Here's a look at the state's Prop 98 reserve account. And as you can see on this slide, the governor withdrew the entire balance in the Prop 98 reserve account of \$8.4 billion in '23-'24. And he did that with the enactment of the current year budget act. The governor also made a discretionary deposit of 1.15 billion. That's in the current year '24-'25, which will be converted to a mandatory deposit next year. Additionally, there's another required deposit of 376 million in '25-'26 and that will leave a total of 1.53 billion in the Prop 98 reserve account at the end of next year. Here's just a look at some of the risks to the state budget that the LAO's office has identified as we move forward. Although the economic outlook has definitely improved at the state level, the LAO does note some significant concerns, significant risks including capital gains volatility that's tied to the stock market.

We have a stagnant job market outside the government and healthcare sectors as well as elevated unemployment. We also have delayed tax deadlines and tax receipts associated with the wildfires in Los Angeles County and not to mention some sluggish consumer spending here in California, some federal policy uncertainty and large state operating deficits that are projected beyond next year. Here's just a quick recap of some of the key assumptions that we used when we built our second interim report. And so again, if you were to take a look at the salary line items in the budget book, you'd notice that we've included cost for staff and [inaudible] for all of our classified certificated management employees. If you're drill down and take a look at the statutory line items, you'd see the increased cost reflected for CalSTRS and CalPERS pensions as well. The negotiated settlements are also reflected in those line items.

Statutory COLA for this year set at 1.07% and for next year projected to come in at 2.43%. ADA for this year projected at just over 4,300. And then you notice for '25-'26 and '26-'27 projected to decline just slightly. LCFF funding revenue projections for the current year expected to come in at about 103.7 million. You'll notice in '25-'26 a drop of almost \$1 million to 102.7 million. Again, the reason for the decline when you look at the COLA for next year of 2.43%, not enough to be able to offset the funded ADA declines that we experienced over the last three years. And then in '26-'27 you can see it a rebound slightly to just over 103.3 million. Tuition for ACCESS in special schools for the current year estimated at 45.2 million and again, expected to increase slightly each of the next couple of years.

Here's a look at some of the key factors impacting our multi-year projection as we move forward. Let's see if I missed a slide here. I did. Let me go back. Here's a look at our combined multi-year projection, and you'll notice here we've got the current year and then the two subsequent years. This is the combined general fund, so it includes all of our unrestricted operating accounts and it also includes all of our restricted categorical programs. If you want to look at the more detailed version, we have that in the budget book. For the current year '24-'25. Again, forecasting an \$18.6 million operating deficit if you were to drill down and take a look at just the operating accounts. So, take out all those restricted categorical programs, you'd see that we're looking at about a \$13.1 million deficit in the unrestricted accounts, but as we talked about last month, that includes a significant amount of one-time spending on large capital facility projects such as our Rancho Sonada project, the conference center upgrades. We have an installation of elevator here in building A, and then we also are making significant amount of purchases for classrooms as

well. So, when you back out all those one-time expenditures, you actually left with a small structural surplus in the current year. And then in '25-'26, we are projecting a small deficit just over 155,000. And again, there includes some significant one-time expenditures for capital projects primarily in '25-'26 related to the Rancho Sonada project.

Here's a look at some of the key factors that impact our multiyear projection as we move forward. We know the CalSTRS and poor contribution rates they are forecast to remain steady at 19.1% in the current year, '24-'25 and in the out years. And that's based on the latest information that we have available from CalSTRS. And then as you can see from this chart, since implementation of the LCFF, this goes all the way back to 2013-14, the CalSTRS employer contribution rate increased from 8.25% to 19.1%. And this of course has placed tremendous strains on school district and County Office of Ed operating budgets. Prior to the implementation of the LCFF in '13-'14, the rate had remained steady at 8.25% since 1986.

Here's a comparison of the CalPERS and CalSTRS rates going all the way back to 2019-20. And as you can see from this chart, the CalSTRS rates are expected to remain flat at 19.1% over the forecast period. On the other hand, the CalPERS employer contribution rates expected increase from 27.05% in the current year to 27.4% in the budget year '25-'26. Additionally, the CalPERS rates are set to increase to 27.5% in '26-'27, '28 0.5% in '27-'28, and that's before they dropped slightly to 28.2% and '28-'29 and then 27.8% and '28, or excuse me, '29-'30. And then similar to CalSTRS since the implementation of the LCFF back in '13-'14, the CalPERS employer contribution rate also has increased dramatically. Good time to cut.

WILLIAMS: Can we continue at the end of our meeting, David?

GIORDANO: Perfect.

WILLIAMS: Beautiful. Thank you very much. So, for those who have been out there, hopefully that was a very interesting conversation and dialogue that that's what government does is look at all these numbers and we have to operate within a certain budget. And these are important. They may seem rather boring, but they are important. So again, as I mentioned earlier, welcome to the Orange County Board of Education. This is where the exciting part gets going here. This is where we get to see you, the people you begin to talk with us. We have public comments, we have a few charter schools we get to talk about here. But as is our tradition here at the Orange County Board of Education, we begin with an invocation. Then I'm going to go out to somebody out there and ask you to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance. But first, so be prepared. You never know who's going to be picked. But first, before we begin, let me allow the opportunity to introduce the good Rabbi Stephen Einstein, who is the founding Emeritus Rabbi at the Temple B'nai Tzedek, and he's now retired, but he's going to lead us in our invocation and we want to thank you for doing this again, Rabbi, and we always want to support the state of Israel and always support the Jewish community here in Orange County. We thank you so much. Thank you for being here.

RABBI EINSTEIN: Thank you. Much appreciated and for the hard work that you all do as public service. As you may know, I have sat on the other side. I'm a former member of the Fountain Valley School Board as well as for 27 years, the Personnel Commission, so I know what it's like to sit on that side. So, thank you for your service. So, let us join now. This is a

sacred season. The Muslim community has just completed the holy month of Ramadan. The Christian community is in the midst of Lent, the Jewish community is preparing for Passover. As a student of religion, I have noted that all of the religions have a golden rule. The wording may vary from faith community to faith community, but the essential message is the same. Many of us are familiar with the teaching, “do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” About 150 years before Jesus enunciated it in that fashion, the Jewish Sage Hillel framed it this way, “what is hurtful to you do not do to others.”

So, whether we look at it as do unto others what you want them to do to you or don't do to others what you don't want them to do to you, the basic idea is the same. Think about the other person. All of our acts have an effect on those around us. At this holy season, let us all recommit ourselves to the highest teachings of whatever our faith may be and commit ourselves to go out into the world and make those ideals real. Amen.

BARKE: Thank you.

WILLIAMS: Amen. Okay, who would like to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance?

BARKE: Oh, I see a hand back there.

WILLIAMS: I see a hand back there. Okay, what is your name? Come on up young lady. It's a brave young lady. Would you like to do it? What is your name?

CHLOE: Chloe.

WILLIAMS: Chloe, okay, Chloe. So, have you ever done this before? Okay, so you know the Pledge of Allegiance, right? You learned it in your school, okay, so I'm going to give over the meeting to you and you're going to say ready, begin. You want do that?

BARKE: Wasn't there somebody else? She raised her hand. Did you want to do jointly?

WILLIAMS: Yeah.

BARKE: What about we could have them do it jointly if she wants to do it.

WILLIAMS: Yeah, come on up here, love. Come on up here.

BARKE: I saw her hand first. You can both do it.

WILLIAMS: Yeah. Yeah. So...

HENDRICK: Why don't you guys come right here.

SPARKS: Can you guys stand over the microphone right here.

WILLIAMS: Perfect. What is your name young lady?

NOVA: Nova.

WILLIAMS: Nova.

BARKE: Nova. What a pretty name.

WILLIAMS: So, Chloe and Nova, the youngest of our community, is going to lead us in our pledge to a representation, a sign, a flag of this great Nation. So, Nova and Chloe say, ready, begin.

NOVA, CHLOE: Ready, begin.

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.

WILLIAMS: Thank you Chloe. Thank you, Nova. You see, you just never know what you're getting into tonight, huh? Just all this fun and love and charity and grace. Okay. That's the first time it's happened to me in my 30 years here. So anyway, going on with our meeting, hopefully it'll be exciting and a little peppery in speech. We do have a special presentation. Is that right?

HENDRICK: We actually had a last-minute delay and so we're going to hold that over until next month.

WILLIAMS: Okay, no problem at all. Do we have introductions, Renee?

HENDRICK: We have none.

WILLIAMS: We have none. Wonderful. Okay, do we have public comments? Vice President Barke?

BARKE: Excuse me. Yes, we have eight of them. So, I will call the person and then I'll call who's on deck. So, we have Michelle Sapanara followed by Aaron White.

MICHELLE: Good evening, Superintendent Bean, President Williams, ladies and gentlemen of the Orange County Board of Education. My name is Michelle Sapanara and I am proud to serve as the assistant superintendent of student services with Springs Charter Schools. I'm here this evening for two reasons. First to share a brief update on the launch of our newest school, Orange Springs Charter School, and second, to express deep appreciation for the collaboration between this board, OCDE and the charter community. Orange Springs Charter School is looking forward to a successful launch this fall as it joins Citrus Springs Charter School. Representing our network here in Orange County and we are incredibly proud of the work our educators and families have done to build a strong foundation of personalized student-centered learning. I want to highlight one example of the heart of our community. We recently hosted the third annual open closet event at our Santa Ana Student Center, hosted by our school counselor and her amazing team.

The event Welcome families to shop for gently used clothing and shoes at no cost thanks to generous donations from across the county. We needed a U-Haul to transport everything. Events like this remind us that student success goes beyond the classroom. It's about dignity, connection, and care. I'd also like to acknowledge the academic data being presented this evening for Citrus

Springs Charter School. While we recognize there is still important work ahead, we are encouraged by the 4.2 gain in the math distance from standard this year. This growth reflects the dedication of our teachers and staff and we're excited to build on that progress. With a recent adoption of envisioned mathematics and the addition of targeted instructional coaching supports, we're confident these investments will drive continued academic growth and support deeper learning for all students. I also want to thank Dr. Bean and the OCDE leadership team for hosting the inaugural meeting with the Orange County Charter leaders last month. Your invitation to collaborate, share resources and align on priorities could not have come at a more important time. As we head into a challenging legislative season, we are grateful for your ongoing support, thoughtful oversight and commitment to equity for all students in Orange County, including those attending charter schools. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. We have Aaron White, followed by Wayne Williams and there's some seats here in the front. I see a lot of you standing up. We've got the whole first row and the side first row, so if anybody wants to come find a seat, there are some seats up here. Do we have Aaron? Okay, and on deck is Aaron here? Aaron White? Yes. Yes. And following Aaron White will be Wayne Williams.

AARON: How are you guys doing today? My name is Aaron White. As a parent and taxpayer and someone who works in the local court system, I want to call out a political motivated legal attack on one of the members of the OC Board. Local Democrat active Lynn Riddle personally, sorry, I don't speak too often. This is—Riddle political bias is clear. She has donated tens and thousands of dollars to Miss Barke's political rivals, leaving little doubt about her motives. This is not about justice, it is about discrediting a political adversary, Riddle's, financial entanglements and history of partisan political discount. Political donations exposes her lawsuit as calculated attempts to harm Ms. Barke both politically and personally. A personal gain Riddle may achieve from this lawsuit, be it financial, political, clout or influence with her ideological circle. Further discredits Riddle, allowing personal motives to cloud the pursuit of justice and undermine and justice is unethical and undermines the very system Riddle once served. Shame on you, Lynn Riddle. Thank you, guys.

BARKE: Thank you. Is Wayne Williams here and following Wayne will be Heidi.

WAYNE: My name is Wayne Williams. I'm a parent Orange County resident and concerned citizen. Filing political motivated lawsuits against opponents is a troubling trend. The undermines our democratic processes. Whether you support President-elect Donald Trump or not, the use of our courts to discredit, distract and obstruct a political figure is unprecedented in modern U.S. history. This weaponization of the legal system commonly referred to as lawfare, is now being mirrored at the local level in Orange County, California, where retired federal bankruptcy, Judge Lynn Riddle, a Democrat, has taken aim at one of our elected educational board members, Mari Barke, a Republican by filing a civil lawsuit in Orange County Superior Court asking Barke to comply with California's political financial disclosure laws and seeking monetary damages that Riddle herself would collect if she prevails. I find this repugnant. I know Riddle sometimes attends these meetings and if she is here tonight, she should be ashamed of herself. Thank you for your time.

BARKE: Thank you. Heidi followed by Karissa.

HEIDI: Hi. So, I have the pleasure of introducing one of my students at Suncoast today because we wanted to share our gratitude for the board as our authorizer. So here is Karissa Podraza.

KARISSA: Hi everyone. I'm also here to do a paragraph of gratitude for one of my peers, Joanna Ashby. But first I do something about my, I actually really do like Suncoast because one for the amazing Ms. Heidi and all the teachers, they help and support us. They make sure that we keep on our schoolwork and they help us with if we have any troubles. So, thank you.

BARKE: Thank you.

WILLIAMS: Love. You are very brave to do that. Thank you. You did wonderful.

BARKE: Okay, next we have Carlos Hernandez, followed by Linda Cone. Is Carlos here? Okay.

CARLOS: Board members, thank you for the opportunity to address you this evening. My name is Carlos Hernandez. Now to call out Democrat activist Lynn Riddle. Lynn, are you here tonight? Political motivated lawsuits are a destructive force in our democracy. They erode trust, discourage public service and compromise of fairness of our institutions. Your lawsuit against the OC Board Members Mari Barke sets a dangerous proceeding and threatens the credibility of both our legal and political system. Lynn, shame on you. You know better for turning the courts into political cudgel. Your lawsuit against Board Members Barke is an abuse of the legal system to settle political scores. As a former judge, you better than anyone should understand the importance of preserving the courts for legitimate grievances, not personal or political vendettas. Lynn your actions are not just as disappointing. They are dangerous. Thank you for your time.

BARKE: Thank you. No, there's one more. Following Linda is Cyndie.

LINDA: I just want to begin, I'm not speaking on this, but I want to add my voices to the three people who've already spoken. I also want to call out Judge Riddle for what she has been doing for many years now. She should be ashamed of herself. I'm actually here to speak on a different issue. We have in Orange County, a treasurer tax collector who has held this office since 2010. Her name is Shari Freidenrich. I do not know her personally, but I've come to know a lot about her recently. The powers that she holds in terms of managing the tax collections from all of our property taxes, which amounts to several billion dollars, have recently been removed from her by our Orange County Board of Supervisors. And I want to commend this board of education for providing me the opportunity to hear both sides of this issue and also committing themselves to follow up on this issue.

And I urge you to do so. This is extremely important, even though anything to do with finances really makes my eyes glaze over. I heard two very different views of Dr. Freidenrich at this meeting. I heard first from Don Wagner, but I'd also read some media accounts that gave a view of Dr. Freidenrich as being somewhat problematic, incompetent, doing a poor job and requiring the removal of her responsibilities. I heard a very dramatically different view from these rather vague charges launched against Shari from Dr. David Carlson. He gave several minutes of very factual data on the job that Dr. Freidenrich had done. You all heard that. I urge you to re-listen to what Dr. Carlson said because in comparing these two views, I am going to go with a factual account supported by hardcore evidence, which I got from Dr. Carlson. I want you to realize that

Dr. Carlson for 20 years has been on a very important committee connecting with the tax collection department.

It is the County of Orange Oversight Committee. He has served as president of that committee. He's actually been involved in tax collection in this county even longer than Dr. Freidenrich. She was first elected in 2010. The bottom line here, folks, is from my perception, we have a power struggle. So, we as citizens have to make this decision. Do we want the billions of dollars that is being collected by our property taxes to go to an individual that is trustworthy and competent and has a track record of doing exactly what needs to be done with this money or do we want this money to be turned over to the Board of Supervisors? Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you.

CYNDIE: Good evening. My name's Cyndie Borcoman and good evening the board and Dr. Bean. The teachers from ACCESS have asked me to come today. Again, they kind of fear about expressing themselves, but there are too many administrative staff in ACCESS. In 2015 and 2016, the student population was 8,900 with seven principals. Currently there's 280 students with 11 principals with only 843 students attending regularly. The principals are being made go to meetings during the day instead of being on campus. Why aren't they at least making home visits to make sure these students are coming to school? I wonder why there's so many administrative staff, Miramontes hired, as you know, many of his cronies from his school districts that he worked at, they still remain. And to have this many staff members, administrative staff still being present with a dwindling student population to me is outrageous, and I just really want you to look into it because I think it's a waste of taxpayer money. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. That ends our public comment.

WILLIAMS: Okay, so that's the ending of the public comments. We're going to be moving on with our meeting here. May I have a motion for the consent calendar for items five through eight.

BARKE: So moved

VALDES: Second.

WILLIAMS: We have a motion a second. This is a non-discussion item because we are on Zoom. We will take an individual roll. Darou.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

WILLIAMS: Wonderful. Consent calendar passes unanimously. 5-0.

SHAW: Dr. Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes. Tim? Yes.

SHAW: Sorry, before we move on, I just wanted to apologize to everybody there that I couldn't be there in person. I'm out of state for work and one of the great joys I have being on the board is when we have our meetings being with the students and parents and others who come to our meetings. So, I very much regret being away, but at least I can participate this way, but I enjoyed everyone's comments.

WILLIAMS: Thank you, Tim. Moving on with item number nine. Do we have any charter submissions? Renee?

HENDRICK: We do not.

WILLIAMS: Very good. Moving on to item 10. Aracely, will you please come up to facilitate this public hearing on the Magnolia Science Academy?

CHASTAIN: Good evening, President Williams, trustees, and Superintendent Bean. Today the board will hold a hearing to grant or deny the material revision to the Magnolia Science Academy Orange County Charter School Petition. The school is slated to begin operations in fall of 2025 and is requesting to add an additional facility within the boundaries of Anaheim Union High School District and Anaheim Elementary School District. A public hearing was held on March 5th to consider the level of support for the material revision. The Orange County Department of Education staff report was published on March 18th. Staff reviewed the revised charter petition and determined that it meets the standards outlined in education code and recommend that the board approve Magnolia Science Academy Orange County's requested material revision. Before public comments the charter school representatives are allotted 10 minutes to provide evidence and testimony in response to the staff report. I now invite representatives from the charter school to the podium.

MARIA: Hello, good evening, distinguished board members, Orange County Department of Ed staff and community members. I wanted to wish first all of you a happy Autism Awareness Day as this is April 2nd and again, my name is Dr. Maria Rowell and I am back before you this evening, just as excited as last month to work with the staff from OCDE and this board in regard to our material revision for MSA OC, particularly an Anaheim location. We are so grateful to see that there were no staff findings and we hope that we can continue to grow in all of your support and growth and expansion in the county with a yes vote. Our Magnolia families and staff are

here to answer any questions about our material revision if you have any. And I also wanted to acknowledge all of our Magnolia supporters. So, if you could, my Magnolia families and community, please stand and cheer and support for MSA OC. Thank you. So, thank you so much for your time. I pass it over to you.

WILLIAMS: Thank you Dr. Maria. That was very kind. We do have public comments. Aracely is that the next step here?

CHASTAIN: The hearing's now open for 15 minutes of public comments. Trustee Barke, are there any comments right now?

BARKE: Yes, we have five. So, I will call Veronica Escobar, followed by Laura Murillo is on deck.

VERONICA: Good afternoon. My name is Veronica Escobar. I have been a part of the Magnolia family ever since it opened in Santa Ana for more than eight years. When I am asked if this school is the best option for my daughters, my answer is always yes. Because ever since we joined this school has been more than that. It is a school that supports not only its students, but also the families with all the resources it offers. Mrs. Rowell has been there since the beginning. She was the first teacher my daughter had when she first started at Magnolia and now my daughter has graduated and is now studying to be a kindergarten teacher. And I have another daughter attending fifth grade currently. My oldest daughter loves these schools and she often comes back on her spare time to volunteer. I also volunteer and we both do it out of the gratitude and because we love everything that Magnolia represents. Thank you. And so, I asked the board to please support the school. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. Okay. We have Laura followed by Aracely Vargas.

LAURA: Good afternoon. My name is Laura Murillo. I am proud to be here right now. I am typically a very nervous person, but I am proud that my kids attend. My kids currently attend Magnolia. I have four children attending there and my oldest is a seventh grader and he's actually competing in Texas with the robotics team. And that's just one of the many programs that are offered in that school. There's also Girl Scouts and there's 15 girls that participate in the Girl Scouts group in our school currently and I am also participating there. Thank you very much.

BARKE: Thank you. Okay. We have Aracely followed by Luz Villa.

ARACELY: Okay. I want to thank everyone for allowing me to be here today and I wanted to thank the board for always supporting the schools and as my friend had mentioned previously. We want to ask you for more support because these are the kind of schools that have entered the Latino community and have provided a lot of support and resources and giving us hope and giving us hope for the future of our kids. And I also want to thank the Magnolia Schools for giving my kids the opportunity to grow, to be open-minded and to dream big and dream farther than they ever thought they could. Thank you very much.

BARKE: Thank you. We have Luz Villa followed by Javier. Oh, okay. So, we'll go on to Javier. Thank you.

JAVIER: Good evening, Dr. Williams, President Williams, trustees and Superintendent Bean. My name is Javier Orduno and I'm the Orange County local representative for the California Sheriff School Association. CCSA. CCSA is a membership and professional organization that serves our members of schools and advocates for fair policies across more than 1,250 public schools in California. Our mission is to meet the needs of parents, educators, and communities by supporting and advocating for high quality nonprofit charter schools while sharing their successes throughout California's public-school systems. On behalf of CCSA, I strongly recommend the approval of the Magnolia Science Academy, Orange County material revision. Magnolia Science Academy is a valued member of our association in good standing. In our view, it meets the legal standard for a material revision. Charter school material revisions are governed by the standards and criteria outlined in the education code section 476050.6, which include but are not limited to providing reasonable comprehensive description or any legal requirements enacted since the charter was initially granted or last renewed. CCSA has worked quite closely with Magnolia leaderships and recognized the valuable programs that they provide students throughout the community. Approval of this material revision would ensure that the school can continue and expand essential services for students under its care. Therefore, CCSA fully supports these schools and respectfully urges to approve this petition. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you.

WILLIAMS: Very good. So, Veronica, Luna, Aracely, and Javier, thank you so much for speaking up under public comments. At this time, we will now go to board questions. Is that correct?

CHASTAIN: Yes. The public hearing is now concluded. The board has three options for action regarding a charter school material revision, approve the material revision, approve the material revision with conditions, or deny the material revision. President Williams, I now close the public hearing and return the meeting to you.

WILLIAMS: Very good, thank you Aracely. Tim, do you have anything to add under board questions?

SHAW: No, I just know what a terrific job they've done for a while, so I'm anxious vote on this.

WILLIAMS: Very good. Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Quick question, Dr. Rowell.

MARIA: Yes.

VALDES: I did I hear somebody say that you have a robotics team that's competing in Texas?

MARIA: Yes. Our Santa Ana campus, our students, high schoolers and middle schoolers are competing in the National Robotics League in Texas as we speak. The huge round of applause.

