

WILLIAMS: Good afternoon. It is July 9th, 2025. Time is now 4:03. I welcome everybody to the public meeting of the Orange County Board of Education. Today, Trustees Shaw and Valdes will be participating remotely in today's meeting and in compliance with the Brown Act, all of the actions and votes will be recorded by a roll call vote. So, for the benefit of the record, I am calling this regular meeting of the Orange County Board of Education to order and we will begin with roll call.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Here.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Present.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Here.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Present. On video.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Here in Orem, Utah.

WILLIAMS: Beautiful. May I have a motion for the adoption of today's meeting?

BARKE: So moved.

SPARKS: Second.

WILLIAMS: We have a motion and a second. Any questions? Any changes? Otherwise, all those in favor? This is a roll call vote.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes. Aye.

SIAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

WILLIAMS: Moving on with the meeting may I have a motion and approval of the June 18th minutes?

BARKE: So moved.

SPARKS: Second.

WILLIAMS: We have a motion and a second by Barke and Sparks. All those in favor? This is a roll call vote.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

WILLIAMS: Very good. Motion passes 5-0. As we move on with our meeting, we are going to be going into closed session for two inter-district appeals. Do we have any public comments for the closed session?

HENDRICK: We have none.

WILLIAMS: Very good. Very good. Okay, so we are going to officially go into closed session. That means that the doors are shut.

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

WILLIAMS: Very good. Good evening. The time now is about 5:08 and the board has been in session since 4:00 today. We've had two inter-district transfers and today is a very special board meeting as I will be handing over the gavel to another one of my great peers. And as is typical and usual for our board, we do have an invocation that we give as well as the Pledge of Allegiance. And sometimes people come in here and they don't know if they're given the Pledge of Allegiance. So, I'm going to ask you one of your children, would they like to give the Pledge of Allegiance?

BARKE: Or both of them together?

WILLIAMS: Or both of them together? What is your name?

ALINA: Alina.

WILLIAMS: Alina and?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Lucas.

WILLIAMS: Alina and Lucas, would you like to give the Pledge of Allegiance? No?

BARKE: I love it.

WILLIAMS: Okay. You have two minutes to think about it. I'll come back to you. Okay. Okay, moving on with our agenda. We do have our invocation and we have a very special invocation today by Jenna Sagan, a Cantor from Congregation B'nai Tzdek. And she's going to give us a very special invocation, something from the heart. Jenna is a mother, she's also a teacher at the charter school unit. Is it LA County or Unified?

CANTOR JENNA: In LA Unified.

WILLIAMS: LA Unified. And you have two beautiful daughters I think as you shared with me.

CANTOR JENNA: I do.

WILLIAMS: I think as you shared with me. So, for this invocation, it comes from the heart, it's very spontaneous and we appreciate you coming today, Jenna.

CANTOR JENNA: It's my pleasure and my honor as a parent and an educator and also a member of the clergy. So, I thank you all for letting me be here. As we begin tonight's meeting, I invite us all to pause for a moment and to acknowledge the responsibility, the trust, and the

purpose that brings each of us to the table. The work you do shaping policy, allocating resources, and setting vision is not only essential, it is sacred in its impact. In the book of Proverbs we read, “Teach each child according to their own way. Even when grown, they will not depart from it.” The rabbis, sage teachers of our tradition expand on this verse, teaching that true education must honor the individuality of each and every student. Each learner carries unique strengths, challenges, and potential. And I pray that your leadership will reflect that sacred obligation to see that each child not only is who they are, but who they might become.

The prophet Micah speaks to us across generations. Do justice, love kindly and walk humbly. This wisdom challenges us to lead with both clarity and compassion. To remember that decisions made here will echo far beyond this room in classrooms and homes and the lives of young people who rely on this system to open doors and expand their futures. The sages of the Talmud remind us that a community is too heavy for anyone to carry alone. Your work is not done in isolation. It is sustained by collaboration, by listening, by debating, supporting and challenging one another. May tonight's conversations reflect that spirit of shared responsibility, mutual respect, and collective purpose. Though this space is secular, the task before you is deeply meaningful. And I will venture to say it, it is sacred. It is the kind of holy work that emerges not from ritual, but intention, not from belief, but from the act of showing up again and again to serve the greater good. May the evening's meeting be guided by wisdom and patience and the enduring belief that every child matters. In our tradition we sing a song, “Olam Chesed Yibaneh”, I will build this world with love. And so, I conclude this invocation with that song and a prayer that the choices made here tonight will lift up the promise of what education can and should be. Olam chesed yibaneh yai dai dai, dai dai, yai dai dai dai, Olam chesed yibaneh yai dai dai, dai dai, yai dai dai dai. I will build this world from love yai dai dai, dai dai, yai dai dai dai. And you must build this world with love yai dai dai, dai dai, yai dai dai dai. And if we build this world with love, yai dai dai, dai dai, yai dai dai dai then God will build this world with love yai dai dai, dai dai, yai dai dai dai. Olam chesed yibaneh yai dai dai, dai dai, yai dai dai dai. Olam chesed yibaneh yai dai dai, dai dai, yai dai dai dai. Thank you for your service and for the integrity with which you lead. May your work this evening be a source of love, light and good.