VALDES: When I was growing up in the 1980s, we did not have a robotics team in high school.

MARIA: Did you compete with Atari?

VALDES: I was a baseball player.

MARIA: Oh, baseball. So, it's the Sega Genesis.

VALDES: That's all I have Dr. Rowell.

MARIA: Thank you.

VALDES: You always do a great job.

WILLIAMS: Trustee Barke.

BARKE: Well, I can't say how excited I am that you'll be spreading this enthusiasm to Anaheim because I love the enthusiasm. I love what the school is doing. As you know, I'm a huge supporter of school choice. I don't like to see children trapped by their zip code and you guys are just doing an exceptional job and seeing expansion just warms my heart. So, thank you for all you do and your continued success.

MARIA: Thank you. Thank you so much. Thank you.

SPARKS: I would just echo Mari Barke's words. You all have just done a phenomenal job. I'm so proud of everything you're doing and adapting to the 21st century with the robotics.

MARIA: Yes, thank you.

SPARKS: And yeah, so I would be very supportive to move forward on option one.

WILLIAMS: Okay. Can I say a few words?

SPARKS: Yes, please.

VALDES: Stealing his thunder Dr. Sparks.

WILLIAMS: Sometimes we feel like we're in Dancing with the Stars or we're now criticizing people for this star here. It's absolutely amazing the energy that you give off and that goes down to your staff, because the leader of the staff, and it gets down to the teachers and to the kids and to the families and community. So excellent job. You get a 10 in my book.

MARIA: Well, thank you.

WILLIAMS: Okay, you have a motion Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes, a motion for option one.

BARKE: I'd like to second that motion.

WILLIAMS: Okay. We have a motion and a second to approve Magnolia's revision. Any other questions, Tim? Out there?

SHAW: No.

WILLIAMS: None. Okay. Roll call, Darou.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Really solid yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Absolutely.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Definitely.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Absolutely. Yes, definitely.

WILLIAMS: Congratulations.

MARIA: Thank you.

WILLIAMS: So, the board's going to take about two-minute break if you from Magnolia want to go out and celebrate and have your cake and photos. You want to do photos up here in front. Okay. So, if you're from the Magnolia, please come up here. You'll get some photos and we'll be down there. We'll take about two-minute break from our public meeting and we'll come back.

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

WILLIAMS: Okay. Hello. We're going to begin our meeting. If I can have everybody take their seats. We will begin our meeting as we move on with our agenda and up on the agenda is the charter...

SPARKS: Everybody needs to take a seat. We're getting started. Thank you.

BARKE: Sergeant in arms.

SPARKS: I was a cheerleader.

WILLIAMS: Okay, we are ready to move on with our meeting and we're going on to item number 12, which is the charter school public hearing for the Tustin International Charter School. Aracely, will you take us from here?

CHASTAIN: The board will now hold a hearing to grant or deny the appeal of the Tustin International Charter School Petition After denial by the Tustin Unified School District governing board. The charter school proposes to operate a classroom-based program serving students in transitional kindergarten through grade five for an initial charter term from 2025 to 2030. The board held a public hearing on March 5th to consider the level of support for the charter school. The petition has been reviewed according to California Education Code as legally required. You've been provided with the Orange County Department of Education staff report that summarizes findings from that review and offers recommendations for consideration by the board. Based on information gathered throughout the review process, including a clarification meeting held with petitioners on February 11th. Staff recommends approval with conditions of the Tustin International Charter School petition. We put forward to the board that the deficiencies in the charter petition can be adequately addressed via the execution of an agreement to remedy the findings in the staff report and establish appropriate timelines for the petitioners to meet the conditions as specified.

We offer this recommendation based on the following findings that encompass the most significant areas of concern. One, support for English-Language Learners. Two, special education compliance. Three, meeting the needs of students achieving below grade level expectations. And four, curriculum for core subject mastery and language acquisition. The charter petition lacks a comprehensive plan that includes clear metrics for reclassifying English-Language Learners support for reclassifying learners for the required four years strategies to address the needs of long-term English-Language Learners and provisions for students learning Mandarin and English concurrently. The petition lacks the necessary information regarding how the school will meet the needs of students with disabilities. Specifically, the petition fails to clearly explain how the school will differentiate instruction to accommodate students with special needs. When petitioners were asked to elaborate on school's plan for diverse learners during the clarification meeting, the response indicated a misunderstanding of the special education process.

Furthermore, the petition fails to outline how the school will provide the necessary accommodations and support for students with special needs per legal requirements. The petition lacks a clear plan for addressing the needs of low achieving students who require additional support. The approach outlined in the petition does not address the needs of all struggling students such as those who are low achieving but do not have IEPs. There is no indication of how the school will differentiate instruction or provide targeted interventions for these students to meet grade level expectations. The petition presents inconsistencies regarding the curriculum, which raises questions about its implementation. For example, which topics will be taught in which language and whether the school will purchase or develop the curriculum. While these questions were clarified verbally, these discrepancies suggest the need for further clarification on how the school plans to deliver its educational program. Prior to board action, Tustin International Charter School representatives will have equal time and opportunity or 10 minutes, whichever is longer to present evidence and testimony responsive to the staff recommendations

and findings published on March 18th. I now call representatives from the charter school to the podium.

STEVEN: Good evening Board President, Dr. Williams and board trustees. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to help Tustin community and neighboring community to allow parents to have this opportunity for them to enroll their kids in this Mandarin immersion program. We do thank that the charter unit work with us and we will make sure that we will be working with Janelle and Jennifer Reiter and Tabitha today to address the concern. We'll make sure we meet all the requirements to get the board's approval. Thank you. So, I'll give time to Jennifer.

JENNIFER: Good evening, Dr. Bean, President Williams, Vice President Barke, distinguished board members. My name is Dr. Jennifer Reiter-Cook. I've been working with the Tustin International team throughout their charter school development process and I have over 25 years of experience working with charter schools. Most recently I had 11 years with the California Charter Schools Association as their managing director of school growth. And I also specialize in serving students with disabilities, including working with students with more moderate to severe disabilities and with designing fully inclusive school programs and structures. So, I'm here to kind of address some of the things that came up in the findings as well. Many of the teaching strategies designed for students with or having difficulty with academic progress such as scaffolding, peer assisted learning, and sheltered instruction, closely resemble those used for language learners making the dual language environment and appropriate setting for these students.

TCIS understands that students who are below grade level do not yet have IEPs and the inclusive model and supports will ensure that all students with a wide range of learning needs will be successful with interventions and may not even need to be referred for assessment. TICS will also be partnering with other charter schools with research-based and successful strategies and structures to collaborate on program implementation. TICS will be partnering with the new teacher center and will provide ongoing professional development that will ensure teachers are empowered and prepared to teach all students in the general education setting. The administration and staff of TICS will have the opportunity to collaborate and consult with myself and with other experts in special education. In order to implement the key components of an inclusive program. Teachers and students will engage in specific tiered supports through an intentionally designed MTSS program and that will function as a part of general education and all students will be supported in the least restrictive environment.

In terms of English-Language Learners, TICS is establishing partnerships with leading Mandarin immersion schools, including Yu Ming Charter School and Barnard Elementary School. They're forming an advisory committee composed of nationally recognized leaders in Mandarin immersion who will provide guidance to ensure the instructional model aligns fully with the California ELA and ELD framework. This includes clearly scheduled designated ELD time strategic use of integrated ELD across content areas and consistent support from credentialed staff during the instructional day. Finally, once TICS is approved and opened, they will have the opportunity to work with the California Charter Schools Association. CCSA no longer has memberships for developer members, so that's why they're not members now. But they have the opportunity to do that and when they do open, they'll have the supports, resources and training in order to build their capacity. And I'm happy to work with the board members to work with the

charter district charter staff to collaborate as they have their planning year and to help them prepare to work with a wide range of students. Thank you.

TABITHA: Hi. Just to kind of piggyback on that, my name is Tabitha Obligacion. I am a licensed educational psychologist with over 15 years within the school setting and I serve as a non-public agency. So that is certified by the Department of Education. And so, what we do is we have a team of psychologists. Currently we have staff over seven psychologists. We have speech therapists currently onboard. We have about five speech therapists and we have three occupational therapists and behavioral interventionists. So basically, we are ready to serve students. We not only serve students that have IEPs, but we also service students that do not have IEPs. We are a team of advocates, therapists and psychologists and we also do have a lawyer on our team that we help parents gain knowledge and understanding of their child schooling rights and services. We are an excited team to help with Tustin International Charter as we help support not only with their special education department, but with their general education department by aiding with child vine Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions and with their student support study teams and providing any special education services. I've already had the lovely opportunity of working with Dr. Chuang and the hard work and dedication that his team provides. They are definitely supporting putting the student's needs first. And I just want to thank the board for this opportunity to speak with you guys today and thank you.

JOE: Hi, my name is Joe Liu. I am part of the petition and the team, I just want to address the concern that some people have about a facility for the place. If we get approved as indicated, we are planning to go for Prop 39, but as we also would think that there might be challenges for Prop 39. So, a year ago we did already have different scenario, a backup plan and one of which is to look at the Tustin old Marine base. I came to know about that particular location due to my employment with South Orange County Community College District. So that's for lease. And I have already reached out to them before, but they said come back when you are approved. Besides that, because I'm a realtor for several years I have worked together with a commercial team that's happy to support us for alternative locations. So, I just want to mention that for the board. Okay, thank you.

STEVEN: I want to thank parents again and community members to be here to support this because we know this will be a gift to the community and as a public servant, this school will belong to parents. That's my role to make sure the school will be successfully open and thank you. Thank you for considering. Thank you.

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

BARKE: Okay, so we have 15 public comments. So, each person will be given a minute to comply with the 15 minutes. So, I'll call up the first person and who's on deck? We have Jennifer Reiter-Cook first with Emily Chu following.

JENNIFER: I already.

BARKE: Oh, okay. Gotcha. Okay. All right, so next we have Emily Chu.

STEVEN: Barke. So, as I mentioned in the past, most parents are really shy, so they would just give time to heard.

BARKE: They can just come up and do a me too and say, it can be very simple. Whatever they're comfortable with. They don't have to take the full minute.

STEVEN: Okay. Thank you. Parents, please. You can come here.

BARKE: Okay, so we have, let's see. Yes, Emily? Yep. We have Emily followed by Deko if you're going to all line up, followed by Mei Chi followed by Karen Liu, followed by Destiny, followed by Elaine, followed by Carrie, followed by Dora, followed by Darius, followed by Jason, and followed by Yanhua. Okay.

EMILY: Good. Evening board members and ladies and gentlemen, my name is Emily Chu. I was involved with Santa Ana School District for the past 15 years and each month I went to food bank. I collect six pallets of diapers, five pallets of fruit and produce and we serve five schools in Santa Ana each month. So, which means we serve 950 families and 7,500 people. And because my experience with the Santa Ana school district, so they invite me here to support this program and this happened, my two grandchildren are in the Charter school and with the Charter school, my 16-year-old grandson last year he took the classical learning test. His score was one of the top 50 in the nation and the score he got is 1500 out of 1520 on the PSAT test. So, he received \$2,500 for his award. So, he's applying for the college next year.

Anyway, this is my story, but I really support this program because the dual language is so important. Like when we go to the school in Santa Ana for distribution and the school volunteers want to speak to us with English and we try to learn Spanish with them so we can communicate, talking about the language. I have a girlfriend, her husband receive a job in Apple company in the North California. And the mother, she's so wise, she stay in Southern California because her children went to San Clemente. That's a dual school, dual language school, Spanish and English. So, this little girl, she graduated from this school, very fluent Spanish. And then by the time she finished, when we have the distribution, she represent my organization named Tzu Chi and she speaks Spanish. And after she finished her speech, and this principal will ask me, where did you find this girl? She speak better Spanish than we do. That's because she grow up with the Spanish people and she's part of them. So that's how important this dual language school is. Very important.

BARKE: Thank you. I just want to make sure because we have 15 minutes. Does anyone else want to speak? I mean if you're speaking for everyone, that's fine, but I just want to make sure, is there anyone else?

EMILY: Thank you very much for this.

BARKE: Thank you for your comments.

EMILY: Please support this program.

BARKE: Okay. Is there anyone else who would like to make comments?

DEKO: Hi, my name is Deko. I was born and raised here and then I started speaking Chinese when I was very young. But then when I went to elementary school I started not being able to speak Chinese as well. In the end I went to high school here, obviously still, and I spoke Chinese, but I could not read and write. And then so in the future I was thinking like, oh, if I have children I'd want to send them overseas, Taiwan, China maybe. So, if they can learn Chinese first, then come back here for maybe high school, it'd be a lot easier for them because English is much easier to learn and I've seen many people succeed like that. But if there was a school like this where we could learn Mandarin and English, then I'd obviously want to send them here rather than have them go overseas and spend a lot of time there then coming back. Yeah.

BARKE: Well thank you. Anyone else want to share any support? And you can just go up and say your name and me too or whatever.

DESTINY: Hi everyone here. My name is Destiny Chan. I have two sons are 19 years old. I spent a lot of money for after school to have them to learn Chinese, but until now they cannot read and write. By the way, that was my son, I was really surprised that he came up here. So not for my son generation, but for the next generation, not only for Chinese or I think it's good for every nationality for everyone to learn a second language because U.S., the reason we come here, because here is so advanced events are better than all other country. But the only thing, I think it's a language. Language is so behind, way behind other country. I travel a lot of country like Europe, they all speak like six or seven languages, but here, including my son only speak English. So, I think this international school or bilingual school is a must. So please support. Thank you very much.

BARKE: Thank you. Or anyone else that would like to come up to the mic?

LIPING: Hello, good afternoon everyone. My name is Liping. I'm a local real estate agent and I married my husband. He's an ABC, we call American Born Chinese. And very unfortunate he does not know how to read and write Chinese. And for our next generation, I really wish we can have a bilingual school that I can send my kids to. So, I hope everybody can support this petition. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you.

DORA: Hi everyone, this is Dora. My son grew up here in graduate from Harvard Law and one day when I talked to him he said that Mom, if I have any chances to go back to my childhood, he want to learn more languages. So, we want everyone to support this one to be a bilingual school. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. Anyone else? I think we have a couple minutes left. Are we good? Everyone spoken who wants to speak?

JASON: Hello? I talked last time, but just want to also just express my support for the program. It's a wonderful program. It's so beneficial for the kids and just think how incredible it would be to have children in the Tustin area who many of them are already speaking like Spanish in their homes and many of them are already bilingual to become trilingual. That is just so powerful for them and for their opportunities in the future. So, thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. Anyone else? Want to venture to the mic?

KAREN: Good afternoon board. My name's Karen. The reason I support this international charter program is I also, I'm involved with the Santa Ana community for volunteer work and then every month I visit a Santa Ana school. Most of the family don't speak English, so I have to learn some Spanish to them. Like que talla, that's what size of a diaper do you need? Because we have been doing this for many years with them, they want to learn Chinese to show their appreciation. And so, the reason I mentioned that, the reason I support, because we know, we all know to learn a language, you have to learn at the youngest age because the brain are still developing and then once they master the second language, the third language will be the easiest to grasp. So, I really think it's a benefit regardless Chinese, English, Spanish or French. And then I think the more language the children can learn at the youngest age that will be benefit to them. Please support this petition. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. Do we have any time left of our 15? Anyone else? We have a few minutes left. You can just go up to the mic and say me too. I support or anything you want to say quickly? No.

MEI CHI: My name is Mei Chi Chang. I have three girls. We all speak Mandarin at home. I stopped sending my daughter to the Chinese school Sunday every day until the high school and then now they still don't speak good Chinese. They cannot write, cannot read. I believe in learning the different language they have to be every day. Of course, their English is still better than the Chinese and although my daughter, they don't need to go to the school, it's kind of late that they all grow up. But I support this program. Yeah, definitely. Thank you.

RICHARD: Yeah, my name's Richard and I just support this because with my grandson, he would have the opportunity to learn more than just English varied languages and I think this would be a great program for the younger group that's growing up. So yeah. Thank you.

BARKE: Anyone else? No. Okay. Well thank you all for your public comment. I appreciate you being brave enough to go up to the mic.

CHASTAIN: This concludes a public hearing. The board has three options for action regarding a charter school petition submitted on appeal. Option one, approve the charter petition as written. Option two, approve the charter petition with conditions. This action will result in the approval of the charter and require the execution of an agreement to address the issues outlined in the staff report. Option three, deny the charter petition. President Williams, I now close the public hearing and return the meeting to you.

WILLIAMS: Okay, so Aracely under item 12, we have board questions so we're not ready to move on with item 13 until we have board questions, so would that be fine?

CHASTAIN: Yes. Correct.

WILLIAMS: Okay, very good. I just want to make that clear. Tim, do you have any questions for this charter school petition?

SHAW: Well, I think really more just comments. I feel pretty torn on this one. I totally agree with the comments that were made about—I've felt a long time that we need to do a better job in our country of teaching young people multiple languages. I think that is a huge skill that is very valuable in life. Certainly, there's demand for Mandarin, probably one of the most spoken languages on the planet. I in general, like the concept of school choice and giving parents and families that option. And of course, our staff has recommended approval. So, I'm kind of making a list here. The pros and cons. So, in the column, the staff that I notified, what I guess they thought were deficiencies and the charter application, I got the email that's trying to address those, but how to deal with the English-Language Learners, special ed, the low achieving students and the curriculum clarity and of course the facility challenges that all of our charter schools face. There's a lot there and I know it looks like there was a good team put together to try to address those concerns. I very much feel on the fence and will appreciate hearing from my colleagues.

WILLIAMS: Very good. Thank you. Tim. Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes. So initially reading the report from our staff, I do have some concerns and some of the discrepancies that were in the petition now, some of them had been clarified for me here because reading it, it appeared to me that the most vulnerable students there were discrepancies. And that's what concerns me. Because we are concerned about the most vulnerable students. I was impressed with Jennifer. Jennifer. So, are you a full-time part of the school or are you consulting or what are you doing? It seems like you are knowledgeable in many of the areas where there were the discrepancies.

JENNIFER: Is this on?

BARKE: I think you can come up here for that. Yeah, please.

JENNIFER: Yeah, so I've been working with this team since I was with the California Charter Schools Association, and so I'm currently consulting with them. However, that role could change depending on the outcome of tonight and what their team needs. And now that they have a planning year, that's super helpful in helping them kind of develop the structure and make sure the implementation happens. So that's where I see my role happening is primarily in this planning year to make sure they have everything set up to address those needs of those students.

BARKE: Okay, thank you. I appreciate that. Let's see, you said you'd be partnering with other charters. Are there some you already partnering with?

STEVEN: Yes, they have successful Mandarin immersion program running already. So, they would join the advisory committee and we'll be meeting and make sure we duplicate their successful model. That's what we do.

BARKE: Are you free to divulge who they are?

STEVEN: I'm sorry?

BARKE: Are you free to divulge who they are, the charters you're partnering with?

STEVEN: Am I free to...

BARKE: To share with us who the charters are?

STEVEN: Yeah, yeah, I put in my email already. You mean charter school in Barnard and Penn Branch Elementary School?

BARKE: Yes. Okay, thank you. Let's see. Okay, you're forming an advisory committee. You said once approved you would work with CCSA?

STEVEN: Yes.

BARKE: I also liked a lot of what Tabitha had to say. I appreciate what you would bring to the table, the facility, that's always the biggest issue with our charter. So, you have I guess a year to figure that out. But that I know is the biggest issue and I know it's kind of the cart before the horse. They don't want to talk about it until you actually approve. So, I understand those issues. I'd love to see Janelle up here. You're with the charter as well?

JANELLE: Yes.

BARKE: Thank you. And are you comfortable with the petition and you've worked with a lot of our charters, we have a lot of faith in you, and is your feeling that they have what they're ready to go or after they're planning year they're ready to go as it's your feeling?

JANELLE: Yes, I do. Janelle Ruley. I do feel with the planning year that's going to be very helpful for them to, I think what staff identified as concerns are going to be actually really instructive for the petitioners to figure out, here are some concerns we have, here are some potential holes we have. Let's figure out how we fill them before we have students in front of us so that we get those things addressed, make sure we've got the team in place on the ground ready to go before we open the doors to students. So, I'm confident that they can do that.

BARKE: Okay. And my last question and then I'll let one of my colleagues is as far as student enrollment tonight, I saw a lot of people with grown children who really support this and the theory behind it, it's what the community needs, but do we have excited families that are ready to join the school when it opens?

STEVEN: I share the data with the charter school unit and then that was even before the approval. So, we do have many parents who are interested and as board president mentioned, once we got approved, we believe there'll be a snowball effect. Then there'll be more parents jumping in since it's legit.

BARKE: Okay, thank you. Oh, did you want to say something?

JENNIFER: I just wanted to say one more thing about the planning year. There are interested organizations once the school is approved that are very interested in funding to support this school. So, once—they need approval right, so once they get approved, they're going to be able to have that consistency in the team that they're working with because they're going to have those

funds to be able to do that. So, the funding issue pre-approval, as you know, is very limited. So that's where the consistency will come in to establish this structure of the programs.

BARKE: Okay, thank you. That's all for me. Thanks.

SPARKS: Okay. Yeah. I have a few questions just to clarify with the consultant, Jennifer, right?

JENNIFER: Yes.

SPARKS: Yes. So what role will you have if we did a conditional approval or an approval and how is that going to be funded? Your role as a consultant?

JENNIFER: Excuse me, sorry. So, the approval funding would come pretty quickly from the organizations that are interested in funding this school. They also have had some funding available to work with consultants. So that would continue. It's pretty flexible in terms of how I'm able to work with schools because I do, I am not an independent consultant. I work with an organization, so I'm able to provide more services than say an independent consultant who would want a bulk or a fee upfront or something like that. So, I can consistently work with them through this planning year.

If they needed more support once there were students. I don't do direct support to students, but I certainly could work with Tabitha and with the networking and resources that we have with our organizations that we work with to actually provide the services to the students. So, my role would be more setting that up, making sure they're getting the right people on board, making sure they have people who understand the structure of both the English language piece, the special education piece, the dual immersion, all of those pieces. So, I would be primarily it would be this planning year, well the end of this year, and then the planning year to set all that up.

SPARKS: Okay, great. Thank you. Speaking of the struggling learners that can't speak Chinese or Mandarin yet, maybe they're coming in, maybe this is for you Steven. Can you explain how MTSS would be supporting that struggling learner who isn't speaking Chinese or Mandarin yet?

STEVEN: So as many research show that you don't need to know the language to learn the language and why it's important for them to learn when they're very young, because they don't get little filter like to think anxiety. So, they pick it up every day as long as you put them in the environment. So, in this model it's 50 50, so half day Mandarin, half day Chinese, half day English. Once they work in the classroom, it's all Mandarin only or English only. So, they'll pick it up. And I thank you for the opportunity to clarify that. Again, as I mentioned last time, so our teachers will be trained with the small group instruction. They will deliver the whole group instruction during the first hours. Then after that they will deliver small group instruction for at least 45 to 60 minutes. So, during those small group instruction, they'll meet different small group with different level proficiency of providing the needed support to help them. And we will meet monthly with the teachers to go over with each data and they see who need extra support and that's where the morning after school support program come in to help this low achieving students.