WILLIAMS: Jenna, that was so moving. Thank you.

BARKE: Yes, thank you so much.

WILLIAMS: What a beautiful voice. So young man Lucas, are you ready to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance? Would you like to do that?

BARKE: We're up to four. Lucas is a speaker.

WILLIAMS: Lucas is a speaker. Okay, very good. Yay. Okay, so I'm standing behind and affirming Lucas. So, let's all stand and turn towards the flag. And you may start us.

AUDIENCE: I pledge of 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 Lucas. That was wonderful. Good job. Introductions, Renee?

HENDRICK: We have none at this meeting.

WILLIAMS: Very good. And at this part of our meeting, the first meeting of July, we have an organizational meeting for those who are our guests. What we do is we pass the gavel. So, I've been fortunate enough to be blessed by working as the board president this last year along with my Vice President Mari Barke. I just wanted to say a few quick words. This year has been wonderful. We've done a lot. We selected our great Orange County Superintendent, Dr. Bean, that was in June. And then we got to choose our new General Counsel, Mr. Greg Rolen. We concluded two pieces of important litigation that had been going on for a long time. We had our wonderful salute to our veterans in the form of our Memorial Day essay. Along with a wonderful celebration of patriotism, we have passed resolutions and advance public policy that strengthens parental choice charter schools and the rights of parents to direct the upbringing of their children as well as us protecting the innocence of our children. So, with that, I am going to thank the board. Thank you for your trust and for selecting me to run the meetings and going forward, we will have a new leader. So, I will first ask for a board nomination for president.

SPARKS: I'd like to nominate Mari Barke.

WILLIAMS: We have a nomination for Mari Barke. Any of my other board colleagues would like to nominate a position for board president?

VALDES: I second.

WILLIAMS: Okay, very good. Okay, so I will close the nominations and we will take a vote for the president who will be running by herself. So, all the—Mari, Renee, is this a roll call? It's a roll call. It's the formal. Okay. So, Darou, roll call.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: I guess I should vote for myself. Yes.

WILLIAMS: Very good. Congratulations, President Barke.

BARKE: Thank you.

WILLIAMS: You now take over the nominations.

BARKE: Well thank you. It's an honor to serve as president for the next year of this fantastic board. I have amazing colleagues that I look forward to working with every day, every month, every week. And I would like to nominate my colleague Tim Shaw as vice president.

SPARKS: I'll second that.

BARKE: All right, any other nominations or comments or rejections or anything we should know about?

WILLIAMS: I request to close the nominations.

BARKE: All right, we've closed the nominations.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

BARKE: Okay, wonderful. Do we have any nominations for clerk?

WILLIAMS: Yes. I'd like to nominate the good Trustee Jorge Valdes, who is never without a comment that he has in his mind that he does not share with us.

BARKE: All right, I'll go ahead and...

WILLIAMS: We love you Jorge.

BARKE: I'll go ahead and second any other comments or nominations?

WILLIAMS: I asked to close the nominations.

BARKE: All right.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

WILLIAMS: Very good.

SHAW: Madam President, may I have a moment?

BARKE: Sure.

SHAW: Before we move on from this item, I just wanted to thank Dr. Williams for the great year he put in and the amount of energy and passion he brings to our board. And as we had such a significant year with our new superintendent, new general counsel, so many things going on, he led us admirably and I just wanted to, before we moved on from this item, personally thank Dr. Williams for a great leader he is on our board.

WILLIAMS: Thank you, Tim.

VALDES: Can I please take a moment and second that Dr. Williams, really you did a fantastic job in the organizational aspects of president of this board and really, really, I just feel like you really did a great job this year.

WILLIAMS: Thank you Jorge.

SPARKS: And I echo everything that those gentlemen just said.

BARKE: And I would agree, Ken has been a great leader. He has a lot of experience. He knows where all the bodies are buried and what's happened over the last 30 years and he has initiated some great things this past year that we really appreciate. We put forth some great legislation and projects as a result of his leadership. So, I really appreciate that.

WILLIAMS: Thank you. Thank you.

BARKE: All right, I guess we're going to move along and I'm supposed to run this meeting now. Maybe I better get out my glasses so I can read. Oh, all right. And I guess since Tim is remote that Ken will help me.

WILLIAMS: Lisa.

BARKE: Oh, Lisa is going to help with the speakers. Wonderful.

SPARKS: Okay. Are we up right now? All right, so I'm going to read off the first name and the second person will be on deck. We have Ellie Cohn first and on deck is Heidi. Heidi. Okay. Is Ellie Cohn here? Okay. Sorry.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is that okay?

SPARKS: Yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Go ahead. We're going to go to the right.

SPARKS: Oh, Ellie and Stacey are together or no?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

SPARKS: Okay.

STACEY: She was just number four.