SPARKS: How are you going to measure that? How will you measure that?

STEVEN: The teacher will do the daily assessment and we will meet and then make a Google Excel spreadsheet and see what level they belong to for both languages so we can identify during our faculty meeting.

SPARKS: Okay.

STEVEN: Yeah.

SPARKS: And another question is the report talked about the lack of a comprehensive plan, particularly for special needs students. So how would you work with the NPS to support the school with the special needs students to make sure the special needs students are getting the support that they need?

STEVEN: I think last time I didn't really clarify the question because they said I didn't understand the IEP meetings annual. I did understand that because I was the principal for four years. So, for the IEP, we'll make sure we take the advice from the expert and fix whatever is not meeting the standard. And then once we got approved, we'll join the LA County SELPA to make sure we have the support funding too before the school open. We'll make sure we meet all the standards.

SPARKS: As you all know, we are very much pro school choice board and we want to support, but we want to make sure that you're educationally viable, you're organizationally viable, and that you're financially viable and the students aren't going to be placed in a school that later is not performing. That forces us all collectively to make a decision where the school's not succeeding. We do not want to cross that bridge.

STEVEN: Absolutely.

SPARKS: And so, we don't want you to be out in front of your skis. I'm a skier. You don't want to be out in front of your skis, you're going to crash and burn. We want to make sure you're prepared and that's why we're asking all these specific questions.

STEVEN: And I already worked with her in the past so she know we have a record to make sure you work successfully and I, so they worked successfully.

SPARKS: Okay. And thank you. And then is Javier, I saw him earlier. Is he around? Javier, I want to hear from you. Yeah, wherever you want.

JAVIER: Hello? Yes. What is the question Dr. Sparks?

SPARKS: Well the question is, Javier, I need to know what your overall assessment is given a pretty comprehensive list of challenges that the school is still currently facing in the current proposal.

JAVIER: Yes. As I mentioned last during the last month meeting, we've been working with them. We've been providing guidance about the petition, about what are the needs. We've been

talking about facilities. We've been having consistent meetings when they're providing feedback about what they should be doing, the landscape of the community. I think the one year will help them to be more strong and be more ready for the community. I've been very vocal with them that we will have to remain neutral because they're not our members, but happy to provide more resources when they have their membership with us. I wanted just to have successful schools in the community. So, I think the one year will be a good opportunity for them to start working with that. And as Board Member Barke mentioned, the facility challenge is one of them. So, I've been talking to them about how they can be doing things in advance so I can be providing that type of guidance throughout the year to make sure that they will be ready for next year when they become members. So that's kind of my assessment on this school.

SPARKS: Okay. Thank you so much. That's all I have for now.

WILLIAMS: Okay. Trustee Valdes.

VALDES: Dr. Reiter-Cook, would you take the podium please?

JENNIFER: Yes, sir.

VALDES: So, you said your role with the charter right now is just as a consultant. How many other charter schools do you consult for?

JENNIFER: Well, I kind of have two roles right now. I work with new charter schools. So, since CCSA no longer does that work, I'm continuing that work. So, I'm working with about nine teams, but they're in various developmental phases, so I don't have any right now that are submitting. And then I also work with current charter schools in assessing their special education programs and redesigning the structure of those programs.

VALDES: So, you have a business presumably in consulting with charter?

JENNIFER: No, I work for an organization.

VALDES: What's the organization?

JENNIFER: Comp Therapy.

VALDES: Comp Therapy. So, this company is in the business of consulting with the charters and you work for them?

JENNIFER: No, I'm the only one that does that for the organization. They primarily provide staffing. Right. So, if somebody needs a speech and language SLP. Right.

VALDES: But you are a salaried employee for that organization?

JENNIFER: Correct.

VALDES: Okay.

JENNIFER: And then people can join just like they with CCSA, they can join as members.

VALDES: And you mentioned that you had 25 years of prior experience. Could you go through your credentials again?

JENNIFER: Sure. So, I started off as a special day class teacher for students with moderate to severe disabilities. My whole career has been in charter schools, so I started in a special day class at a charter school. My kids were not included for lunch or recess, let alone anything else. So, I also had a general education credential. So, I started the inclusion program at that school. So, I went, my principal allowed me to go to fourth grade and I took two of my students with significant needs with me and I modeled full inclusion. One of them had a significant intellectual disability, the other had Down syndrome. So, I did that for about seven years. I started multi-age programs, so I taught fourth, fifth, and sixth grade general education. I then was a principal of a charter school in San Diego Unified, and then got my master's in special education, my doctorate in leadership studies, focusing on charter schools and charter school closures in California.

And then I taught in a credential program at Point Loma Nazarene University for about 10 years before I started at CCSA. So, I was with CCSA for 11 years the whole time on their growth team. So, I would support new schools and I've seen some of you at the regional meetings and that kind of thing when I was doing that. And then after CCSA stopped doing that work, then since I have that extensive background in special education, I moved on to the organization I'm with now. But they also have allowed me to start the support for the new schools as well as work with the charter schools and their special ed programs. The one thing I want to clarify or kind of emphasize is I am looking at charter schools right now that have been in existence for a long time and they're trying to avert the crisis that they're in. Some schools are spending hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars on special education services because their structure is so broken, right? In this case, we can build it from the ground up and create that structure and that foundation that's going to really support inclusive learning and make sure all the students with a variety of needs are getting their needs met and avoid that budget crisis when it comes to special education because that really can be detrimental for charter specifically.

VALDES: Dr. Cook, where are you based out of?

JENNIFER: I work from home in San Diego.

VALDES: Okay. So, at best you are two hours away from onsite at this school.

JENNIFER: It was an hour and 35 minutes today, but yes.

VALDES: Okay, thank you. So, I guess the rest of my time I'm going to spend on some comments. Dr. Williams said to the parents here, I appreciate you coming down. You don't need to sell this trustee on the need for a Mandarin charter. I think that that need is well established, and I know a lot of you spent a lot of time trying to convince this board and myself that another Mandarin charter is a good idea. I'm already of that opinion. The problem to lay my cards out here, I am deeply concerned about the leadership structure at this school. It does not have a good prior track record and without someone like Dr. Cook on site every day, I just see a lot of problems in this school's future. I will very likely be voting no.

WILLIAMS: Is that it trustee?

VALDES: Yes.

WILLIAMS: Okay, very good. So historically, this board has been always very supportive of parental choice, charter schools, private schools, all those types of alternatives that our children have besides the neighborhood, brick and mortar, public schoolhouse, we have also been burned. We have learned a lot. Like many of us in life, we go down this journey and we stumble and we fall and we learn from it. One of the big learning experiences we had was with a charter school that we approved sometime in 2018 around there. The leader I thought was just par excellent. She was incredible. She had the community behind her. She had so many things going for her. The biggest challenge was that she could never get a conditional use permit out of the city of Orange, and it was hard to get the money to create the facility.

And that's the budget, the money and the facilities are the biggest challenges to charter schools. You can have the best petition. It could be perfect, which this one is not I'm going to get into in a second here. And still you can have everything perfect and lined up and then all of a sudden you just can't get that facility. Mr. Liu, thank you for bringing up Joe. Right. You brought up going Prop 39, which is always an alternative, but I can tell you sometimes that could be very hard and difficult to go to the local school districts to get property. You mentioned about the former El Toro Marine base, Air Base there. Do you know that there are two of our charter schools that were denied by South Coast Community College based upon the fact that they are charter schools only? We have OCASA that's led by Kapil Mathur, who is rather respected around here as well as Ednovate. They went to that community college and because they were charter schools and because the unions were against charter schools, they said, no way you're going to get any property down there. So, what did they do? They aligned themselves with the private school that's going to have an on-staff dormitory and tennis academy. And what's that new one? Paddle?

SPARKS: Pickleball.

WILLIAMS: Pickleball, yeah, we are going to have pickleball Courts. It's with a private school and it's like, hmm, is that the best use of public funds for a former Marine base? So, I just want to let you know that avenue that you go down may not be there. It may not be viable. So again, it's the money, it's the funding, it's the facilities, which are the biggest obstacles. Now I do want to get to a couple key issues about the petition itself and then I want to ask Aracely if we can alter the time limit and approval on this. I want to see this go, but I'm not so sure I want to give a five-year commitment. Can we go less? Can we do less than the five years? Can we go one or two to get them starting off the ground to see if a year from now they can get going and pass that bar.

CHASTAIN: You can approve the charter school for up to five years. So yes, you can go less. Our concern as staff with going less is that the school would still go through renewal, whether it's after one year or two year or three years, they would still go through the renewal process. And the renewal process, as you know, is complicated and it's based on academic. And so, if we don't give the school enough time to show us what their academics are, they will most likely fall into that middle category. And that middle category is we tend to figure that's okay, but they won't really have the academic data to back it yet. And so, we would probably end up giving

them more time in order to get that academic data. And so even though you're thinking you're doing a two-year initial petition since they would most likely get approved, because two years is not enough time for us to say you're not academically doing well, the next approval has to be for five years.

And so what you're actually giving them is a seven year approval period as opposed to giving them an initial five year where we can see where their academics are, we can see where their finances are, and it's given us enough time to really assess where the school is and when they do come up for renewal at that five-year mark, we can give you good data to make that decision on as opposed to giving you no data because they haven't gotten enough time yet to do what they need to do as far as academics, if that makes sense. But yes, the board does have the ability to do that and they've done that before. But these are some of the struggles we've had in the past with short terms.

WILLIAMS: We've done a three year before, I can't recall what charter that was. How did that work out?

CHASTAIN: Correct. Yes. We only had one year's worth of data because they need to submit their renewal pretty much a year before their term ends.

BARKE: They're doing a planning year.

CHASTAIN: And so, so one of their years already is going to be a planning year. And so, if you do, for example, a three-year renewal, one is a planning year, no students, the second year we don't have, they're just starting to test. We don't have data. So, by the time they do their renewal, we'll only have one year's worth of data and a very short period of time for them to have gotten really their finances in order the way we would want them to.

WILLIAMS: May I ask you another question?

CHASTAIN: Sure.

WILLIAMS: I'm troubled by report that for instance, the issue of implementation in page 42, it said one thing, the instruction will be in Mandarin and then there is a discrepancy because now mathematics was going to be taught in English and now it's a Mandarin.

CHASTAIN: Right. We see that often in charter petitions that are submitted and then pulled back and fixed according to some of the feedback that they get. They could end up missing some of those areas within the charter petition. That's what the clarification meeting is for us to make sure that what we're reading, the discrepancies that we're seeing, are they discrepancies? Do they actually know what they're going to be doing? We did get clarification on those questions. However, we would want those to be in writing. So before, during that planning year, if the school were to be approved, we would be collecting curriculum during that time. We would be making sure we'd have a class, we'd have a schedule on how they're going to run their Mandarin program. All of those things that we're concerned about, that's what we would put in our conditions and that we would monitor during that first year to make sure that they've addressed all of the concerns that we have. So, for special education, for example, we would be collecting

their special education plan, seeing who they've put in place to run that special education program. Those are the types of things we'll be looking at in order for them to meet their conditions.

WILLIAMS: On page 26 or page four of your recommendations, you put here that there is a misunderstanding of the special education process...

CHASTAIN: Our staff...

WILLIAMS: Is that a general concern that they don't understand the special education process?

CHASTAIN: It was a general concern from Dr. Chuang, who's the one who answered that question. He was conflating services for special education with services for just low performing students, for example. And those are two different populations of students that aren't addressed in the same way. There was some, I think believe there's something in the petition about holding monthly IEP meetings, right? You don't hold IEP meetings every month. And so, we wanted some clarification during our clarification meeting as to what his understanding was of the special education process. It's a tough meeting and I'm sure there's nerves and all that happening, but it ended up in our staff report because we did not come away from that meeting completely sure that he understood the difference between the two student populations. And because they're a new charter, they don't necessarily have yet in place who's going to be looking at these things. And so, we would be wanting him to hire someone to be on staff that monitors their special education vendors and has a clear understanding of special education and how IEP meetings and things like that are run. And that's one of the conditions we would want to put into place where this to be approved with conditions.

WILLIAMS: And I think that's what Trustee Valdes and Sparks we're addressing as to the leadership and to the people who are leading this that it appears, and I don't mean to be offensive, but it appears that they don't understand the process, which leadership is everything to success.

CHASTAIN: I think...

WILLIAMS: That concerns me.

CHASTAIN: Right? A lot of folks, we have a lot of executive directors that take on schools and even first-time principals for charter schools and they don't have teaching credentials. They don't necessarily have the background, but they put the people in place, they put the vendors in place, they ask for help from CCSA, they get the training they need to do, and a lot of them begin without even a first planning year. So, we are encouraged by the planning year for this particular school to make sure that we have everything in place before they open. And so, without that planning year, I think our recommendation might look different.

WILLIAMS: So, let's suppose we do what you say, we recommend it. What happens after the first year? The planning year number one is done. They're wholly inadequate.

CHASTAIN: We would hope that by the time that the school opens after their planning year that they have everything in place that they need in order to open a successful school. After that, we obviously continue our monitoring. We have our visits, we make sure that they're serving the students that they're serving, and that's when the results start coming in. Their academic results, their financial reports. So, we really can't predict what any school is going to do, what their finances are going to look like, what their actual instructional programs are going to look like when they begin. All we have to go by is what we can collect, what we can monitor, what we can see. And so as with any other school, we would be giving them that opportunity to begin their program and show that they're able to successfully run it.

SPARKS: Can I jump in?

WILLIAMS: Absolutely.

SPARKS: Since you're here and you're talking about the special needs, you were talking about in the report that they didn't seem to have, understand the difference in IEPs and how that specifically works. Okay. Maybe they could hire someone to do that, but then they also didn't address the struggling students that may not fall into an IEP, but there needs to be a plan for those students.

CHASTAIN: Yes, correct.

SPARKS: That are fall between the cracks.

CHASTAIN: We would want to see what those plans are. We would want those plans in writing and fully developed before the school opens. And that would also be part of what the conditions are. And just to remind you what you don't have in your initial packet here, because we don't do it in this order, but if they were to be approved with conditions, what we'll come back with to the board in a month or two is the actual agreement with the conditions that we're wanting to see. And that will outline everything that we want to see from them with timelines on when we want to see it. Then in that first planning year, we're going to be monitoring that those are actually being met. If they're not, that's when we come back to you to potentially revoke the charter. If they're not following the conditions that we've put in place or if we're not satisfied with the conditions or how they're responding to those, I am encouraged that even just based off of the staff report, he's already reaching out and looking for the professionals that he will need to help guide him through this. I think that that's a positive step already.

WILLIAMS: Thank you. It may be a positive step, but I think it still leaves a lot of concerns as to the potential success of this school.

VALDES: It is just really concerning to me that the executive director turned around tonight and said the expert was the consultant. The expert needs to be the executive director. That person needs to know everything about all the aspects of this school.

WILLIAMS: I totally support that and I think that is very good. And again, Steven, nothing personal, but history is very important. The Irvine International Academy when you were there still has a bad taste in our mouth. It still leaves a memory that is one that makes it difficult to

support you because you're supposed to be the leader and you're supposed to know these things, and I just don't see your leadership being effective enough to overcome the obstacles that are ahead of you.

STEVEN: Can I clarify?

WILLIAMS: I'm being very direct.

STEVEN: Yes. Thank you for being direct.

WILLIAMS: Okay.

STEVEN: I want to clarify my role. I was there to help to set up the school from ground zero. There was no students, there was no teachers, there was no curriculum, there was nothing there, but I was there to do everything and then the executive director was in charge. I was not in charge at all. He decided everything, how it to be run. And then he also hired a curriculum director above me. So, I was not allowed to talk to our teacher without her presence. So that was my situation there. I want to clarify. I was not leading everything there, but I was there to help make sure we meet every requirement from the charter school unit. So, when it came in to audit I leave my team, it's two-day full day schedule. I set a different room to offer the data, like student folder and then also look at our account, everything we spend that they're looking for. That's what I did.

WILLIAMS: What is your role in this charter? Be very specific what you do.

STEVEN: I'm here to help to build a school. I don't have to be executive director. I can step down anytime you require me to. It just at this point, we don't have anyone who has the experience to build a school from ground zero. We don't have any facility. We don't have anything at this point, so we'll be willing to find that person...

WILLIAMS: Are you on paper now the executive director?

STEVEN: No. You mean on the paper? Oh, you mean...

WILLIAMS: On this petition? Who is the executive director?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Steven is.

STEVEN: The principal and executive director based on the suggestion last time because I was a board member last time.

WILLIAMS: And do you have a board right now?

STEVEN: Yeah.

WILLIAMS: Okay.

STEVEN: Yes.

WILLIAMS: Tell us about your board.

STEVEN: It's in the petition. So, we have all different experts and then in the field of a Mandarin immersion program and a Chinese language program.

WILLIAMS: Tell me about your board. Just give me how many people they are.

STEVEN: They have five.

WILLIAMS: They're five. Tell me about their background.

STEVEN: So, we have people who are running the Mandarin immersion program, the executive director, and also, we have people who are local and they are helping to make sure that this program will work, the different background.

WILLIAMS: Do you know their names?

STEVEN: Yes, of course. Dr. Anthony [several inaudible words]. And then, hold on, I'm kind of nervous. This why? Yeah. And then Ruby Castilla and Dr. Chen and then Dr. Timothy Jones. And one more. Hold on. I'm really nervous right now.

WILLIAMS: That's okay. Are they here tonight? You are here?

JOE: Yeah.

WILLIAMS: Are the other four here?

JOE: No.

WILLIAMS: Okay. They should be here. Because I want to talk with them.

JOE: Okay.

WILLIAMS: Tell me your experience. What is Sylvan Learning you're wearing your shirt with?

JOE: That's in the private because I'm a small business owner, so I own a Sylvan Learning Center in Irvine.

WILLIAMS: I see.

JOE: I've done education my whole career since I finished my graduate degree in education management. I work in the higher education for 15 years. So, entrepreneur, I did that. I built my center from ground up. I built a center in Tustin. Unfortunately, during COVID, I have to close that one. So, I still have my center in Irvine.

WILLIAMS: Have you ever been on a board of a charter school before?

JOE: No, but I do have a lots of experience with Irvine Unified. I've been a PTA board member. I've been in the school site council. I've been in the ELAC, the district committee for ELD

Learners. So, I've been through a lot in education because the school to send me to those meetings with my background, because when I work at the Community College District, I was once a registrar at Irvine Valley College. So, I worked under the time when Supervisor Wagner was in charge. So, I gained a lots of experience about ed code and everything else.

WILLIAMS: Do you know anything about this petition? Did you read it?

JOE: Yeah.

WILLIAMS: What concerns you about the petition?

JOE: Well, there are weaknesses, but we have presented, we're trying to get expert into this. I kind of disagree that one person can know it all because being an entrepreneur, I have to learn a lot myself. There's no way I can learn everything to the expertise of the experts. So, I don't agree that the person should know everything, but you do need to know who to find for help. That's always my own strategy as a small business owner. It's very important. So, I mentioned I helped consultation for small businesses too because I earn all those experience through my years, like working my business.

WILLIAMS: Yeah. No, that's okay. I think I'm done. I just want to spread it to the rest of the board, the conversation, if there is anything left to talk about. Sorry for asking the difficult questions.

JOE: Oh, no, no.

WILLIAMS: These are very important only because we've actually made decisions and later on we find out they weren't the best decision. And so, we're at a crossroads here historically too.

JOE: I realize that.

WILLIAMS: And this is not the strongest petition that's come before us.

JOE: Yeah, I mean, I can tell you that I joined this because I see the passion with the team, Dr. Wong and Ruby, and they're all very...

WILLIAMS: Has the board met?

JOE: Yeah, we met many times. Dr. Wong flew all the way out here and we had a meeting and we had Zoom meetings. Of course, we met or else I won't be continuing. I put my own time for over two years into this. I, despite having my own business, doing consultation, doing real estate, I mean there's a reason why I continue on with this. Time is precious. Come on. Why am I committing myself to this for so long?

WILLIAMS: I'm going to ask the business guy. Come on up here.

DELANO: All right.

WILLIAMS: You're going to be the key backbone to this. You know that?

DELANO: Absolutely, yes.

WILLIAMS: Because you have people here that I don't think have enough experience to run this charter. You do. You've been there around, you've been around the corner. You bring a whole lot of experience and credibility to this. So, you're one of the key leaders. I think if this charter gets approved that they're going to depend upon you. What do you see as needs to be done to make sure this thing works?

DELANO: I think the board has, in good evening everyone, and I appreciate the opportunity to speak tonight. There are a few things, in essence with all charters that are sort of homogeneous to their development, they all have to start someplace and they all start at ground zero and then they go up from there. One of the things that I do believe in is the passion of the people behind me. I don't think anyone is getting a check or has received any payment for the amount of time and effort that they've put into this present company included as well. And I believe in the same way that I believed in Irvine International Charter, because I saw that from ground zero and some of those same comments that were echoed tonight or echoed then, and look how far we've come to where they're now one of the pillars in Irvine.

WILLIAMS: In fact, we denied that charter, didn't we? The first time around?

DELANO: Yes, sir. Absolutely. So, we know what the potentials are, we know what the possibilities are, and all we're asking for is an opportunity. I think you've heard from staff who said, well, it's not really there, but it's not completely a mess either. It does have potential. I know the numbers. I don't think we heard anything about the budgets or any concerns about those things. But that's not to say that everything that's on that paper will come to fruition in the exact way that we set it either, right? There will be some trials, there will be some pitfalls. Every charter has these as growing pains, and I think they will not be any different for this group behind me. But I think what we have is that perseverance we have that go get it attitude. And I think the people that were here today who gave up their afternoon or their evenings to come and speak tonight, speak to the potential and the possibility for that. So absolutely, yes. I do believe in this thing 100%. And you can hold me to that word. If in two years or three years we come back here and it's not the way that we say, then you can absolutely take it. And I stand by that because I believe in what they're doing.

WILLIAMS: It's the first positive thing I've heard.

BARKE: How about Janelle?

WILLIAMS: Janelle.

BARKE: Janelle's very positive.

WILLIAMS: Where's Janelle? Okay, we're going to put you on the spot.

JANELLE: I'm not going to volunteer any revocation, but understood.

WILLIAMS: Just for disclaimer, we've known Janelle for quite some time and she's a very competent attorney. A good decision for your school. In the process, you've been through this, our concerns where we've been, you know the past.

JANELLE: I do.

WILLIAMS: There are a great deal of concerns for this charter, and it's not an easy decision. I clearly am still thinking about options. Help me out here. Help us out as a board.

JANELLE: Well, I'll say I haven't seen all of you wrestle with a decision like this for a long time, so I can appreciate the gratitude.

VALDES: It's because I don't think we like saying no. We want to say yes.

JANELLE: I think what was most persuasive for me was actually hearing, I shouldn't say actually was hearing from Aracely, was hearing from staff. The staff is difficult. They're challenging. I've been in those capacity interviews. I get sweaty. Those are difficult meetings. And I think that OCDE staff came together and really took a difficult look and a hard long look at this, that they're not shy about recommending denial.

And in this case, they didn't. And so, I actually felt a boost of confidence in seeing their staff report and knowing again that Aracely is not going to sign her team up to do work that's not possible to do. I'm a little nervous about what the MOU would look like, what kind of or else's are in there. But look, I don't like the messy ones either. I don't like coming here to beg you and to say, we promise. We promise, we promise. I don't want to be a part of that either. And so, I think that we are all collectively, I think what you're seeing is all of us collectively trying to put our arms around this and saying, let's give it a shot. If it's clear that we're not going to get off the starting block in the first year, I would hope that there would be the self-reflection on that.

WILLIAMS: Dr. Bean, you've been so quiet, can you help this board? Can you give us insight?

BEAN: Yeah, I mean, the insight that I would give you is my staff's report. I was in the capacity meeting. I listened to the answers. I've read the staff report, and I am behind my staff's report.

BARKE: I would like to make a motion if you're ready to entertain it. I don't want to cut off discussion if you want more, but I am ready to make a motion.

WILLIAMS: Well, you can make a motion, okay, so point of parliamentary procedure. If you make a motion, it has to be seconded and then it goes into discussion.

BARKE: Yes.

WILLIAMS: Okay. So, you know that?

BARKE: That's okay. Yeah. So, I'd like to make a motion in line with our staff recommendations. I'd like to approve it with conditions and whatever our team feels is necessary. I know Aracely is expert in that. As long as you are agreeable to the MOU, I would like to make that recommendation or that motion.

WILLIAMS: So, your making—so just for clarification...

BARKE: It's number two is what I'm...

WILLIAMS: Right. You're making the motion for option number two, and those are conditions. So, there's a motion on the floor. It needs a second to continue. Without the—actually I'm going to second it because I want discussion.

BARKE: Thank you.

WILLIAMS: I want discussion, not that I'm going to vote for it.

BARKE: That's fine.

WILLIAMS: Okay. So, this is a point of parliamentary order that we've adopted. You have a motion to second, and that carries on the conversation. So, the motion on the floor is to accept and approve this charter with the options on number two. Now, Aracely, I do have questions regarding option number two. If you can help explain that now that we have a motion. So, option number two includes conditions.

CHASTAIN: Option number two...

WILLIAMS: What are those conditions?

CHASTAIN: Option number two approves the petition, and part of that approval is that they will enter into an MOU with conditions to address the staff report. As you know, that MOU gets negotiated between all parties that are involved. And so that's what will be brought back to the board once that's been negotiated.

WILLIAMS: Okay. So that's where Dr. Bean, you're going to come into this. You've been a charter school leader for many decades. I consider an expert in charter schools. Are you going to be present and know about this and participate in it on behalf of the board?

BEAN: Yes. We have fiduciary responsibility to be present as a staff and make sure that this particular organization meets its conditions.

WILLIAMS: Okay. Could you give me an example of a condition Aracely that we would be facing or they would be facing?

CHASTAIN: Sure. The one that comes to mind is we would ask them for a board approved special education plan that outlines their entire special education program. We would ask for the same thing and an EL master plan, which would tell us how they're going to reclassify students. We would be collecting an LCAP that tells us what their plans are for their kids and how they're going to be spending their money. So those are just some of the easy ones that I'm thinking of. And we probably have a few more that are going to be a little bit more difficult, which is making sure that they have the appropriate staffing in place with appropriate credentials in all areas and where we're concerned. So being fully staffed before they start having all of those programs in place. And so those are some of the things that would address the issues that we have in the staff

report. And then on top of that, they'll be doing the regular things that they need to do in order to open a school, get their food vendors in place, find the facilities. Doing all of that is also part of our oversight in that first zero year.

WILLIAMS: What happens if they do not have a facility identified by the end of one year?

CHASTAIN: We've had that happen quite often recently. They can put off opening for another year. And then, as you know, we even had Explore Academy that put off opening for three years because they couldn't find a facility. So that is something that has been allowable through OCDE, and they are able to do, if they are not able to open a facility, it becomes expensive to not be able to get a facility. You have folks working. And so, at that point, you really, if you can't find a facility by year two, you should be definitely making a decision as to whether this is even a feasible charter.

WILLIAMS: Let's say we approve them, they get a number from the state, they start now lining up their vendors, they start lining up their funders. How does that money get accounted for? Is there a process for a fiscal responsibility and oversight on that?

CHASTAIN: There is. And they do start accounting. They start doing their fiscal reporting and everything right away. Well, not without kids, but because they're not receiving any ADA yet, but not exactly the person to talk to about how finances happen in that first year.

WILLIAMS: But that happens right?

CHASTAIN: But it does happen. And a lot of the folks who work with charter schools understand the way financing happens. And so, some payments are deferred, some different things can happen, but a school is given startup funds and they are able to, and I'm thinking probably Delano can answer this a little better than I'm fumbling through it right now. See, as he taps me right here.

DELANO: I dying to help you out of it.

CHASTAIN: Thank you.

DELANO: So, in that first year, that planning year, we would submit a multi-year budget with a planning year budget included in there. So, what you would see would be that first year would be inclusive of all our grants and outside of ADA funding and all our expenditures related to that in that, help me here. This would be '25-'26. And then '26-'27 would include ADA derived from students.

WILLIAMS: What are you going to do to guarantee there's no embezzlement and that we don't have a Magnolia School District problem? You know what happened there, right?

DELANO: No, I'm not familiar with Magnolia.

WILLIAMS: Okay. Magnolia School District had about \$17 million taken by an administrator that was embezzled. What are the checks and balances? What are the securities that the funds get properly transferred back and forth and there's no finagling of funds?

DELANO: So, I pride myself on keeping my name out of the newspaper.

WILLIAMS: And jail incarceration is not nice.

DELANO: So, my company, we have checks and balances and fiscal policies that we adhere to from top to bottom. No one single person can authorize transactions or checks to be written without approvals and things like that.

WILLIAMS: So, you're going to have two people signing checks?

DELANO: Absolutely.

WILLIAMS: Who's going to sign?

DELANO: All this will be predicated via their fiscal policy. And that will be developed. And we obviously have templates for those things that we provide for guidance and things like that. For best practices, normally what we'll do is we'll start with FCMAT Charter School's Guide on Fiscal Practices. And usually that's what I have most of my new clients to read as a how to get to know how. And then from there we'll develop their fiscal policy that will be tailored to their board's specific requirements. And then from there we will adhere, obviously it'll be voted upon. The charter school's office here will get a copy of that as well. And I can guarantee you that in my almost 20 years of doing this, I've never had one administrator as much as been accused of taking one penny, let alone a nickel.

HENDRICK: Can I just add one thing just for clarification? If you do approve with conditions, you are approving the charter though, and so even if they don't meet the MOU, you can't—you'd have to still go through the revocation process. So, I just want to make that clear. Okay. Because I thought maybe people wouldn't understand, well if they don't meet their conditions, we can close them. You'd still have to go through the revocation process to do that.

SPARKS: So, can I ask you a question related, so if we were at this stage to deny it because we just feel it's not operationally viable or financially viable as presented, would they be able to work on all these things and come back later when all these i's are dotted and t's are crossed of concern?

HENDRICK: Yes. Every charter has that option? Yes.

SPARKS: Okay, thank you.

BARKE: Yes. Jennifer?

JENNIFER: I just want to add to something you just said. Oh, sorry. In terms of the fiscal, maybe if there's fiscal concerns, the funding that they will receive, the potential funding that's on the table happens after an approval. Right? So, they would never be able to rectify that necessarily unless they have the approval because that's when they would—we have a funder who's in place, those kinds of things. The other thing I just wanted to add is I don't feel like I do my job if somebody feels like I have to be by their side on site every day. My job is to build people's capacity. It's to build their understanding. It's to get the right people on the bus. It's not

for me to be there every day. So that is going to be my role from now until they open to get all the right people hired to get all the right structures in place so that whoever's leading the school can have that oversight and support that and empower the teachers, empower the site administrators, empower the staff that's there to do that work. So, I just wanted to add that I don't feel like I as a person with a lot of experience and a lot of insight on special education and charter schools together would need to be there every day if I'm doing my job right.

WILLIAMS: Aracely, do we have to make a decision tonight or can we put this off in 30 days? What's that timeline like?

CHASTAIN: In order to extend the deadline, you would've had to request that from, and there be agreement between the charter school and the board for an extension of the deadline and that can be extended to the 120 days, which right now, I don't know what that date would be on the calendar. It's 120 days from when they submitted their petition.

WILLIAMS: Okay, so we're like 90.

CHASTAIN: We're beyond 90.

WILLIAMS: We're beyond 90.

CHASTAIN: They've already, yeah, I believe we're beyond 90.

SPARKS: And if we were to do option three, deny, is there some sort of appeal process to that?

CHASTAIN: They can appeal to the state? Yes.

SPARKS: How does that work?

CHASTAIN: The appeal process to the state? They would submit, they have 30 days to submit their petition to the state and the state would then review for any abuse of discretion taking into account all the information that we would give them as well as what the school would give them.

WILLIAMS: Okay. Thank you. Okay. Board, you're looking at real life drama. This isn't the theatre. This is a real serious thing and we take our job and duty responsibilities very serious here, and this has probably been one of the most difficult charter decisions that we've ever had to make. We do have, just for the point of order, we do have a motion and a second, I second it to continue the discussion. I'm done with my questions. Is there any of my boards Tim out there? Lisa, Jorge. Okay. So, then what I'm going to do is call the question, we have a motion and a second and the motion is to approve option number two. Yeah, option number two. Okay. Roll call.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: No.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: No.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: No.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: No.

WILLIAMS: Motion fails. 1-4. We will take a 10-minute break. Thank you very much.

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

WILLIAMS: We need to take one more vote here. May I have a motion for the next vote. I have a motion.

VALDES: I have a motion to deny the charter. Option three.

WILLIAMS: Okay. We have a motion to deny the charter by adopting number three. I will second that. Any further discussion? Bar none. We'll take a vote. Darou.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: No.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

WILLIAMS: Motion passes. We will take a 10-minute break.

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

WILLIAMS: Okay. Wow, about 7:20 for the record. We're moving on to item number 14, which is a charter school public hearing for Compass Charter Schools of Santa Ana. Aracely. You have the dais.

CHASTAIN: The board will now hold a hearing to consider public input regarding the charter petition appeals submitted by Compass Charter Schools on February 25th after denial by the Santa Ana Unified School District governing board, the charter school proposes to operate an independent study program serving students in transitional kindergarten through grade eight for a charter term from 2025 to 2030. The charter school operates one resource center in Santa Ana. I want to provide the board with some relevant background prior to the public hearing. Compass Charter Schools is currently authorized by Mountain Empire Unified School District in East San Diego County. The Santa Ana Resource Center was opened by Compass Charter Schools in August of 2017. As you know, there is a moratorium on new non-classroom based charter schools currently in effect until January 1 of 2026. However, Compass Charter Schools submitted a petition for a continuing charter school pursuant to a carve out an education code that went into effect in January of 2020 for charter schools that were providing educational services prior to October of 2019. Before public comments, Compass Charter Schools and Santa Ana Unified school district representatives are allotted 15 minutes each. To address the board, I now call representatives from Compass Charter Schools to the podium.

ELIZABETH: Thank you. Thank you. Good evening. How do I start the PowerPoint? Will it go? Oh, there it is. Okay. Thank you so much, superintendent, president, vice president and board members. I truly appreciate you taking the time to hear our petition tonight. My name is Elizabeth Brenner and I am the superintendent of Compass Charter Schools. I started with them in January of 2023. I have over 25 years of experience in charter schools working all the way from a teacher to administrator and now a superintendent. And I'm very proud to be here tonight with my staff and our families and scholars. So, we are excited to share with you our school.

I also have some of my leadership team here tonight, my director of operations, our back office provider, one of the representatives and also our leader of the school who we call them coordinators, which she's like our principal. So, they are with us tonight as well as most of our teaching staff. So, Aracely did a great job of framing this unique situation that we are in. So, we've been operating within the Santa Ana Unified boundaries, this Learning Center. And when I came to Compass as their superintendent, the first thing that I did was I reached out to the superintendent of Santa Ana because the first option we had was to get permission from the district to just stay and we could have continued to be under the Mountain Empire Charter and operating within the district. So, I reached out, we asked for approval, they did send a team to our school, we got to share our program and they asked a lot of really good questions and they decided at that time not to allow us to continue in the district.

And so, then our next step was to apply to be—a charter petition to Santa Ana. That petition is the same petition that we sent to Mountain Empire and then we had to just resubmit it to Santa Ana as the Learning Center and then they denied us. And now we have brought that same petition to you. And I just say that to give some background because what I'm doing tonight is really addressing some of the concerns that the Santa Ana Unified School District had. And it is very challenging because a lot of what's in the petition is the San Diego Charter and the Learning Center, the Orange County Learning Center was a Learning Center under that charter. And so, I'll be speaking really specifically to the Learning Center and it's operation and our families and what they are doing. So, the first finding that Santa Ana brought up was that the petition that we submitted did not meet the requirements, did not contain the required elements. And I would push back that this charter was approved by Mountain Empire. We actually have been approved by them for another five years of operation as of June, 2025. The Orange County Learning Center will no longer be able to be under that, so they are not included in that renewal. And so that's why we need to be approved as a separate charter.

One of the things that they brought up was our designation as a middle track school. The San Diego Charter is a middle track school. You can look it up on the CDE website. We did meet those requirements. The Orange County Learning Center on its own doesn't have any track because it's a Learning Center that was under that school. So, what we did was we actually pulled out the data. We use a third-party vendor called Parsec and they are experts in analyzing school data. So, they were able to actually disaggregate all of the scores from our scholars at our Learning Center. And they provided us, and I'm sorry, this chart has a lot of bars and they're kind of small, but this is our math state scores for the first one is the Learning Center compared to Santa Ana Unified and then also the state of California for the last three years.

And the blue bars are bad, so you want to have more of the yellow and green. And if you look at our scores, we outperform the state and the district year after year and we are a TK to eight school. So, it's only those grade levels that are tested. We have a 100% participation rate. And so, year over year our scholars do very well in math and in English. And so, we know that if we are approved that we will continue to have that high level of success and we believe that we will as a standalone actually be a high track school. We have a 0% suspension rate and 0% chronic absenteeism and very high scores. And so, we take our education very seriously and I think if approved, we will actually be a high performing charter school on our own. Some of the other areas that Santa Ana recognized where we need to grow is one was the curriculum.

And this is really, it's challenging for I think people that aren't familiar with charter schools and personalized learning and school choice to look at our program and kind of see where it fits in the educational realm. So, we offer a lot of curriculum and all of it is vetted by our professional staff. They make sure that it meets the standards and all of our credentialed professional teachers work with our parents and they determine what curriculum is going to be right for that scholar at that time. So, an English curriculum might work really well for a scholar, but the same math curriculum by that publisher does not fit that scholar's needs. And so, our parents and teachers are able to work together to truly create that personalized environment. So, we do have approved curriculum, it's a lot and we work with our parents to give them that choice.

Our instructional design, again, we are a personalized learning model. Our scholars come to our Learning Center twice a week. We are at the first Presbyterian Church of Santa Ana. And so,

when they are there, they are learning their science and social studies from their teachers, they're doing their enrichment and it looks like a traditional school day. And then the other three days a week they are working with their parents who we call their learning coaches and getting that support in English and math at home. And so again, it's very personalized. It looks different for every single one of these scholars. Because you know they all look different and they learn in different ways and we also have the engagement activities online and in person and so they have opportunity to be in Zoom. We have scholar clubs. We have a lot of different ways that they can interact with their education.

And just a couple of highlights here, some of the things we do, science fairs, book clubs, field trips, all the things that you would expect to see in a more traditional school. We are able to have at our school. Our teachers are all qualified. They all have current teaching credentials. We have already met the renewal requirements for the early education teachers. They actually went through the San Diego County Office of Ed program and they've all been certified. We maintain very low scholar to teacher ratios in all of our grade levels and we meet the needs of all scholars. And this is another thing that the district brought up that we want to be really clear that we serve all scholars and Compass as an organization actually currently supports three charter schools, but it looks like one, we have to have separate charters because of the different laws around geographic boundaries.

The OCLC charter will be supported by Compass like it has always been. So even though it will be on its own in a charter, they have all the support of our counselors, our special education staff. We have tutors for our English-Language Learners and for scholars that are struggling, they have support with professional learning. So, all of that will continue as if they didn't change, even though they'll be chartered separately. Part of that is our MTSS support system. We use Renaissance Learning as our internal benchmark and we evaluate our scholars. We make sure that they are making adequate progress in getting the standards and moving into their different grade levels and if they need support, again, we have those additional supports that are built in and sometimes it's social emotional, sometimes it's academic, whatever they need that is provided at the school site and also through the support that we provide as an organization, we do have scholars with special needs.

We make accommodations for them. We have IEP meetings, we have credentialed education specialists that are assigned to them as well as all of the services. So, if they need speech and language, if they need occupational therapy, whatever that is we contract, that can be in their home, it could be at a center, sometimes it's online depending on what the needs are. But we absolutely provide all of those services. This is just a breakdown of our enrollment by race and ethnicity. We do have a diverse scholar population and then also our socioeconomically disadvantaged scholars. And so, we do have those scholars in our population. We are serving everyone who comes to us. We have orientations or open houses once a month and anyone from the community can come and be part of our school. Just another highlight of one of the ways that we actually work in the community is that many of our families have actually participated in raising money for a local organization called Olive Crest.

And those families, some of them have also fostered or adopted children from this local agency. And you can see we've also raised money for different causes in the community, including the LA wildfires, just some pictures of our families that have foster and adoptive children. One of

the other concerns that the district brought up was that we would not be able to successfully implement the program. I would argue we've been operating successfully since 2017. We did submit a budget that is separate, that is based just on the enrollment at the school. We're currently at 175 scholars, 171 of them live in Orange County. So, we're predominantly Orange County and our budget is based on a 5% growth year over year. Another way that I would measure the fact that we've been successful is that 100% of our scholars who have graduated from our eighth grade program since 2017 have graduated from high school and that is amazing. So, we only have the three years because it's only been since 2017, but a hundred percent have graduated from high school, not necessarily with Compass. They go to lots of different schools and 100% of our current eighth grade scholars are attending high school and have remained successful in high school.

I don't need to speak too much to this, thank goodness because Aracely did such a good job of just saying this is a continuing charter. I understand it's a unique situation, but this is why we are here and we are very hopeful that we will be able to be a charter under the county office. Just some quotes from our parents and during public comment you will get to hear much more from them. So, we don't need to stay on that for too long, but I just want to thank you and again, we are looking forward to working with you and we are hoping to receive a five-year approval for our school. Thank you.

CHASTAIN: I don't believe representatives from Santa Ana Unified made it to the meeting. Is anyone here from Santa Ana Unified? The hearing is now open for 15 minutes of public comments. Trustee Barke, please call for the first speaker.

BARKE: Yes, we have 15 speakers again, so we'll allow a minute each. I'll tell you who's up and who's on deck. Antonio Novella. Novella is first and following him is Katie Novella.

ANTONIO: It's kind of scary up here.

BARKE: Don't be scared we don't bite.

SPARKS: Yeah.

ANTONIO: Hi everyone. I'm Antonio. I'm a freshman at VP and I'm alumni from Compass. And I just wanted to say that Compass is an amazing school and it really set me on track to being honors in AP classes at Villa Park and most of my friends ended up also being in honors in AP classes or going to OCSA or Schools of the Arts. And Compass offers a lot of really cool things like for field trips you get to go to Catalina or you get to go on a ton of different field trips for history and since it's only two days a week, it's really like—one sec. So, on Tuesdays and Thursdays it's like history, science and then your elective and the classes are longer so you spend more time on each subject so everyone really understands and if you don't end up understanding, the teachers are more than happy to help you understand and help you get the education that you need. So yeah. Thank you.

BARKE: Following Katie will be Linda Larson.

KATIE: Hi, I am Katie Novella and that's my oldest. I have three kids that go to OCLC. We've actually been with them for nine years. They were with another charter before Compass took over and my kids really love the hybrid program where they get to go in person and really dive in and do a lot of hands-on activities and programs. We love that they're smaller class sizes and the ability to have time at home for extra time on assignments for reading and math has been really helpful for my kids because doing those assignments in class can be distracting and they might have a hard time focusing versus at home it's a lot quieter. So, it's been a really great program for us. We are also an adoptive family and so I love that I get to spend more time with my kids and give them the individual support that they need. And my daughter also has an IEP and we have always been very pleased with the services that she's got and she's made tremendous progress and gets help in the classroom and with additional services, so thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. Following Linda will be Blaire going.

LINDA: Good evening. My name is Linda Larson and I am honored to serve as a coordinator and the principal of this amazing program with these amazing scholars. Before I stepped into this role, I was a proud parent of this program. All four of my children went through this program, all four of them with completely different learning styles and this program was able to cater to exactly what they needed. Compass is a true hybrid model, so we do history and science on campus and we believe that's the best way history and science can be taught, whether it's hands-on labs or discussions in history. It's really a rich environment that serves itself best in that classroom environment, whereas language arts and math work best at their individual level where they need to be can be met where they need. If they are soaring and can challenge themselves, we allow that to happen. If they need more support, then that also is something that we do. All of the teachers that are at the OCLC, their classroom teachers. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. Following Blaire will be Micah and Nova.

BLAIRE: Hi, my name is Blaire Going. I'm nervous and I think that's a reflection of how important this is to me. With my son's permission, I'm going to share a bit of his story. This letter is in the packet that you received. I'm going to be sharing an abbreviated version and I'm going to be reading really fast. Our son Sawyer was enrolled in a traditional public brick and mortar school for transitional kindergarten and kindergarten. He was quickly identified as a struggling learner. He was five years old and rapidly following further and further behind as his classmates soldiered ahead. I didn't know exactly what was wrong, but I had suspicions based on our family history that he might have dyslexia. Our school was uninterested and unable to explore this diagnosis with us and instead suggested additional tutoring and more work to be completed at home and we struggled to follow their suggestions and he made minimal progress. Like many families during COVID, we were allowed a different way of schooling and this meant one-on-one instruction at home with Sawyer for the first time, he began to make progress and we were thrilled, but he would have to go back to school eventually. Oh, that went by so fast. He's soaring and he's reading way above grade level now and he's doing amazing.

BARKE: Thank you. Next, we have Micah and Nova, and then following them we have Lauren Suggett.

MICAH: Hello. Hi, my name's Micah. I'm in fifth grade and I go to school at Compass. I think. Sorry, I think my school is excellent.

SPARKS: You're doing great. You're doing fantastic.

BARKE: Where's Nova? Is Nova supposed to be up there with you? Is Nova missing?

VALDES: Can we give her more time?

WILLIAMS: Absolutely.

BARKE: Oh, okay.

LAUREN: Do you want me to read it for you? Okay.

MICAH: If I could pick, sorry.

LAUREN: You okay? Take a deep breath.

MICAH: If I could pick just one thing that my school is great at, it would be the teachers teaching. Almost every day I learn something new and fun. They also helped me to, sorry. They also help me to pass my confidence zone and do better in my subjects and achieve more. Those are some reasons why I hope I'll get to learn in the same way I did this year, at least for a few more years. I wonder, sorry. I would love to keep going to the school. I cherish Compass the school that excels in all ways. Can I speak for my sister?

BARKE: If you feel like it?

WILLIAMS: Yeah. Please do.

MICAH: She's in kindergarten and if she were here I know that she would say, I love this school and I have a lot of new friends that I have been able to have this year. I love learning about the and I love learning about the world. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you so much. That was very brave.

SPARKS: Great job.

BARKE: You did a great job.

SPARKS: Tomorrow will be more fun than today.

LAUREN: All right, good evening. My name is Lauren Suggett or Mrs. Suggett. I am one of Micah's teachers. I am the fourth and fifth grade history teacher at OCLC. I'm a credentialed teacher. I've taught for 15 years, including the past four years at the OCLC, at the OCLC, all of our teachers are credentialed professionals who collaborate and develop standard aligned lessons that meet the diverse needs of our scholars. We work as a team to create a nurturing environment where students are encouraged to think critically and develop a genuine love of learning.

Additionally, we work closely with parents or learning coaches to select and pace the curriculum best suited for their scholars, providing guidance on various of teaching methods to ensure success. This hybrid independent study program is truly specialized because it offers families the flexibility to personalize their educational experience while feeling fully supported and connected. I wholeheartedly believe in this program, there is nothing like it elsewhere. It empowers scholars to thrive in ways that suit them next.

HENDRICK: I'm sorry, your time is up.

LAUREN: Okay.

BARKE: Next we have Truett followed by Silas.

TRUETT: Hello everyone. My name is Truett Houlton and I've been attending Compass for I think eight years now, which is over half my life, which kind of insane, but I really love the hybrid learning style at Compass because on Tuesdays and Thursdays I get to see my friends socialize and like really enjoy that time with my friends while also still learning, but at home I get to work at my own pace. I'm not great at math, so it helps me to work at my own pace so I can get back to where I need to be. And I also really like reading and writing, so the hybrid learning style has really helped me excel in that and it also helps me to do my many hobbies. Right now, me and my siblings are doing a pottery class and I also do various things at home such as solving Rubik's Cube. Thank you. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. We have Silas Next, followed by Oliver.

SILAS: Hello, my name is Silas and now I've been going to Compass for seven years I think, and it's the only school I've gone to, but I think it's the perfect school for me. One thing that I really love about Compass is that if you have trouble with anything, the teachers are able to help you. A good example of this is that a couple years ago I had some speech problems and my mom told my teachers and they were able to find a good speech program and they had check-ins with me and now I can speak fine. I really love the hybrid program because at home I am able to work at my own pace while still meeting standards. I can slow down just a little bit if I'm having trouble with something and be able to catch up later or if I'm doing better at something, I'm able to go ahead. Thanks.

BARKE: Thank you, Silas. Next, we have Oliver followed by Dottie and you spoke very well Silas.

OLIVER: Hi, my name is Ollie and I have been attending Compass for I think it's been eight years. It's an amazing school for a couple of reasons. One the half independent studies, half in person school gives us many opportunities to do amazing things outside of the classroom. Not only are we doing typical math and language arts at home, but being at home allows us to learn in unique ways. I've enjoyed learning how to recognize patterns through Rubik's Cubes, study local plant life on hikes, doing book clubs with friends and learning instruments throughout the day. Another thing I love about Compass is that the small number of students lets us get to know the teachers and our fellow classmates better. I've gotten to know my teachers on a deeper level and because of this they know how the class learns best and can modify lesson plans based on

that. Among the students this small community lets us know everyone better, not just a small group of friends. Lastly, I love our school's unique style of learning. Our classes are very project based, which is amazing because that's how a lot of our classmates learn best in class. We have Socratic seminars, labs, and science group projects in both science fairs and history festivals. It really makes it fun to discuss what you're learning with your peers. Thank you for considering making space of all kinds of learning in our area.

BARKE: Thank you. Next, we have Dottie, followed by Anna.

DOTTIE: Hi, my name is Dottie Holladay and I've been attending Compass for three years and I'm in fourth grade. Every week I look forward to going to school. I love seeing my friends and teachers who are always there for me. At OCLC, there are so many cool traditions like the history festival or the science fair that are so much fun. We get to dress up and get to teach every grade about a topic. Before I went to OCLC, I had no friends because I had just moved to California, but it was not hard to make them. Every adult at OCLC worked so hard for the students to have the best experience possible. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. Next, we have Anna followed by Blake.

ANNA: I've tried every type of schooling, public, private, fully online, fully in person. You name it, I've done it, but OCLC is what works best for me. Hello, my name is Anna Holladay. I'm an eighth grade at Compass Charter School and I'm also neurodivergent. I have ADHD and dyscalculia, which is a math disability. This means traditional classrooms don't always work for me. Sometimes in the middle of a lecture, my brain will just decide that it's not listening anymore. In geometry class, my worst nightmare. Compass is the perfect environment because it lets me play to my strengths like English and history with teachers who love going deep into discussions with me. At the same time, I can go at my own pace in math and have an in-person teacher guide me through science. While Compass may not be for everybody, it provides a space for those of us who learn differently. Thank you.

BARKE: After Blake, we have Emily.

BLAKE: Good evening. My name is Blake Flattley and I've got three daughters at OCLC. And for us it's been a great place of public independent study. It's provided both structure and flexibility, allowing our children to thrive academically. During STAR testing, my third and fifth graders, they scored above their grade level while my first grader, scored below and needed some reading intervention. And thanks to guidance of her OCLC classroom teacher and the resources provided by Compass Charter, my wife and I were able to give her the one-on-one attention she needed and by midyear she was already scoring above grade level in reading. The hybrid model provided by OCLC has given our family the ability to focus on academic mastery while also prioritizing our children's socio-emotional wellbeing. And there are so many people in this room who you can see how it's really impacted their lives and I have a whole lot more to say, but I'll leave it there. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you. Following Emily, we have Christine and then Janelle is last.

EMILY: Hi, I'm Emily Pennington. This is our fourth year at OCLC. Honestly, we didn't know what we were in for when we signed up, but now we are huge advocates of a hybrid education. I honestly think our family and friends get tired of hearing about it, but it's true. Our daughters are thriving in independent study and they also get the school experience, the teachers, the recess, the academic learning and subjects that are so much richer with other people and we get the gift of partnering with the most phenomenal staff who work so diligently to ensure that our kids are not only progressing, but thriving both at home and on campus. The one thing that you have to come to understand tonight is that this little school is not just adequately getting by. It is thriving. The staff and teachers are thriving, the parents are thriving, the students are thriving, and all the data only gets to prove what only proves that we get to experience on a daily basis. One thing that hasn't been mentioned is all the students study the same thing at the same time, and so our kids come home talking about things together with each other and it's such a rich experience. I could go on and on. The hybrid movement is growing and the OCLC is already well positioned to set the standard for other hybrid schools I know will make you proud.

BARKE: Thank you.

CHRISTINE: Thank you for taking the time to learn about our school. I know it seems like a foreign concept to understand a hybrid school two days on campus and three days doing independent study at home. You may wonder how that can work, but I'm here to attest it does work and it works so well. I have two children currently attending OCLC and I have two older children that attended OCLC. The older two went on to excel in high school after attending through eighth year, the oldest excelled in sports captain of his football team, AP classes and graduated with above 4.0 and is in university out of state on full academic scholarship. The next one is in high school, presently is in a varsity sport, honors classes on speech and debate and coaches the junior high speech and debate at his school. He also has an above 4.0 GPA and he just got elected as vice president for the next coming year for his school. I just want to let you understand a little more about what this education model helps to produce. Thank you.

WILLIAMS: Is that it?

BARKE: Janelle.

JANELLE: Good evening again. Dr. Williams, board president, board members, Dr. Bean, superintendent. My name is Janelle Ruley. I'm with legal counsel for Compass and really proud to be here tonight. And in a total rookie move, I planned a whole thesis dissertation for you on what a continuing charter school is and now I've got about 45 seconds. So, what I would like to express, I think your staff talked about it. I think the school talked about it a little bit. The reason that Compass is here before you is because the law changed. So, it used to be okay for a charter school to be authorized by District A and have a facility in District B that is no longer now allowed under the law. The legislature in its wisdom gave schools an off-ramp from that program, and so you can essentially continue to do that up until the time that you come up for renewal.

Compass San Diego, as you heard, was up for renewal this year. Their term expires or would have expired in June of '25, but it's been renewed. So, we are here as a continuing charter school. So, a learning center that has already existed that is now proposed to be its own standalone

school. It's got its own budget. It would if you approve it, have its own CDS code, generate its own test scores and everything on the Dashboard, all of that. I see that you stopped the time, which is very generous, but I also want to respect the board's time here.

VALDES: I wanted to hear this, so I asked Darou to stop the timer, so Janelle, go ahead.

JANELLE: Sure, thank you. Yeah. So, I will give you just a brief history lesson. In the mid-2010s, there was a lawsuit up in Shasta County where somebody was alleging that a charter school was basically improperly located. There was a ruling in that litigation that was not favorable for the charter school, but of course that was in Shasta County and we're here down in Orange County, so it wasn't clearly statewide applicable. The legislature as part of Assembly Bill 1505, Assembly Bill 1507, you've probably heard of these over the years. This was part of what they changed. So, they changed all of the renewal criteria. They changed how a charter school gets approved. They added new reasons a charter can be denied and they also changed the law to say no charter school, not a classroom-based school, not a non-classroom based school. No charter school can have a facility operated outside of the district where it's either authorized or where it originally applied for a charter and then ended up on appeal.

So, no charter school can have a facility outside of their district and they gave us an off ramp. So essentially you could keep doing that up until the time of your renewal. And then at renewal you can first ask for permission. So, I think this is probably the first time we've done this in Orange County. I've done it a couple times in Riverside County and probably a handful of times up North. But you asked for permission of the school district where you happen to be located. They could say yes. And if they said yes, if Santa Ana had said yes, we wouldn't be here tonight. And essentially Compass San Diego would continue to be authorized in Mountain Empire with a facility here. All of these families would still have their access. Santa Ana did not say yes, other districts do maybe 50/50, half of them say yes and half of them say no.

Santa Ana said no. And so, what we did was to create a continuing charter. The last thing I'll say, the overlay here that Aracely mentioned as well, there's a moratorium, there's a prohibition on new non-classroom based schools as of right now, that set to expire January 1 of '26. So, we've got eight more months of that of the moratorium. But this is not a new non-classroom based school. This is a specific carve out that the legislature gave charter schools situated like Compass basically because if they didn't, it would've killed quite a number of charter schools because they wouldn't, non-classroom based schools wouldn't have been able to open in that way. So, I really appreciate the extra time. I'm certainly happy to answer any questions now or next month or talk with your council. Happy to do any of it, but thank you for the extra time.

BARKE: Thank you.

CHASTAIN: The public hearing is now concluded. The Orange County Board of Education staff recommendations, including recommended findings will be published by May 20th. At the June 4th meeting, the board will conduct a public hearing to take action to grant or deny the charter petition appeal. President Williams, I now close the public hearing and return the meeting to you.

WILLIAMS: Okay. So, we're going to continue with under item 14 with board questions. Jorge, do you have any more board questions? If you want to ask Janelle, I would be in favor of that.

VALDES: Not for Janelle. I think it's either Dr. Brenner or Mrs. Brenner. Mrs. Brenner. So, you are the superintendent of Compass. How many students overall does Compass have?

ELIZABETH: About 2,400.

VALDES: And so, this school is 175 serving 170 kids already based in Orange County.

ELIZABETH: Yes.

VALDES: Right. And you asked Santa Ana to continue and they said no.

ELIZABETH: Correct.

VALDES: So basically 175 kids in Orange County were told go figure it out.

ELIZABETH: Correct.

VALDES: Okay. How many teachers are on site?

ELIZABETH: 10.

VALDES: And so, it's a hybrid model and I think the classes are Tuesday, Thursday at a church?

ELIZABETH: Yes.

VALDES: Right. Does everyone show up on Tuesday and Thursday or is it staggered like Monday, Wednesday, Tuesday, Thursday?

ELIZABETH: Everyone comes on Tuesday and Thursday.

VALDES: So, you have all 175 kids onsite at the same time?

ELIZABETH: Yes. I'll say it's a church that was built like a school. I mean it's full, it's classrooms. They have a learning facility that we lease from them.

VALDES: Just curious, as a prior athlete, do you have any type of recreational or sports activities as part of the curriculum?

ELIZABETH: Yes. So, we actually have sports on center that are just fun games, but then for our scholars who want to participate in sports, they can do that through local vendors. So, if they want to take karate lessons or do any of those sports, they can do that. Now because they're in the lower grades. I'm not going to speak anymore. I know something else about high school, but it doesn't apply here because actually in high school they can play at other schools and you can have agreements, but this is just TK to eight.

VALDES: TK to eight. Okay. Well, very impressed with your presentation. That's what a presentation from a director should look like.

ELIZABETH: Thank you. I'm going to get emotional. My friend always says we have the gift of tears, but I will say I'm a charter school advocate as well. I do a lot of advocacy work and every five years we have to fight for our life. And when I see children having to stand up and beg for their school, it makes me, I'm sure I'm doing what I'm supposed to be doing. Okay. That is definitely true, but there's just something so broken about our system that we have to fight for a model that is...

VALDES: Well, Mrs. Brenner, I don't want to speak for my board, but I don't think you have to beg here.

ELIZABETH: I'm not. I am sorry. I'm just so moved by that child and I just thought, so thank you and thank you for hearing our petition and considering it truly, you have a difficult job and I appreciate the support that you offer.

SPARKS: Oh yeah. I wanted to just acknowledge all the wonderful kids who've been able to stay up. I'm so impressed with you guys. You've sat through this crazy meeting for hours and we really see you. Okay. We really see you and we appreciate you playing with your Rubik's Cubes, crawling around and just getting through the meeting. Okay. We really appreciate you and we see you and we thank you for being here.

BARKE: I would echo that. It's just so nice to see the community out and to see parents and teachers and students, and it says a lot about the school when you see these students that are really thriving and each one had a different story and I loved hearing about them. So, thank you everyone for coming out tonight. Because it has been an unusually long meeting, so thank you.

WILLIAMS: Tim.

SHAW: Yeah, I'm somebody who would agree with the premise that we shouldn't just have a one size fit all in education, that there can be interesting options like this hybrid model that's obviously been successful for so many students. So, I compliment your presentation as well, and everyone did a good job, but of course the students really stole the show in their comments. So, thank you for coming tonight.

WILLIAMS: Yeah. As you can see, you certainly have won our hearts. And Antonio, Katie, Micah, where are you? Micah, that was very touching. Your purity, your tears. They melt hearts. You've melt my heart. Truett, Silas, Ollie, Dottie, and just incredible amount of ability to get in front of the public with great confidence, speak in a public forum that is very intimidating. You all did it. You're all to be commended and we love you all. Thank you for coming here. Now, Elizabeth, it's your turn.

ELIZABETH: Okay, what else can I do for you?

WILLIAMS: I'm still having conceptual issues. So Compass Charter is from Mountain Center, is that right?

ELIZABETH: Mountain Empire.

WILLIAMS: Mountain Empire.

ELIZABETH: We are a public nonprofit that operates three charter schools. Majority are virtual. So, the Orange County Learning Center is the only actual Learning Center that we have in our network. So, I have a charter with Mountain Empire. I have one with Acton-Agua Dulce in Los Angeles, and one with Winters Joint Unified in Yolo. And those three charters allow us to serve scholars in those geographic areas. The law makes us have to get separate charters to serve in those separate areas. And so, I have teachers and counselors and all the support staff that serve those scholars in those areas.

WILLIAMS: Okay. So, you're the superintendent of Compass for all those three sites, is that right?

ELIZABETH: Correct.

WILLIAMS: And you have a total of 2,400 students?

ELIZABETH: Yes.

WILLIAMS: From all three of those sites. You have 175 here in Orange County. And that's, you referred yourself as the Orange County Learning Center?

ELIZABETH: Yes. We must have known. It's always been our name.

WILLIAMS: Okay.

ELIZABETH: It was meant to be.

WILLIAMS: It's a whole new concept for us. This is the first time that we've had anything like this. I'm truly impressed. You did a good job. But we're going to be learning of course, more about you as you go through the staff. You're going to like our staff. Don't be intimidated by Dr. Bean. He really is a nice guy.

ELIZABETH: Thank you. I do want to really thank the staff too. Aracely and her team have been great to work with and we delivered our binders of tons of paper and all of that, but it's important. So, I appreciate the amount of work that it takes to review these charters and really be thorough, so I do appreciate that.

WILLIAMS: Okay. You're asking for a new charter to be approved, is that right?

ELIZABETH: Yes. It's technically a continuing charter, and I'm going to look at Janelle because it's a continuing charter, but it is a standalone, so it is a new charter.

JANELLE: We typically think of either a new charter or a renewal. And when the law changed, they invented this third category for continuing charters. So, you're not new and you're not

renewal. We don't have to prove up data. They have data, but we don't have to prove up data in order to be approved. But we're also not blocked from existing as a new non-classroom based.

WILLIAMS: Okay. If we approve you, then you fall under this Department?

JANELLE: The county, yes.

WILLIAMS: Okay. And you're trying to get the same thing for those other two schools, correct? Oh, it's just Orange County?

JANELLE: Yeah, they actually don't have to. So, the other two schools don't have physical resource centers. And so...

ELIZABETH: They're virtual.

JANELLE: They're all virtual.

WILLIAMS: I see.

JANELLE: So, the Yolo and Los Angeles don't have the same issue.

WILLIAMS: I see. Okay. Thank you. That's all the questions I have.

HENDRICK: Dr. Williams, as I said you have a very large packet here from the school of letters, support from parents, scholars, teachers committee members that we will copy and send to you at a later time. It's very heavy.

WILLIAMS: Very heavy. Any other questions for Jennifer or anybody else? Okay. Very well. This ends this portion. Thank you very much. We'll see you back next month.

ELIZABETH: Okay. Thank you again for your consideration.

WILLIAMS: Very good. What we'll do is we'll take a minute break if you want to leave. We're going to continue on with our business.

SPARKS: You don't want to stay and watch more paint dry. Thank you, families, for coming. Bye.

WILLIAMS: Thank you.

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

WILLIAMS: Okay, so let's move on with our meeting. We do have some staff recommendations. May I have a motion for item number 15?

BARKE: So moved.

SPARKS: Second.

WILLIAMS: Good. We have a motion and a second for Resolution 09-25. Just give me one moment here. Dr. Bean, do you want to give us a little bit of background?

BEAN: Sure. On 09-27?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

BEAN: Yeah, that's basically...

HENDRICK: I'm sorry, this one is...

BEAN: The Williams settlement...

HENDRICK: I'm sorry, Dr. Bean, this one is...

WILLIAMS: A Resolution 09-25.

HENDRICK: It's AB 1224.

WILLIAMS: 1224.

BEAN: Oh, 1224. Okay. I thought they just passed on. Okay. Gotcha. Yeah, 1224 basically because of teacher shortage Assembly Bill 1224 would address that by allowing the extension of a 30-day emergency sub to extend to 60 days. The 58 county superintendents have all lobbied whatever you call that when you go to Sacramento. And we went to all of our legislators asking that they would support this resolution. I support it as the county superintendent schools. I would hope that the Board of Education would join me on that.

WILLIAMS: Absolutely. Good. Any questions? More for our good superintendent? Barring none, this is a resolution. Darou.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

WILLIAMS: Good. Motion passes. 5-0. Moving on to item number 16. May I have a motion for item number 16.

BARKE: So moved.

SPARKS: Second.

WILLIAMS: We have a motion to second discussion. Dr. Bean, do you want to fill us in on this one?

BEAN: Yeah, just a summary of this one is that we are, the county superintendent schools is responsible for the Williams settlement, which basically we inspect all, well, not all facilities. We expect facilities within the list, the Williams settlement list. We also inspect curriculum or material and then teacher assignment all under that settlement. In a typical year or a typical cycle, each cycle is three years. Our list is about 30 sites, 30 sites. But because of the pandemic, that list grew because it's based on chronic absenteeism. So chronic absenteeism was greater during the pandemic. So now we're in the new cycle. And so that's going to include about four times more schools. We're looking about 120 that we need to actually inspect. This bill would then allow county superintendents to do these inspections within eight weeks instead of four weeks. And so again, another bill that we as the 58 county superintendents would obviously have you guys approved and the state legislators.

BARKE: Sounds reasonable to me.

WILLIAMS: Very good. Just a real quick note. So, Renee, you're going to send these resolutions to the author of the bill so they have it as part of their census building. That would be, Tom, you would let the legislators know that we approved and support these bills too?

TOM: You like me to speak?

WILLIAMS: Yes, please. Yeah. In essence, we're passing these bills approving and supporting these resolutions. They need to go someplace. Where do they go? They don't get deposited in U.S. mail. They go someplace.

TOM: So, Dr. Williams, once the board takes action on these resolutions, then that will trigger my firm to go ahead and create letters of support on behalf of the Orange County Board of Education. And then we will have those letters distributed far and wide in the legislature to the appropriate policy committee staff and members of the legislature that weigh in on education policy.

WILLIAMS: Good. Thank you. Just wanted to put that into the record. Very good. Okay, so we have a motion, a second. And are we ready for the roll call?

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

WILLIAMS: Good. Motion passes. 5-0. Moving on with our agenda number 17. I need a motion to approve the appointment of Renee Hendrick as a real estate property negotiator.

BARKE: So moved.

VALDES: Second.

WILLIAMS: Okay. A motion a second. Do we need any sort of background for the record on this, Dr. Bean or Renee?

BEAN: No, but you may want to read the whole motion as here.

WILLIAMS: Okay. To put into the record, this motion is for the approval of Renee Hendrick, who is our Deputy Superintendent of Instruction here to act as the negotiator for this property on behalf of the Board of Education. The property is the Argosy Building located at 601 South Lewis Street in Orange, California. And this particular piece of property that we're considering currently houses our ACCESS kids and programs as well as our administrative staff. This is something that we're beginning the process to look at for acquisition for our students and our Department here. I think that's adequate. Renee, anything else you add? Dr. Bean?

BEAN: No, that's perfect.

WILLIAMS: Okay. Very good.

VALDES: Negotiate well, Renee.

WILLIAMS: Okay. So, we have a motion a second. Any further discussion? Bar none, Darou.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: I'm actually going to abstain on this item.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

WILLIAMS: Very good. Motion passes 4 0 1. Moving on to item number 18, Resolution 11-25. May I have a motion for this?

BARKE: So moved.

SPARKS: Second.

WILLIAMS: Good. Motion and a second. Trustee Barke, anything that you want to give us some background on?

BARKE: Yeah, this is just in favor of fact, in favor of an upcoming run for our students. And it's something that we're supporting. I know our superintendent has discussed it with the districts. We have several over a hundred districts I know throughout California that, or throughout Orange County, sorry, that participate. And basically, what these kids do is the teachers are given a curriculum for their PE that they really love. And they run the first 25 miles during PE course all year. And then on the day of the run, which I believe is May 3rd, they run the final mile and they get their little marathon and they get a medal and a T-shirt. Sorry. It's really encouraging physical fitness and it just provides an alternative for PE for a lot of our children.

WILLIAMS: Okay. Where is this resolution going to go? Does it go to anybody in particular?

BARKE: We can provide it to the founder of the marathon, I think would probably be the best to do.

WILLIAMS: Okay.

BARKE: And Dr. Bean and I met with the founder and we're very impressed by the program, and I think our instructional team was very impressed as well.

WILLIAMS: Great. So Darou, you'll make sure it gets to that program then? Very good.

BARKE: If you get it to me, I can get it to them.

WILLIAMS: Okay.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

WILLIAMS: Great. Motion passes. 5-0, thank you. Presentation. We have Mr. Thomas Sheehy, who is our Sacramento representative up there as we follow the various bills that impact education in our children and their wellbeing.

ROLEN: With the board's indulgence. I want to provide some context for this item. The board has made many legislative struggles in the last few years. We have attracted a lot of attention in Sacramento and we have withstood the attacks and the architect of that defense is Mr. Sheehy, just by way of a feel-good story, we found out about AB 286 to move our board elections about two days before the hearing.

I got in the office at 7:00. I made calls to lobbyists till seven that evening. Mr. Sheehy picked up the phone and he said, give me two hours. I will come up with a strategy. He not only came up with a strategy, but that was a strategy we implemented in order to get the bill held in the suspense file. So, he became a full-time lobbyist for the board. We had some successes in maintaining communities of interest for the board in redistricting efforts. And the governor vetoed SB 907, yet another attempt to reconstitute the board. And Mr. Sheehy works with the board and myself in a legislative process that you're going to learn a little bit more about tonight. But he has been doing such good work with his lovely bride, Brena, that I wanted to acknowledge his work here publicly and let him contextualize our legislative process and make some recommendations to the board. So, thank you for that indulgence.

BARKE: Thank you.

TOM: Thank you very much. Please forgive me, I'm going to send a text message to the aforementioned Mrs. Sheehy, which I should have done to let her know that she can tune in now.

ROLEN: No, I never did that with my wife.

BARKE: Right.

TOM: Thank you, Dr. Bean. Trustee Sparks, President Williams, Vice President Ms. Barke and Mr. Valdes, thank you so much. It's such a great honor to be here today. I know it's been a long hearing, I promise I will not filibuster, but I do think it's helpful to have a little bit of background. Greg's comments were very kind. When I talked with him the first time he told me, he said, I think this is going to be quite a challenge. I said, I'm sure, let me get back to you. But really, even after doing my initial research, I didn't realize how challenging it was going to be, and quite frankly, if we didn't have such good support from the trustees that have served in the leadership positions here and on the legislative committee.

And from Mr. Rolen as general counsel, we may not have been able to do what we've done. We're three for three. So, for the baseball fans here on the dais, we're batting a thousand so far. We want to keep that average as high as we can. Just very quickly, so you know what our process is? We're a boutique firm. There's just four of us. There's two registered lobbyists. There's another consultant that does non-lobbying work, and then we have an admin. And the other registered lobbyist is my wife, Brena Sheehy. She's been a lobbyist now for five years. Her background was in sales and marketing in the medical industry before she got into lobbying. Brena and I, Brena does a very thorough job and we back each other up. We look at every single bill that's introduced and then we look at every amendment to every bill.

So, we spend a ridiculous amount of time on big computer screens looking at bills. It's made a little bit easier. We've got a really good database that we subscribe to, but the point is we look at everything, every bill that affects the education code we assign to the Orange County Board of Education. So, we create a running track list. Right now, there is 116 bills in print that affect the education code. Then what we do working with the legislative committee, which today that legislative committee is Vice President Mari Barke and Trustee Tim Shaw, who was assigned by Mr. Dr. Williams. We meet every two week or every two weeks or when we have fires going on, it seems like we have fires going on all the time. Now we'll meet ad hoc the subsequent weeks, so sometimes it's weekly and Brena and I go through all of the bills and the amendments and we come up with lists of bills for the legislative committee and Mr. Rolen to look at that we call priority bills.

These are bills that we think you might take particular interest in. For example, bills that make it harder to create a charter school or to renew a charter school or bills that might make it easier to create a charter school bills that change the process by how trustees on boards of education or superintendents get elected. Since you have to stand for election periodically, those things matter to you. We look at bills that affect education financing. We look at a whole variety of different things. Working with the legislative committee, we come up with what we feel would be recommendations to the full board here to consider for support or opposition of legislation. Sometimes these things come to us and smack us across the head and it's a very easy decision and sometimes they're a little bit more nuanced.

Very quickly. I will tell you that so far there have been 2,593 bills introduced since this session started in December of 2024. Okay, so in four months, the legislatures introduced 2,593 bills, 1,644 assembly bills 949 Senate bills, and as I mentioned a moment ago, as of April 2nd, today a total of 116 are being tracked actively for you. And of those 116, there's about 20 that are on the priority bill list. And out of those 20, there are four bills tonight that in consultation with the legislative committee and your general counsel, I think you're going to be asked to consider taking a position on similarly to what you did in just a moment ago. I apologize. I'm going to work with Ms. Hendrick here to get the format that will be most easy for you to look at in the future. Didn't have that nailed down for this meeting, but these things are pretty straightforward.

So, I thought what I could do is just very quickly run through what these are and then be happy to answer any questions that you have. And I'm going to save the most controversial one for last, if that's okay. So, the first bill that the legislative committee has considered making a recommendation to support is a bill by Assemblywoman Castillo. It is AB 600, AB 600 by Assemblywoman Castillo. Ms. Castillo is a freshman Republican from Southern California. She's one of two Republican members that flipped a Democrat seat in the last election, and she has introduced a bill that would give parents. What AB 600 does is it gives parents the opportunity to opt out of transgender education for their kids. It doesn't affect the provision of transgender education in any particular school curriculum, but just like parents have the ability to decide when they want their kids to go through sex education, this bill would give parents the ability to say, these are ideas and concepts and values that we want to be in charge of teaching that we don't want our kids to be taught in public school.

Now, I will tell you that her bill hasn't had any action yet. Don't take my word as gospel, but I checked again this afternoon that bill has not been referred to committee and has not been set for a hearing. That's not a good sign. That tells me as a seasoned lobbyist that the speaker of the assembly is probably going to bottle this bill up and not allow it to come to a vote, but hopefully I'm wrong and it will come up for a vote. But nevertheless, that bill is alive and is eligible to be supported. Are there any questions on AB 600 by Ms. Castillo, which is an optout for parents on transgender education curriculum?

VALDES: Are there any particular ages?

TOM: Oh, it would affect public schools K through 12. I believe that's how the bill's written. I wouldn't swear my life on it, but I'd bet you five bucks if I was a betting man which I'm not.

WILLIAMS: I don't know anything about a transgender curriculum. Dr. Bean, is there such a thing?

BEAN: Well, I mean, that's a very broad question. I mean, I'm not aware of any curriculum, but there's certainly things that schools are allowed to talk about, but I'm not aware of any transgender curriculum. No.

TOM: So, may I, Mr. President, Dr. Williams, let me just read directly from the summary of the bill. "AB 600 would allow parents or guardians to request that their students be excused from and not participate in any form of curriculum lessons or activities that discuss transgender concepts as well as any confidential test surveys or questionnaires related to transgender

concepts. The bill would also prevent schools from punishing students from being excused from those activities.”

WILLIAMS: Very good. That answers my question.

TOM: Okay, so that's AB 600 and the legislative committee may want to recommend the support of that bill and we'll hear from Trustee Mari Barke. Do you want to wait till the end so we just run through all these or do you want to do that now?

BARKE: Just rather than rehash it. I would absolutely ask for a vote in support of the bill. I appreciate this new freshmen legislator that bringing this out and doing something to protect parental rights and our children. I think we are about that. One of the many things we're about school choice, but we're also about protecting our kids and parental rights. I think this is aligned with that.

WILLIAMS: So, you would...

TOM: And if Ms. Barke's motion of that is a motion, if it's approved, just so we're clear, what that will trigger is my firm, Sheehy Strategy Group will draft a letter of support on behalf of this board. It'll have that letter approved by Mr. Rolan and the legislative committee, and once they give it the thumbs up, then that letter will be transmitted to the legislature, become a public document, and if this bill set to be heard, we will show up in person representing the Board of Education testifying in support of the bill.

VALDES: Dr. Sparks, I have a question for you.

SPARKS: Yes.

VALDES: So, one of the things that I've appreciated in our three-year dialogue at this point is you are always concerned about the educator not being able to educate. And the question I have for you, really, when we're talking about kids who are in third grade, I mean, I absolutely think a parent should be able to make a decision. I'm not sure if that is such a great idea for someone in high school. I mean, these concepts are something I think a high schooler should be able to entertain. So, I'm more on the fence on this and I just want to know what your thoughts are.

SPARKS: Well, my thoughts are on the side of parental rights and parents are in charge until the age of 18.

VALDES: 18. Okay.

SPARKS: At least for life, really. But yeah, in the schools, dogs are in the house. As long as they're in the house, we're paying the bills. But I do believe in academic freedom. Absolutely. So, this is kind of the perfect storm in that way. The educators can still educate in whatever way they see fit. And as a teacher, that's very important to me.

VALDES: The bill as I understand it is they can't.

SPARKS: No, no, no. But the parent note, educators can still teach whatever they feel is appropriate in their class. That's very, very important for academic freedom and that's why a lot of us go into teaching and education right. Now hopefully people are making sound judgements along those lines, but nonetheless, parents then can choose to opt out of information that they believe is not age appropriate for their child. And I think that's really important.

TOM: And that's right. I'm just looking at, this doesn't stop. It doesn't stop anything from happening in the schools by way of curriculum, whatever that is, but it gives the parents the authority to say, this is a subject that we want taught at home or at the synagogue or wherever, not something that we want our three-year-old, sorry, third, I meant to say third grader, not something we want our third grader or fourth grader or eighth grader to be taught in public school.

WILLIAMS: And just because I don't want...

SPARKS: I was just going to second the motion just before.

WILLIAMS: Okay. If I can, I just don't want to put the cart before the horse because we have that under item 21.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's right.

WILLIAMS: So, we're going to be taking these positions under item 21.

SPARKS: Oh, okay.

WILLIAMS: I mean we can talk about it now.

BARKE: I'll just talk about my position. I won't make the motion.

SPARKS: Oh, okay. Okay. You made a motion so I was trying...

WILLIAMS: I was going to say your motion is out of order, but...

SPARKS: Well, you didn't say that so I went ahead.

WILLIAMS: I want to be respectful.

ROLEN: Just a boring housekeeping item. The way the agenda item's written is that we are going to discuss each one of these things and either take a support or deny a position on all of them together. So, there's going to be one vote at the end and the way the agenda's written, we can support or oppose each one of these individually.

WILLIAMS: When we get to the agenda item.

ROLEN: Is that the next item?

WILLIAMS: Yeah, it's number 21. Yeah.

ROLEN: Yeah. And 22 is after that?

WILLIAMS: Yeah. Okay.

SPARKS: You could count.

WILLIAMS: And 20 is before that too.

ROLEN: Yeah, I took a math class as well.

TOM: Okay. I apologize if I muddied the waters. I'll do it a little bit smoother next time.

WILLIAMS: No, this is very spontaneous. This is awesome.

TOM: Trustees. Are there any more questions at this time about AB 600 and what the legislative committee is likely to be recommending here? Okay, seeing none, I'm going to move on to the next bill. The next bill is a Senate bill. It's SB 64. SB 64. This is by Senator Shannon Grove, who if you don't know her, is just a delightful state legislator. She's a veteran Republican from Kern County, and she's in the last two years of her term in the legislature. We're going to miss her. She's been a really, really good advocate on a lot of issues.

Shannon Grove is nothing if she's not persistent. She's introduced the same bill I've counted at least three times, and it might be four times I might've missed one. And each time it's been a bill trying to give parents more choice. Her bill says that if you don't have the right, you don't have an OCLC that you can send your kid to and you don't have the choice that you think is right for your kid and you want to send them to a different school. Could be a private school, could be a school that has a different tuition structure that a portion of your ADA money, in this case, the number is \$8,000 for regular students, it's all, it's double that amount. If they have an IEP or they have special education needs, that money will follow the student with them to the school that they want to enroll in.

Since there's a total of about \$28,000 tied to each child in a classroom, if they take 8,000 with them, by definition, they're leaving \$20,000 behind in the classroom, a classroom which their students no longer participating in. The point being that the actual dollars being spent per student would be higher in those public schools where the students left and it wouldn't be less. So, it was meant to counter the argument of your draining our resources. And at any rate, this is an attempt it, it's kind of like a voucher program, but it's not really a voucher program. It's supposed to provide parents some financial flexibility so that they can have more choice in sending their kids to school. I'm sorry to report to you. I've witnessed this personally. Two out of the last three times, each time she has brought this bill up, they've had a polite debate in the Senate Education Committee, and each time the bill has failed on a partisan vote and leading the opposition, of course, is the California Teachers Association who just doesn't want anything to do with legislation like this. Ms. Grove's bill was heard this year on March 19th, and it failed on a straight party line vote with two Republicans voting yes and seven Democrats voting no. And that bill is not dead. It has now become what's called a two-year bill. So, you can still choose to support that bill. Your support will matter. That bill is still viable, but it doesn't have the

necessary support at this point to get out of the Senate Education Committee. Are there any questions about SB 64 by Senator Shannon Grove?

Okay, seeing none, I'll move on. The next measure that your legislative committee may want to recommend is SB 267. I believe this is one that Trustee Shaw's going to want to talk about. And oh, by the way, I think that SB 64, Ms. Barke was going to talk about. The next one is SB 267 by Senator Choi, who is—I know Senator Choi quite well because I worked with him when he was a member of the assembly and he had just come up here from Irvine. I was representing Hyundai Motor Company at the time, and he always would call me up and he'd say, do you represent Hyundai? And I said, yes, we do. And he says, you've got to get them to work with me. And I said, okay, assemblyman, we'll try to get them to work with you, and of course you don't boss your client around you just let them know that there's a freshman.

The only member, only Korean member of the California legislature was dying to get a meeting with you. So, we finally got him a meeting. But I really like Dr. Choi. He's so bright and he's got a really good sense of public policy. He's introduced this bill SB 267, and what this bill does is it would provide teachers, all teachers, public schools and private schools, not a deduction. As Mr. Shaw pointed out to me earlier last month, there's a deduction already allowable under the tax code, but this bill would give teachers a credit against their taxes owed of up to \$250 annually for any qualified out of pocket expenses that they have in the classroom. So, they have a special art project or anything where they need extra supplies and they don't have it in the school budget, and they go out and they spend their own money on it. This bill would give them a tax credit. It allows a credit against the personal income taxes each taxable year, and this would begin January 1st of 2026. It would run for five years and then be subject to a sunset review. And I believe your legislative committee's going to ask you to consider supporting that bill. Are there any questions about SB 267?

SPARKS: Why 250? Why not 1,000?

TOM: That will be for the legislature to decide? Fortunately, Mr. Dr. Choi's bill has been referred to the Assembly Revenue and Taxation Committee. It's not going to a hearing until May. That's okay. bills that change, the tax code can run on a different track than regular policy bills. The policy committee deadline, it'll be coming up at the end of April, but Dr. Choi's bill won't be subject to that deadline and they have set it for a hearing in May, so that's a good sign. The question is whether the usual suspects will come out and support our opposition to it. Hopefully both the labor unions and other interested education parties and teachers will support this, but we'll have to see how that works out. And I think this board's support would be meaningful if it chose to do that. Any other questions about...

SHAW: That was going to be my question, Mr. Sheehy. If the California Teachers Association was supporting this, you would think they would be because it's obviously directly helping their membership. I think the sad reality is a lot of pretty common that teachers are paying money out of pocket for classroom supplies and stuff like that. So, this is a meaningful way to help them out a little bit so they're not out pocket.

TOM: Okay, I agree. All right, so if there aren't any more questions or comments on SB 267 by Dr. Choi. Oh, and for those of you that don't know, Dr. Choi was the only Republican running

for a Senate seat that actually unseated a Democrat. Our friend Senator Newman was running for reelection and Dr. Choi beat him, and I think he was kind of an underdog. Chairman Williams. I was at an event in Sacramento in February, and I ran into Dr. Choi. We had a nice conversation and he said, please be sure to tell Dr. Williams I really appreciated all of his help. And so, I'm saying that publicly now because he was very effusive over the suggestions, advice and help that you gave him, and it made a difference.

Finally, the last bill here unfortunately is rather controversial and it's unlike the last two attempts, SB 286 three years ago, which we killed in the legislature after you hired my firm. And unlike SB 907, which was introduced last year, which we got the governor to kill by way of veto, this bill has a big fat target on this board, but it's not just this board this time. It's got a big fat target on five boards. Let me explain. What SB 249 would do, what it says, and I'm sorry. This bill, SB 249 has been introduced by Senator Tom Umberg, who of course also is from Orange County.

What SB 249 would do is say that any County Board of Education who currently elects their trustees in a spring primary must move that primary to November. This is what 286 did except it's specifically called out Orange County. This bill will impact Orange County, it'll impact Riverside County, it'll impact San Joaquin County, it'll impact Alameda County and it will impact Sacramento County. So, there are five counties. Now I'm telling you that based upon my firm's own personal research, we did all this research last year when 907 reared its ugly head. We wanted to know what other—Orange County wasn't the only county in the state of California whose trustees were elected in the primary. So those are the five counties that are impacted. Now, the Senate Appropriations Committee, their own fiscal staff in the Senate determined three years ago when 286 was going through the legislature that the cost to the Orange County registrar would be several hundred thousand dollars.

This is associated with changing election procedures, new ballot cards. There's a whole series of technical things that the registrar here in Orange County has to do in order to change the election procedure for the county board of trustees. Now, if you take that cost and you multiply it by at least five, now you're dealing with the bill whose cost is going to be in the millions. And by the way, that's going to be a cost every time there's an election. It's not just a one-time cost. Let me explain. In the state of California's constitution, and I promise, first of all, I'm not a lawyer and I won't get into legal geek, but I think we need to know in the state of California constitution, Article 13 says that if the state passes a law, a regulation or an executive order that makes a local government entity, which could be a school district, a school board, city council, county, special district that makes a local government entity do something different today than they were doing yesterday, whatever the cost associated with that change in procedure, that new responsibility, that cost is potentially a state general fund liability.

Now, there's a not well-known but very important commission up in Sacramento called the Commission on State Mandates. And when I was the chief deputy director of the California Department of Finance, Governor Schwarzenegger appointed me to be the chairman of the Commission on State Mandates. So, I know a little bit about it. In fact, the general counsel there is still the general counsel that I put in place when I was there in office. And their responsibility is to review legislation, regulations and executive orders to determine if in fact a local government entity is being required to do something new that they didn't have to do under current law, this bill would be a no-brainer because it's right in the bill. You're going to have to

change your election procedure. So, what that means is, is that every little task that happens in the county registrar's office, every little task that they do to change how they're doing the election, they're going to keep track of, they're going to keep time, there'll be time and materials and they're going to submit a claim to the Commission on State Mandates.

The Commission on State Mandates will either approve it or not approve it. And I'm telling you, this is a slam dunk. They're going to approve it and once they approve it, it then becomes a general fund liability and it'll be a general fund liability every time there's a general election, it will not be just a one-time thing. So, we're talking about over a period of 10 years, we're talking about \$10-\$15 million in general fund costs. So, this bill is ill-advised on the cost factor, but probably the biggest issue here for you as trustees and anybody that cares about public policy is this bill tramples all over local government rights. This bill usurps local control. I'm going to talk about Orange County because you're the Orange County Board of Education, but what I'm saying now is true in the other four counties as well, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Alameda, and Riverside, there was a process in Orange County if you as trustees decided, hey, we want to move our election process to November, you could work directly with your County Board of Supervisors.

They could pass a resolution and there is an administrative process that does not require the state of California to come in heavy handedly and say, you must do this and you can do that. In other words, you don't need legislation to change how you elect your trustees. And this bill just tramples all over the local control issue and says, no, you've got to do it the way we want you to do it. And I think that that's just, this is my personal opinion. I think that's bad public policy. Finally, the last point I want to make before I open take your questions is we talked about the cost of the bill, state mandate likely to become a state general fund liability, which this is not a good thing, and we talked about the local control is terrible, what they're doing to local control here. Finally, even Gavin Newsom agrees this is a bad idea.

The governor vetoed SB 907 and while we made a truce with the author, he agreed to amend the bill to make it less bad. It was still a bad bill, but he agreed to make the bill less bad last year. And in return, we promised that we wouldn't go lobby the governor. I had to give him my personal assurance. I would not lobby my former colleagues at the Department of Finance to get the bill vetoed. He made some amendments to the bill that made it less deleterious, but it was still a bad bill. Governor Newsom vetoed the bill. Let me read you the Governor's veto message. He says "To the members of the..." this is the Governor's veto message to SB 907. This was in September of 2024 "To the members of the California Senate. I am returning Senate Bill 907 without my signature. This bill would require the Orange County Board of Education to be increased from five to seven members and it would require an election for the Orange County Board to be consolidated with the statewide general election in November of each even number year.

I appreciate the author's intent to increase representation on the Orange County Board of Education. However, there are local processes for altering the number of members on the County Board of Education and there are local processes for changing how they are elected. State circumvention of these local procedures, especially with respect to a single County Board of Education should be avoided absent extraordinary circumstances. Unfortunately, I am not convinced that there are extraordinary circumstances in Orange County and for these reasons I

cannot sign this bill.” Sincerely, Gavin Newsom. So even the governor didn't like that bill and obviously 907 did the same thing that this new bill by Mr. Umberg did, but it did some more too. It also would've added additional trustees, which is also a problem. So that's where we're at. It's going to be costly. It's going to mess with local control, which is not a good thing. And even the governor has said, there is no compelling reason to do this. Why are you doing this? And so, I think you're going to see your trustees here are going to recommend an opposition to this bill, in which case my firm will act well, we will lobby against it, but we're going to discuss the lobbying strategy in private, not public. I'm happy to take any questions that you might have.

VALDES: Does the bill also change the number of trustees?

TOM: No.

VALDES: So, it's just moving to November?

TOM: Correct.

SPARKS: Does the cost fall to the five counties named in the bill or does the cost—the increased cost shared by all 58 counties?

BARKE: Goes to Sacramento.

TOM: The costs will fall to each individual county. So, in Orange County, it may cost 475,000. In Riverside, it may be 575,000.

SPARKS: And that's every year?

TOM: It'll be every election cycle.

SPARKS: Every election cycle.

TOM: It'll be, in this case it would be every even numbered election in November.

SPARKS: So, every two...

TOM: I guess you could say the silver lining is for those trustees that would be coming up for election in the springtime, they're going to get an additional six months on their term before they have to stand beyond the ballot. But no, each county will be responsible for their own implementation costs and each county then will need to make a decision as to whether or not they file a claim with the Commission on State Mandates. Now, I've talked about this a lot in the state capitol because my firm has lobbied this very hard in previous years, as you all know, and I'll tell you what, the consultants in the legislature did not understand how this worked. If I may, when we stopped Mr. Min's bill in the Assembly Appropriations Committee in August of 2022, I sat down with the principal consultant and the committee who that bill was assigned to that was doing the analysis on it. We talked about the mandate and she said, oh, I don't really know that much about the mandate process. Could you share more? And I said, well, yes, I told her that I used to chair the commission. And so, we talked about all of that and she said, oh, okay, so this sounds like this could definitely become a general fund impact, but do you think that they'll

really file a claim? That was your question. I chuckled. And I said, what I'm about to say is absolutely true. There is a cottage industry in the state. There are several consulting firms who make their bread and butter working with local government entities that have legitimate claims with the Commission on State Mandates and help them tabulate the costs, present them in a way that will be compelling, support them in the hearings and the data and information that they present to the commission and basically hold their hand along the way to help them get their claims approved. And those firms out there, that cottage industry, they're watching everything that goes on in Sacramento by way of legislation, regulations and executive orders. And anytime they see something that looks like it could be a mandate, they're contacting that local government entity say, you got to, we highly recommend that you file a claim because it's very likely you're going to get money back from Sacramento if you do.

SPARKS: Got it. Yeah. Thanks for that explanation.

TOM: And I know those people.

SPARKS: Yeah, because for the public to understand the complexities of this kind of thing, it's important to have you explain it.

WILLIAMS: So, Tom.

TOM: Yes, sir.

WILLIAMS: Just so you're aware, on our actual agenda, we're going to be taking a opposition. We actually have a resolution there, so that'd be a formal document that you'll be able to take. Just a couple comments this time. No compromise. We take no prisoners and you are going to lobby the Department of Finance to make sure that this gets defeated. That's just a couple of thoughts.

TOM: Oh, yes.

WILLIAMS: Okay. So anyway, are you done because we're going to move on with your agenda.

TOM: No, I'm done.

WILLIAMS: And we're going to get to the legislative platform. You'll be up again.

TOM: My only party comment is let's not discuss in any more detail what our strategy may be because other people that want to see that bill pass will watch what's happening here and we don't want to let them know what our plans are.

WILLIAMS: Great.

SPARKS: Thank you.

WILLIAMS: Great. Awesome. Okay. Thank you, Tom. That was very, very, very insightful and I think it was a wonderful discussion. Okay, let's move on with our agenda item number 20. I'll make the motion on Resolution 12-25 to oppose Senate Bill 249.

BARKE: I'll second.

WILLIAMS: And we have Trustee Barke seconding that. Do we need any further discussion? Tim, Jorge, Lisa?

SPARKS: Nope.

VALDES: Nope.

WILLIAMS: Okay. I think it's fairly straightforward. We have a second a motion. We'll go ahead and call the poll.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

WILLIAMS: Great. Motion passes 5-0. Moving on to now our agenda item number 21, which is taking positions, Trustee Shaw and Barke. Do you want to help us make these recommendations for us?

BARKE: Yeah, I mean, I would go with the recommendations of our lobbyist and those, just to remind you for AB 600, the Castillo, the transgender opt-out, that was to support Grove, it's to support, even though it's already been heard, it's going to come back. Choi again, that's to support and Umberg, it's to oppose. So, I would make a motion to go with the recommendations laid out here on page 63.

SPARKS: Second.

WILLIAMS: Okay. A motion a second.

VALDES: Umberg is 249. We just voted on that separately, right?

WILLIAMS: Correct. Yeah.

VALDES: Okay.

WILLIAMS: Yeah, this is a part of this legislative platform. When the agenda was made, we didn't have everything complete. And by the way, so we have a motion a second, so this is discussion. Are we going to be seeing from the committee any more bills next month? Any thoughts, Tim?

SHAW: Well, I think we have a lot of bills on the watch list, and it'll be interesting to see if they get amended or what the committees are doing. So, I think very likely we would bring some up. Obviously, Tom could weigh in if you'd like, but I think these bills evolve and they might suddenly change a little bit to where we're going to be more interested in taking a position.

WILLIAMS: Okay.

ROLEN: That's absolutely right. There's been some recent gutting amends that we're going to need to take positions on, so there will be more bills coming back from the legislative committee, Mr. President.

WILLIAMS: Okay. So, for the alleged committee, there was another bill that I heard today that was going to consolidate the county. Tom?

TOM: Would you like me to...

WILLIAMS: Can you speak on that just for the record here?

TOM: Sure. The bill number is, is it 868?

SPARKS: 868.

WILLIAMS: Yeah, no strategy. Just maybe a little bit of background on it.

TOM: Sure. Well, so one of the things I always cautioned against with our clients is let's not jump to conclusions. Let's make sure we read the bill from beginning to end and look at everything. So especially before we formulate any public policy and response. So, with that disclaimer, I was made aware of this bill this morning when I was at the airport, and I did look it up right away and I read it and then I contacted the author's office to verify what I thought was going on was going on, and they essentially said, yeah, who's your client and are you going to have a problem with it? I said, I'll get back to you.

AB 868. It wasn't a complete gut and amend, but it was a major amendment, it's kind of like a gut and amend. It was a bill that's been on your tracking list since it was first introduced in January because its subject matter was local board elections. And anytime we see something that says local board elections, we thought maybe it was a stalking horse for another SB 907 or AB 286. So, we put it on the tracking list, but the actual language in the bill was innocuous. Well, it

got amended last week and the amendments got imprint at the end of last week. And what this bill does is no longer innocuous. And I want to just tell you right now, I would like to share with you right now that it does not have a, it's not singling out Orange County. From my initial reading, it looks like it'll affect every county in the state with I think the exception of San Francisco but I haven't verified that yet. There's some charter cities that may be exempted. What this legislation does is it says that every county elected officer, so you're talking board of supervisors, board of trustees, superintendent of instruction

BARKE: Sheriff, DA.

TOM: Sheriff, the DA, the treasurer, if you, the treasurers of elected here, wasn't John Moore elected official when he was treasurer here years ago?

BARKE: Now Shari.

TOM: Any county official will have to be elected in November. So, there are some counties where county officials, just like this board has their election in the primary. There are other county officers in other counties that get elected in the primary and in cases where there's a runoff possible in the general election, if one of those two candidates, if one candidate and a contested election gets 50% of the vote plus one, they went outright in the primary. In many cases. What this bill says is you can't do that anymore. If you get 50% plus one in the primary, you still have to go to the general with whoever got—came in second, also, there are some elected officials in the state, at the county level in some instances who can be elected, who can win by a plurality of the vote, where they don't get 50% plus one, but they get maybe 45%, but they're the highest vote getter.

This bill says You cannot win by plurality. You have to win by a majority, and that majority vote must be in November. So, it's clear what the intent of this bill is, and the author's office confirmed with me, they believe since there, and it's a fact, it's not disputable, there is always a higher turnout in November than there is in the springtime. We have a long discussion on that hereafter having lobbied on 286 and 907, but I won't get into that now, but their intent is to have county level officials be elected when there's a higher voter turnout. That is their stated objective. They think it makes for better democracy and they think that'll make for better voter outcomes. The initial problem that I see as a legislative analyst, not necessarily as a lobbyist, but as an analyst is whatever my previous comments were about the usurp of local control. This bill is that on steroids.

BARKE: Steroids.

TOM: Whatever I said previously about unfunded state mandates, this bill is now taken this from a seven-figure problem for the general fund to definitely an eight-figure problem. We're just going to be talking about tens of millions of dollars and more at costs. So, it's a really bad bill in my judgment from a policy perspective because it takes away all local control over how county officials are elected and it's going to hit, it's going to cost tens of millions of dollars to implement around the state, and that's ultimately going to become a state general fund liability. In my opinion. I'm happy to answer any questions, but I think that's what the bill does.

SPARKS: And you can just point to the reserves that the governor dipped into that \$8 million of reserves that he spent a couple years ago.

TOM: Yes. I know that you don't want to digress into a discussion about the state budget, but our state budget is barely balanced. And in fact, the legislative analyst office projects that in the budget year plus one, which is the '25-'26 year, and then in the '26-'27 year, and then in the '27-'28 year, the deficits are going to grow from 15 billion to 25 billion to 30 billion. Now, they fixed the problem in the last budget with a lot of what I call low hanging fruit. They did some accounting changes, they did some funding delays, they did some fund shifts, they did some deferrals, they did a lot of things that I think any governor would do, Republican or Democrat. I worked for some Republican governors that did these same things, so I'm not going to criticize them. But the point here is all the low hanging fruits gone. And if I could just quote my old boss, Arnold Schwarzenegger, he used to say, "We have to close the fish mouth." And the fish mouth was this, if your expenditures are growing with a slope like this, hand my right hand, and your revenues are growing with a slope like my left hand, it forms kind of like a fish mouth. Right? Well, when that happens that you never close the fish mouth, and when Schwarzenegger was governor, he'd always say, "Are we closing the fish mouth?" Because he got it. He understood what the fish mouth was. And what I'm telling you here is that unfortunately Governor Newsom and this legislature are nowhere near closing the fish mouth. So, there's going to be a lot of fiscal problems for the state of California. It's going to impact education funding and we don't need poorly thought out bills like this to make it even worse in my opinion.

BARKE: Who is the author again? Remind me.

TOM: It is assemblyman. The author of this bill is Assemblyman Juan Carrillo, who is a second term Democrat, and he's from the high desert area of Los Angeles County. I think his home base is in Lancaster. His principal co-author is Senator Reyes, who is a freshman Senator, but she served four terms in the assembly. She's from San Bernardino County and she's principal co-author of the bill. And then there are two other authors. I have it written down if you want me to tell you.

BARKE: Oh, not a big deal. It's okay.

TOM: It's Carrillo, not the Mrs. Carrillo that you voted for, but the male Democrat Carrillo. And then Senator Reyes is the principal co-author.

BARKE: Okay, thank you.

WILLIAMS: Wow. So maybe the alleged committee will come back with a resolution next month for AB 868. You will keep this...

SHAW: Ken I would also mention Assembly Bill 84 is one that's out there that it's aimed at charter schools and making life more difficult on charter schools. I would expect we will agendize a discussion on that one.

WILLIAMS: Okay, very good. Okay, so help me out here. We have a motion and a second. Okay, for support on AB 600 support AB 64, support 267 and oppose SB 249. Okay, so a motion a second being that there's no further discussion let's take a roll.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

WILLIAMS: Very good. Motion passes 5-0. Moving on to item number 22. This is something that we've been talking about for a couple of years here. It's finally materialized. Dr. Sparks and I have been working on this. It was originally put on as an action item, but then in the agenda meeting there was a conversation that was generated from that and Dr. Bean and I, we sat down and he thought that there was some information that we should think about. This has become a discussion item. It was changed officially? Correct. Okay. When the packet went out, it went out as an action item, but it was changed.

SISAVATH: Posted.

WILLIAMS: Posted as a discussion item. Okay, good. Okay. As you can see, there's a lot of language here Lisa and I worked on. This is for the establishment of a liaison for our board. We've talked about this in the past and of course a lot of the supportive information on the process and the intent as mentioned, Lisa and I, we went on in the addendum one, as you can see here in our documentation, we have duties and responsibilities, qualifications and skills and professional and personal traits for this particular position.

And the idea and concept was that we have become so overwhelmed with so much work, a lot of responsibility. And for me personally, it's become a great burden. It became a conversation point over the last couple of years that we needed help to be able to do this. This is something again, as you can see, there's a lot of data in it talking about the reason for it. And I can go and I read all of the duties and responsibilities of this particular position here. It came to the board here as a discussion item, and I just want to give us that opportunity to discuss it and at the very end, hopefully we can ask Dr. Bean to give us some options as to whether this is an actual position

that can be contracted out or whether it's actual OCDE employee. Dr. Bean, if you want to add to that conversation and the information from my board.

BEAN: No, I think you're exactly right. I had love to hear the discussion here and then we'll do an analysis and study and then bring it back to you guys with what we can do at the Department of Education legally.

WILLIAMS: Thank you. So, I thought I'll just toss it out to my right. Jorge, your thoughts on this particular position, and...

VALDES: I mean I'm in support. I think it would be easier for us to perform these tasks if there was someone who answered to us. I think my only comment is I would be okay with an existing Department of Ed employee if they wanted to shift their role and wanted to apply for this. I don't know what Stefan's staffing needs are. I don't know if he plans on any type of layoffs. I would open it up to a Department of Ed staff member, but if that person cannot be found, then it would just go out as a general offering to the public.

WILLIAMS: Just to piggyback on that, so what we envision as a process is that this would be somebody, let's say like Michelle Steel's staff, they are no longer employed. They're looking for a job. These are young people who don't mind starting at the bottom and who are willing to be sort of that board liaison to act in our behalf for any of the public meetings and obligations that we have to help us to...

VALDES: I'm a big fan of Michelle Steel, so if she's got staff members that are looking for a job.

WILLIAMS: So, there are a lot of community functions and administrative policy needs and constituent meetings that we go to managing correspondence and representing the board at various functions. That was sort of the heart and soul of this particular position here. Lisa?

SPARKS: Yeah, we could be out every single night of the week attending events related to our role here, but many of us here have full-time jobs. This is our volunteer job and so we can't be everywhere. We're invited, we just can't. And I always feel a little bit of guilt with that because I just can't go to everything that I'm invited to. I can barely do it at my job in addition to this volunteer job. And so, we just want to make sure we have the proper representation and to have a liaison that is dedicated to the board needs would be I think, really helpful. The way many other boards in the county and across the state have their own liaison to represent themselves. Many of them have a chief of staff or they have different titles and stuff, but someone who is able to really represent us when we're not able to be in five places at once.

WILLIAMS: Okay.

SPARKS: Yeah.

WILLIAMS: Mari, your thoughts?

BARKE: I'm empathetic to the time needs. I may be in a little bit different situation where I do have more time and I like to go out and represent myself. And I also think legally, I don't think

people can actually report to us. I think that's just something they can report to. Dr. Bean, when we compare ourselves to Michelle Steel, that's a full-time position with a salary. We are public servants, almost like a volunteer. We get a stipend. So, I appreciate more the clerical support, which I think I get, which is when I'm getting tons and tons of mail that you guys take the liberty of answering that for me and cc'ing me. And sometimes it comes from me, sometimes it comes from you as long as it's addressed. That's my biggest concern is that when people reach out, I like to respond, but I think for the most part I can handle my physical appearances and maybe I have the liberty of more time than some, but I do think that there's a legal issue too where we can't actually have people reporting to us. And I do feel that this is a volunteer job. It's not a full-time job and I feel like we do what we can and if we can't make it to every event, I think people understand that we do our best. But those are just my—I'm also empathetic to you guys who have less time than I do. And so those are just my thoughts.

WILLIAMS: Tim.

SHAW: I've had it in my head ever since I joined the sport to one day when I had more time go out and speak to Rotary Clubs and Lions Clubs and kind of go out. Nobody knows what the county Board of Education does, what do we do? Who are we? I would love to have help scheduling things like that and making a really nice PowerPoint presentation or presentation to share and kind of spread the word about what we do as a board and what the County Department of Ed is doing. And we are accounting with over 3 million residents and just trying to do a better job of communicating with also the information that's found on our website and correspondence and other communications. That's sort of what I feel like I could use help with. And I would maybe if we had a position like that serving the five of us on the board, that could be put to good use that way. I understand what Mari's saying though. We're not an employer. Sort of different. When I was on the city council, everybody worked for the city council. The council was the employer here. The board is not the employer, the superintendent is. I don't know all the legalities of how that would work, but it's a good concept, Ken. So, thanks for bringing this forward.

WILLIAMS: So just for clarification, so within the document when you read the language, it's absolutely clear that the board is not the employer that the superintendent is. So, the whole part of this process is that the board would be responsible for recommending as a position. This position here, the liaison, there was no mention that we are Michelle Steel. It was mentioned that Michelle Steel has a lot of...

BARKE: Yeah, I was just reflecting on this conversation, not that.

WILLIAMS: Right. Michelle Steel has a lot of ex-employees that are willing to work their way up in a position where they can work in that political field, have that political mindset and have the executive administrative skills. But the process was that the board would be interviewing somebody and making the recommendation to the superintendent to hire. So anyway, that was just some of the details that I think I did.

SHAW: I did talk to Michelle, Ken, all of her staff have landed somewhere. None of them were looking for a job, actually. So that was one thought I had, but they all landed on their feet pretty quickly, so.

WILLIAMS: Very good. Okay, so we all have our input and we'll work on this, Lisa and you and I, and we'll bring it back to the board next month. Sound good?

BEAN: That sounds great.

WILLIAMS: Okay, very good. Moving on now with our agenda. By the way, we haven't read out from closed session. Correct. Okay. Greg, do you want to do that?

ROLEN: Mr. President, madam vice president, superintendent, the readout from the closed session is as follows. For closed session item number one, the board voted 4-1. Trustees Williams, Barke, Shaw and Sparks, yes. Trustee Valdes no, to accept Superintendent Thurman's Code of Civil Procedure Section 998 offer of compromise to resolve the budget litigation with the state's superintendent of public instruction. And they also directed counsel to sign and file a stipulated judgment. And the board also approved a statement that President Williams will read into the record forthwith. Closed session item number two, the board provided direction to pursue a real property acquisition.

WILLIAMS: Very good.

ROLEN: That's the report out.

WILLIAMS: Do you want me to read into the record?

ROLEN: Certainly.

WILLIAMS: So, this is a press release dated April 2nd, 2025. It's entitled the Orange County Board of Education and State Superintendent reach a resolution on budget reviewed dispute. "The Orange County Board of Education has reached a resolution with the State Superintendent of Public Instruction resolving the Board's remaining claims and requests for relief and its litigation seeking affirmation of the Board's budgetary authority and the State Superintendent's obligation to review budgets approved and submitted by the Board. This resolution of a legal case originally brought by the Board in 2019 follows a settlement reached between the Board and County Superintendent Dr. Stefan Bean, in the same case last month.

The resolution was consummated by the Board's acceptance at its regular meeting today of an 'Offer to Compromise' that the State Superintendent conveyed to the Board on March 21, 2025. The State Superintendent made the offer under a civil procedure statute that provides for entry of judgment in litigation on the offered terms if accepted by the party to whom it is presented. 'With the Board's acceptance of the State Superintendent's offered terms of compromise and judgment, we are pleased to have reached out full conclusion of our litigation over the Board's budgetary authority and the state's budget review obligations,' said Dr. Ken Williams, president of the Orange County Board of Education. 'We will have more to say about the details of the resolution once it is submitted to the court for entry of judgment, but we are pleased that the State Superintendent came forward with a compromise offer that extended as far as it did and that implicitly recognized the value of putting litigation to rest and getting to a reasonable resolution of our dispute. In combination with a settlement that the Board reached last month with County Superintendent Bean, we are very pleased with the outcome of this dispute and

these legal proceedings,' added Trustee Mari Barke who is president of the Orange County Board of Education. She goes on to say, 'Within the clarified framework that these resolutions provide, we look forward to working collaboratively with the County and State Superintendents on future budgets in service of the students, schools and communities of Orange County.'" And that ends the reading out of the press release. Moving on with our board agenda items, communications, ethnic studies, update, Dr. Bean.

BEAN: All right, we're near the finish line with our ethnic studies about to official online. Just wanted to bring up both Jonathan and Trish who have led a team and ACCESS to a wonderful curriculum. I know that three of you have reviewed it with intent and so Jonathan, please give us an update.

JONATHAN: Good evening everyone. Superintendent Bean, Board President Williams, members of the board, members of the audience. This is our third time coming up to you to give you an update on our ethnic studies update. I'm going to make sure we have. There we go. So, we're happy to provide an update. Our agenda tonight is we'll try to be brief, but a connection to our 5-3-1 mission as well as course overview, some reminders on that, a timeline. The main reason we're here tonight is actually to give you an overview of our public review process. So, we'll make sure that you have all the details on that and we answer any questions. And then finally some next steps. So first of all, one of the things to make an absolute clear connection to is the 5-3-1 plan connection, the strategic plan connection. I'm not sure if you're aware that ethnic studies is specifically in there with the ACCESS focus.

It's listed as one of the main items there around ethnic studies, curriculum creation and support. And we also see a great connection with our academic support with Rigor, which is our three supports for our school districts. And so, we know that the ethnic studies course is one of the things that will be provided as an option for our local districts to adopt and potentially beyond. And so that's a great connection for academic support with Rigor as well. Within our mission statement. You've seen this before. I won't read through the whole thing, but we'll just draw your attention to the last statement there of students being empowered to explore challenges, legacies and contributions to society. So, wanting to draw that out as we go through our presentation today.

TRISH: Good evening everyone. Just reminding you about the course in general and what that structure contains. We do have a standalone course. It's worth five credits or will be worth five credits and available to all 9th-12th grade students. Our course is organized in five themes, so we have lots of different groups connected to each of those themes. The plan is to move forward with the pilot this coming school year fall of 2025-26. So once the board approves, we'll have time to work on professional development for teachers and preparation for the pilot. Everything about the course and our timeline is compliant with AB 101 and that legislation guiding the ethnic studies course creation for graduation requirement. And then finally, once we have everything approved move forward, we are ready to submit to UC Doorways for that A-G approval that will allow that broad access beyond just our schools here throughout ACCESS, but also Orange County, the state, and then accessible outside of the state of California as well.

Thank you. We have just a little bit of an updated timeline for you so we're able to get a little bit more specific each time we come to you. So, our first visit with you was back previous, gosh,

November or December, but we kind of started this timeline off in February when we presented the initial draft. Moving forward, we had time in February and March to have our board workshops, which we were very happy to interact with board members for a chance for that initial feedback. We also had time for course editing with the writing team throughout February and March. So, coming up on tonight, we're happy to provide you with the draft document. So, you have your entire course outline for you in your board packet. In addition to that, you have all of the details surrounding the public review process. You also have a nice cover letter created by Dr. Bean as well as that guide to understanding ethnic studies.

So tonight, kind of kicks off that public review period. So, we'll get into the details with that. But as you can see, we've got a 30-day period opening officially tomorrow where the draft course outline is available for public review. Feedback, whether it's electronic or written, we are open for the next 30 days. So once that time concludes there at the beginning of May, we have May held for that course refinement. So, we have that time again to take in the feedback, analyze the feedback, make next steps with any further refinement. We're going to before we come, before you again in June, and look for an approved draft course outline, which will hopefully be a final draft at that point. And then beyond that, we'll be on the road with that approval to take those next steps with teachers and moving forward with the course. So that 30-day public review process starting tomorrow.

So, you have your draft. I am happy that you're able to look at it here and kind of leaf through as we talk. We're opening this process to any community member. So, the great thing is we have electronic access for this draft. Anyone interested in seeing it electronically may do so. We also have paper access, so anyone interested can head over to the Argosy campus. We've got paper drafts right there at the front reception area, as well as the ability for written comments also on paper. So, we have a little form just like online. We're going to ask for a page number and just a little bit of guidance and where you're making a comment. Same thing on the paper, just a nice simple form. So, we'll be able to collect that after 30 days. And then the other important part is really having this draft access for all of ACCESS students, staff, and families. And our director over at ACCESS Maria Poulin has already been actively engaged with not only providing the written materials down at the front desk ready for tomorrow, but she proactively sent out communication to principals and teachers. Everything's available for them to share with their families and to share with teachers, to share with students. So really broad open access to everyone over this next 30 days.

JONATHAN: So, with these last couple slides here, we're going to dive a little deeper into how one gains access to the content as well as how they provide feedback. We've tried to create a one-stop shop to make everything simple for anyone from the community. On the top of this slide, you'll see a link up there. It says [link.ocde.us/ethnic studies](http://link.ocde.us/ethnic%20studies). If anyone were to go to that site, it will take them to our ethnic studies site on our OCDE webpage. All of the information is on that page, everything's there. And so, on the left-hand side of the screen, you'll see a direction sheet. And so, what that does is it provides the reader with how they would gain access electronically or if they wanted a hard copy format as mentioned earlier by Trish, where they would go to do that. That is sometimes how districts do things as well.

But we wanted to provide options in multiple ways. Both of those are there in the direction sheet. Now, after they've gained access and they have the content, if they go to Argosy, they'll be able

to provide written feedback if they choose, if they want to provide electronic feedback on the right-hand side of the page, this is what they'll find after they scroll down a little bit more. It's actually very simple if you can't read it, it's kind of small, but it just says feedback comments and it has an open text box and under it says submit. That's it. So, it's an anonymous form. They don't go to any other page. It's on this same webpage. They can submit as many as they would like as long as they would like. It is anonymous. So, we've tried to make it super simple for people to access.

So those are the things on this page. It does give directions to ask for. If you have feedback for us, please provide us with the page number so that way we know what you're referencing specifically. But that's what we're asking over the next month through May 2nd, is that people would go to that website on the top of the page for their one-stop shop for all directions. On this next page, we just have a screenshot of the draft outline. You'll notice in big letters it says draft as well as in your hard copy. That's on purpose because there's been a lot of work to get to where we're at today. There have already been a lot of modifications and we understand that it's still not perfect. And so, as we collect feedback, we'll be gathering that, making some decisions after the feedback comes in with input.

And then finally, as we move forward, bringing back a final copy to you in the future, hopefully at the June board meeting. So, for our next steps, and this will close us out and offer some time for questions, but just to summarize, we have a 30-day period where it's open feedback for board as well as public. After that, we'll have some time with the writing team to basically make some edits and bring that back to you in June. And then finally, once it's approved, we'll be working to support the ACCESS staff work through a pilot, and then finally put it up on UC Doorways for approval. And once that happens, then it can be shared more broadly with anyone who would choose to use it. So that's the end of our presentation. Hopefully it didn't go too long, but really wanted to give you a sense as far as the public review process and make sure you're aware of that.

BARKE: Great presentation. Thank you.

JONATHAN: Thank you.

WILLIAMS: Any questions about the board?

SPARKS: I have a comment. I appreciate. I know you guys have been working really hard on this and I see some of the improvements to the suggestions and feedback that well that I gave and others gave as well. I definitely see that there's progress in that direction. I would also ask that you look at the supporting sources under each inquiry question and make sure there's balance for the examples. For example, on inquiry question four, I see that we have Sonia Sotomayer as an example, but we don't have Clarence Thomas' story as another example. So, I'd like to make sure those, because those are links that people will click on and teachers will use those as resources, which is fantastic. But we just need to make sure we have balance under each of the inquiry questions.

JONATHAN: Great, thank you. Great feedback. And thank you for the recognition to the writing team. I failed to acknowledge them. They've been working super hard to get us to the spot and lots of hands to get to where we're at today.

SPARKS: And it's looking really great. Really coming along.

WILLIAMS: So, is this document here, is this available online?

JONATHAN: Yeah so...

WILLIAMS: When I click on the link, it'll take me to the links.

JONATHAN: So, if you click on the link, the left-hand page will show you how to review that in person or how to gain digital access. And so, we would email that out to the folks that would like access electronically. And for our board members, we can also provide a digital access directly to you.

TRISH: And we'll be sending it directly electronically to our initial feedback group. So, if you recall when we were in that real initial draft process, we convened a feedback group that met three times, and that was a real mixed group of community members and folks from the writing team, ACCESS people, staff, and different community members. So, we will directly share it with them as well. They were there with us from the beginning, so they won't have to come and request that access. We'll give that to them directly.

VALDES: Dr. Bean, I think there was a pending issue that we talked about out of, maybe it was last month's meeting, which was how we were going to disseminate this and tell people that we had done this and you were going to I think create some type of a list.

BEAN: Yeah, we're still on that. We're still working on that because we didn't want to inundate the writing team right now or Jonathan or...

VALDES: Oh no.

BEAN: Or Trish. So, we wanted to kind of let just wait to see what kind of feedback and then present you guys a plan all at one time. We'll disseminate that as well as allow you to approve the curriculum all at one time.

VALDES: Exciting. You guys make us look really good.

TRISH: Thank you.

BARKE: Great work.

SHAW: But we are proactively contacting every ethnic community, right? If there's a Korean American Federation of Orange County or Jewish Federation or Vietnamese, I think we're going to be specifically proactively letting them know. Is that correct?

BEAN: Is that the plan for the review? I assume that that's what Trustee Tim is talking...

SHAW: Yeah, for the comment over the next 30 days.

JONATHAN: Yeah, we can definitely, we do have context through our history social science department for example, of various groups and we can send out the link to those groups for them to have access and take a look if they would like.

BEAN: If you have groups and contacts and links and emails, send them our way. And so that Jonathan and Ian's team I think is supporting with this as well, is we'll get it out to the committee for review.

SHAW: I would just hate to have someone say, oh gosh, we didn't know this was the comment period and the windows closed and we didn't have a chance to have our input. You know what I'm saying?

BEAN: Yeah.

SHAW: So, I'm just thinking about trying to make sure people are proactively told, hey, this is your chance right now kind of thing.

VALDES: Should we do some type of press release that we're offering that?

HENDRICK: I thought that Ian was working on some communication to be posted.

BEAN: He is doing that. Ian is working on a communication that will both be on OCDE Newsroom, which is our main source of getting things out to all of our educational communities in Orange County. I think that's probably going to hit more than a press release. Was there any other plans other than Ian pushing it out for us?

JONATHAN: No, we just wanted to make sure also that we made sure that our ACCESS students, teachers and staff, that was important to us as well. So, we have very much a methodical way about making sure they're aware her. Yeah, but we'd be happy to work with Ian and his team to share the information.

BEAN: I mean, that's definitely Ian's job and we brought this to Ian and had conversations with him. So, he has a plan to get it out widespread to the county. It did not include sending it to the local newspaper or anything like that. It would just included the way we access our educational partners across the county. We have much broader access than *Orange Register*.

VALDES: I mean, I can tell you that the folks over at the *Register* took a distinct interest in this. When I spoke with some of those reporters, I don't think it would hurt.

BEAN: Yeah.

HENDRICK: Well, they do follow our OCDE Newsroom quite a bit. That's where they get their stories from.

BEAN: That's where most media outlets get their stories from. Is our OCDE Newsroom.

SPARKS: Does he push it out on social media as well? Oh yeah. Like Instagram and where the kids are?

BEAN: Yep. All of our OCDE social media platforms.

SPARKS: Okay, great.

BEAN: But you guys might have access to some of these community organizations that don't have, I mean that maybe has never gone to OCDE Newsroom, I'm not sure, but if you do let us know. Yeah, I think we're all getting kind of tired. My eyes are...

SPARKS: Thank you all so much.

WILLIAMS: Okay, let's move on. Charter schools update Aracely.

HENDRICK: Dr. Williams, I just for, I know it's been a long night, so, she will probably be about 15 minutes, 10 to 15 minutes maybe. But you also still have Dave, so hers is not time sensitive. So, if you wanted to wait until next month, it's up to the will of the board though. Whatever you'd like to do.

WILLIAMS: Yeah, I think we're all hurting. Burned out.

SPARKS: Zoned out.

HENDRICK: Yes.

VALDES: I've been here since 2:30.

HENDRICK: Yeah.

WILLIAMS: Okay. So, if that's not time sensitive, how about next month?

HENDRICK: Will do. We'll put on for next month.

WILLIAMS: Is there anything you can give?

VALDES: Is Dave's time sensitive?

BEAN: I think it is important to do it next month because there are some charter organizations that have performed very well and they would we want to lift them up.

SPARKS: Absolutely.

WILLIAMS: So, is your update right here? Is that your update?

HENDRICK: That's just the financial update. There's also a academic

SPARKS: This one.

BEAN: Yeah, there go this one.

WILLIAMS: Okay.

CHASTAIN: You can take a look at it and I can provide a little bit more context next month if you need it, but you have the information in front of you.

BARKE: Thank you.

SPARKS: Great, thanks.

WILLIAMS: Super. Okay. Announcements. Dr. Bean?

BEAN: Are we going to bring Dave up right now and then finish it up? Well, Dave, can you do it in five minutes?

GIORDANO: I could.

WILLIAMS: Okay.

GIORDANO: I was going to joke earlier and say, well, let's go and start on page number one.

BEAN: Start over.

HENDRICK: And since it is so late, if you have questions or you have things that you would like to see us included as we're building the budget, please email me or Dave so we can include those. That's really what part of this is about is things that you want to see when we do the June budget is giving the opportunity. So, you'll have May to tell us also, but that way it keeps you thinking about, right.

GIORDANO: We were talking about things that impact our multi-year projection. We talked about CalSTRS and CalPERS impacts. This slide just highlights the statutory COLAs going all the way back to fiscal year 1983-1984. And as you can see on this slide, there have been large fluctuations in the cost of living adjustment from year to year, which make it real difficult for school districts and county offices to try to determine the level of funding that we're going to receive in a coming year. And aside from the past two fiscal years, that's fiscal years '22-'23, and '23-'24, and that's where the statutory COLA exceeded 6%. The trend line for the COLA now is beginning to stabilize at the lower end of the range. And you can see that here on this slide. Another challenge that districts face is the expiration of all the one-time state and the federal COVID-19 relief funding. And in fact, the final round of ESSER three funds had to be obligated by September 30th, 2024 and then liquidated by January 31st, 2025. And at the same time, the benefits for the ADA protections that were implemented during the pandemic have definitely lessened. In fact, many districts are going to feel the full impact of those ADA losses that they experienced during the pandemic over the course of the current year and the subsequent year.

Switching gears for a moment, here's a look at some of the major projects that we have planned for the coming fiscal year. And as you know, our architects completed the schematic designs for the Rancho Sonado project and they're currently in what we refer to as the design development

phase. Staff's also completed the process to pre-qualify bidders and a total of 10 contractors have been pre-qualified to bid on the Rancho Sonado project. Additionally, our staff has held an onsite pre-bid conference. This is at the Rancho Sonado site for pre-construction services and proposals are due back from contractors by next Tuesday, April 8th. And interviews will be scheduled for Friday, April 18th. And if all goes according to plan, staff will bring back an agreement for pre-construction services to the board for consideration at the May 7th board meeting. And of course, our staff will keep you updated on this project in the coming weeks. We also plan to replace three portable classrooms and one portable restroom building currently being used in our Connections program over at Fred Newhart School in Capistrano Unified. And these new buildings are going to replace older portables that have reached well beyond their useful life. Additionally, Harbor Learning Center South is going to receive a fresh coat of interior and exterior paint and then some new flooring as well. And then lastly, we're also planning to install a much-needed elevator. This is over in building number 4 over at Esplanade site.

Here's a look at a summarized look at the Board of Education's budget. And you can see here we've included actual expenditures for last year, '23-'24, as well as the budget for the current year '24-'25. That's the current budget. And then we've got a placeholder budget here as well. And I'm not going to go through all of these, but I do want to just highlight a couple starting with the salaries and employee benefit lines. You'll notice in '23-'24 salaries and benefits coming in at just over 239,000 and we talked about this last year during the budget study session. The majority of those costs are really for the health and welfare benefit premiums. The stipend that the board receives is obviously very minimal. You'll notice in '24-'25 the costs went down. They're projected just over 193,000, and that's due to the fact that there have been changes in the health benefit plans to lesser costly plans by a couple board members, and that's why you see that reduction there.

The other line item just want to draw your attention to is legal services contracts. And you'll notice last year in '23-'24, we spent a little over 823,000 and then in '24-'25 budgeted at 600,000. If you look at what we spent date for legal services through end of February, we spent just under 300,000. So, we believe when we come back to the board and we present the preliminary budget, this number's even going to be lower. We will update that number when we present that to you. Obviously with legal counsel on board and dealing with many of the legal questions from the board, it's definitely been a cost saving factor. Then you can see we also have the contingency reserve there for discretionary purchases of 250,000. And what you don't see here on this slide, there's another reserve set aside that's for the facilities. Charter school facilities fund a 250,000 that's also accounted for in the reserves. And then I'm not going to go through all these challenges. We talked about this at second interim. These are just the standard issues that districts and county offices of ed are facing across the state.

Obviously STRS and PERS issues with pension costs, health and welfare benefits, all those things continue to go up. We've got all kind of inflationary cost pressures and other areas as well. Nothing new here. Here's a look at the budget timeline. And so again, tonight board's taking no action this evening. This is just the budget study session. In early June, we'll present, we'll have the public hearings on both the LCAP and the preliminary budget. And then in late June, we'll present both those items to the board for approval. And of course, that budget's going to be based on the May revise and that will be out, the governor will have that out by, I believe May 10th.

And so that budget's going to be based on, it will actually have the tax collections through the month of April. We'll be keeping a real close eye on tax collections, especially with the delayed tax payments because the wildfires in Los Angeles County. And so that was the presentation. Any questions?

BARKE: Thank you.

WILLIAMS: You're awesome, David. All right.

BEAN: You did it, Dave.

GIORDANO: Thank you.

WILLIAMS: Thank you. Okay, board member comments. Renee?

HENDRICK: Yes, would you like to go first Dr. Bean?

BEAN: Why don't you go first and then I'll go after you.

HENDRICK: I just have a couple. The next board meeting is Wednesday, May 7th. The submission deadline is Wednesday, April 23rd. Board packet delivery is Friday, May 2nd. Darou will be sending out an email regarding donations for Memorial Day contests, because that will be in May. And then I also would like to know if the board would be willing to look at an alternate date for June 4th. It seems our superintendent has a very important conflict on that day.

BARKE: Graduation?

BEAN: My daughter is graduating. Yes.

HENDRICK: His daughter is graduating and that is also where we do our budget in LCAP. So, we are wanting if we could do it on the Tuesday or the Thursday?

WILLIAMS: I'm good either day.

VALDES: Tuesday. Thursday is really going to be a problem.

SPARKS: My daughter's graduating on Tuesday.

SHAW: You're saying June 3rd or 5th?

HENDRICK: Your daughter's grad—I'm sorry. Yeah. Well, so I'm hearing no on Tuesday because that's another graduation.

BARKE: And no, on Thursday.

HENDRICK: And no on Thursday.

SPARKS: How about Monday?

BEAN: June 2nd?

HENDRICK: That would be Monday, June 2nd.

BARKE: Monday, June 2nd.

SPARKS: Oh no, never mind.

BARKE: Oh, I mean, I can do it. My kids are going to be here, but they're, no one has a calendar.

SPARKS: I can come late that day.

VALDES: No one has a calendar like you.

SPARKS: I know. It's insane. That's what I'm saying.

HENDRICK: Tim, are you available on the second?

SHAW: I will be in Washington DC May 30th through June 8th.

HENDRICK: Right. You're going to be gone.

BARKE: He's gone either way.

SHAW: I'll be Zooming in if we do it anytime that week.

HENDRICK: Okay.

BARKE: All right. So, are we going to do Monday?

SHAW: I prefer if we can't go to June 11th...

SPARKS: Monday, but I'll have to come a little bit late. I have a back of art service for my daughter. Again. It's a two-day deal.

HENDRICK: Okay. Are you okay with that?

SHAW: Is June 11th a possibility?

SPARKS: If you guys are okay, I'll be late?

HENDRICK: I'm sorry, what'd you say, Tim?

SHAW: June 11th. Is that a possibility?

BEAN: Well, remember we have two board meetings in June. So, is that too close, Renee to the second meeting?

HENDRICK: No, it'd be a week apart because our second meeting is on the 18th, so that would be up to the board.

BARKE: I'm flexible, so whatever.

SPARKS: I would've to Zoom in from abroad, I can do that.

WILLIAMS: I'm always available. So.

BEAN: Renee, you can also just keep the original date and you guys will just be absent to the superintendent. I think that's all right. Renee and staff can speak on my behalf. Right? So, you guys can keep...

BARKE: Unless you prefer Monday and Lisa comes late?

SPARKS: We could do Monday and I just come late on Monday the 2nd?

BARKE: You want to do that?

BEAN: Monday works. Yeah.

HENDRICK: Okay.

BEAN: It's up to you guys.

HENDRICK: All right. So, I'll put on the agenda to vote for June 1st.

BARKE: June 2nd.

BEAN: The 2nd.

HENDRICK: Second. Sorry. June 2nd.

BARKE: Okay.

HENDRICK: And that is all I have.

VALDES: We always want you around Stefan.

BEAN: Oh. Thanks. So good. All right. Is that it? Renee? All right, you. It is getting late for us but I think we missed this last time. So, we're going to just do it this time after seeing all the students here today and just listening to you guys in terms of really why you do this work. And you guys are extremely busy and I just want all of us to remember why we do this work and it's because of our kids. So, I just want to lift up a couple of things. First, our Deaf and Hard of Hearing students at Connections, we had four students at Connections that completed the academic at California or DHH Academic at California School for the Deaf in Fremont. They placed in the top four and they'll be traveling to the university in Washington DC to compete in the national championship. This is amazing. We have a video with us, but we're going to skip

that and we'll show this video next time. But Analee, when is that happening, by the way? Or did it already happen?

KREDEL: When they travel?

BEAN: Yeah.

KREDEL: It's a few more weeks out. I don't know the exact date.

BEAN: Keep us updated on how they do, but that's really amazing. And those are our students with disabilities in our Connections program. And then our wrestling team also, we have a wrestling team at Connections. Did you know that? That actually they competed and they did very well. And this is also Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

KREDEL: There are deaf students and students that are not deaf.

BEAN: Right. Both. And then just, we hosted over, I want to say 600 students at the OC Pathways Showcase. What an amazing event. By the way. Over a thousand people across Orange County come and see all the different career pathways that students could pursue. Just the Showcase was amazing. My son actually introduced me up on stage there before I gave a couple minute comments. So that was pretty cool. I didn't know he was going to be there, so that was fun. And then for me a couple of days ago, I've had a few people, I don't know why a few people ask me, Dr. Bean, you got to slow down. Your schedule's just impacted and where's the energy? And I said, you know what? I get my energy actually for doing things like this. This is our why. I went to Otto Fischer, our juvenile court school, and now I'm playing monthly cribbage with what we call the cribbage boys in juvenile hall or in juvenile court.

BARKE: Cool. I love that.

BEAN: And they just look forward to me coming and playing with them and it was just great time.

SPARKS: I bet you're winning a lot.

BEAN: No, they actually, he, he's beating me pretty bad, but that recharges me. Right. And then just let me just share a couple of these notes. I can't read these notes, it's so far. But we had some wonderful handwritten notes from students to us just thanking us for the materials that they have that we send or the furniture we give or the programs that we offer. And these are just handwritten notes addressed to me. It's crazy. And here's from the cribbage boys, the tango, cribbage boys. Pretty cool. All four of them. All five of them wrote something. And then I'll end it with this email that we just got. Oh, we just lost the connection, but there we go. I just received this. I do want to read this. This is a student, Sarah a high school student, Orange County. Not our students, but a student, one of our districts. "Hello Dr. Bean, just wanted to thank you for the hard work you've already put into betterment of Orange County Education System. The experience you have is extremely valuable in reassuring, knowing all the hardships you've overcome and how hardworking you are. I have read about how much diversity you've also been

around and you seem very dedicated to our education system. We are truly lucky to have you in our county and I just wanted to say thank you for choosing Orange County as your district.”

BARKE: That's awesome.

BEAN: It's just a random student that heard about it, but that's because of the work that this board does in support of our staff and vice versa. And truly in the last eight months, it's been a joy to see that connection and the reputation that is going out about me is really just building bridges no matter what side of the aisle. As long as we center our work on these kids, that's what really makes a difference. And so that's why we're all winning. So anyways, thank you. I enjoy the work and I just want to say thank to you guys.

BARKE: Thank you.

SPARKS: Thank you.

BEAN: Of course.

WILLIAMS: Thank you. Okay, I think that's completing pretty much our agenda. Our next meeting is when again? May...

HENDRICK: May 7th.

WILLIAMS: May 7th.

HENDRICK: Can I ask one question, Dr. Williams, for the legislative platform, how that looks? Can I work with the legislative committee and Mr. Sheehy?

WILLIAMS: Absolutely.

HENDRICK: To kind of give a format so that...

BEAN: Yeah, I thought that was a great format you created by way. Good job.

HENDRICK: So, we'll just kind of work together to make sure.

WILLIAMS: Yeah.

HENDRICK: Okay. Thank you.

WILLIAMS: Did you like that Tom?

TOM: I told Renee that I would be delighted to work with her to get something that will be functional for the board.

WILLIAMS: Good. No, I liked it. Feedback Jorge. Lisa, you like what they did?

VALDES: Love it.

SPARKS: Love it.

WILLIAMS: Awesome. Very good. Okay, barring no further...

BARKE: I have just a couple of comments if you don't mind?

WILLIAMS: Absolutely.

BARKE: A couple of us went to OCSA to their Gala and it was a wonderful, wonderful evening. They really appreciate the work that we do, the work that you guys do. It was so nice this time to actually see some charter school staff there. It was lovely. I took photos with them. We had a grand old time, so that was great. Also went to Garden Grove State of the District and that was another really neat event with entertainment and just hearing the district. I saw Renee there, so yeah, that was great. I want to mention Sarah Bach was going to be here tonight from Sycamore. She couldn't make it. So, hold onto these in your red folders or do you want us to leave them here for next month so we have them?

HENDRICK: We'll go ahead and include them again.

BARKE: Okay. Okay. And I also just want to just read one, some comment about a friend, Bill Essayli, who, if you guys don't know, he got quite the promotion today. He's already been sworn in. I just wanted to provide public congratulations to a true friend of this board Assemblyman Essayli. Yesterday, it was publicly announced that Bill was appointed to the United States Attorney for the Central District of California. He's essentially the top federal law enforcement officer in Southern California. Bill is a brilliant lawyer. I know him very personally. More importantly, he is a good friend. Whether you agree with his politics or not is good to know that someone who works hard and stays true to their values can be recognized and appreciated. So, congratulations to Bill. Very excited for him and he'll continue to really make waves here in California.

WILLIAMS: Thank you. Any other board member comments? Okay. Motion for adjourn.

BARKE: So moved.

WILLIAMS: So moved.