SPARKS: Oh, you're number four. They're out of order. It doesn't matter. Go ahead.

WILLIAMS: A guy handled it so it's going to be out of order.

BARKE: When they moved across the dais, they got out of order. Sorry.

SPARKS: Right.

WILLIAMS: My wife accuses me of that all the time.

SPARKS: I can't imagine.

HENDRICK: You do have a timer in front of you if you want to look right here. So, it's three minutes.

ELLIE: Okay, I'll start now. Hello board members, it's a pleasure to share my experience at IIA with you all. For the four unforgettable years, IIA has been open have been the best four years of my educational journey. The teachers with their kind and effective teaching style have been so caring and supportive. I have jumped miles in my scores and have solidified my skills academically and socially. As a student with a 504 plan, they have been kind, compassionate, and consistently provided encouragement, especially during times when I doubted my own abilities. From fifth grade to eighth grade, I have achieved my scores of high school levels thanks to our amazingly skilled teachers. I'm truly grateful that I attended IIA rather than an IUSD middle school for the focus of science and math, Chinese language learning and the solid high school preparations I received. And a special thanks to Mr. Gibbons whose efforts have earned me a place in math to enhance for ninth grade. I look forward to my sister enjoying the same wonderful experience that I had as well as all future students in IIA. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you very much.

SPARKS: So, Heidi, you're up. And then we have Stacey on deck.

HEIDI: Good evening esteem board members I see every month. And Superintendent Dr. Bean. I'm here on behalf of our families and colleagues with Suncoast Prep Academy. Once again sharing our heartfelt gratitude for all of you as our authorizers deserves repeating. But thanks to our enthusiastic and dedicated staff and the treasured support of our families, we increased the number of students who participate in state testing. This year, we were invited by our special education SELPA to do statewide training on IEP meetings and documents. Because of the success we have families demonstrated a 95% IEP sign rate with our families. The morale of our entire staff is steadfast thanks to our committed, enthusiastic, and dedicated leadership team that truly believes in this model of education for our families. When we have school-wide staff meetings, grateful staff are pouring their hearts out into their gratitude for each other in ways each of us have contributed to make it the amazing charter school it is.

Also, want to take this time to share how grateful we are for your united support opposing Senate Bill AB 84. As a school we remain committed to doing what we can to support our opposition, including traveling to Sacramento and participating in silent protests at senators' offices across the state. Together with many other families, learning centers, mayors and senators that now side with us, we can stop this bill that threatens our family's right to choose their child's education. Thank you so much for your continued support. We recognize the need to prevent fraud from occurring within charter schools, but feel strongly that this is bureaucratic overreach. More legislators are listening to our stories and learning more about this bill and how it could potentially harm our families. Hopefully the next time we see each other we'll be celebrating defeating this bill.

BARKE: Thank you Heidi.

SPARKS: Okay, we have Stacey and Lucas is cleanup.

STACEY: Hi, good evening. My name is Stacey Cohn. As vice president of Irvine International Academy PTO, I want to first thank the board for closing all allegations that were brought to our attention. These concerns ranging from flag removal and unsupervised travel to textbooks purchases have either been found to be of no concern or were easily and effectively remedied. This resolution speaks to the IIA's commitment to maintaining a transparent and accountable environment for everyone. This positive outcome is a direct result of the board members here and IIA's dedication to listening to all of the voices. The process of addressing these issues with significantly strengthened by the public comments from both parents and students. Parents, your courage to step forward and share your perspectives, ensure a fair and just process of investigation leading to solutions that truly reflect the needs and values of our community. I want to give a special thank you to our middle school students who shared their personal firsthand middle school activities and curriculum.

Their unique insights and direct experiences provided a complete picture allowing us to understand the impact of these initiatives from the student's perspective. Finally, I want to express my profound appreciation for the moments when both students and parents shared their very satisfied, very private and very personal stories of IIA's special education department. These testimonials are a testament to the dedication and success of our special education staff. Moving forward, let's carry the spirit of open communication and collaboration into all endeavors. By continuing to listen to one another and valuing every voice, we will undoubtedly build an even stronger, more supportive and more successful community for all. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you.

SPARKS: And so, Lucas is up and that'll be our final speaker.

LUCAS: Dear Orange County Board of Education. My name is Lucas Chao and I was a student in Ms. Greengard's fifth grade class at Irvine International Academy this past year. I want to take a moment to thank the OCBE, the state-run director of security for the educational testing service or ETS, the IIA leadership team, especially Mr. Schmitter and Ms. Greengard for your integrity, support, and commitment to due process. A few weeks ago, we took the CASP test. Our school had recently earned the title of California Distinguished School and we worked hard again this year to do our best. Ms. Greengard reminded us to take our time and check our work and we each took the test quietly and independently. I was surprised and scared when I was later called to the principal's office and was asked if Ms. Greengard had helped us during the test.

I told the truth and she did not. She has always been honest and focused on helping us learn the right way. The director of security for the educational testing service, ETS, concluded, "We found no evidence of a security breach, coaching or cheating." ETS concludes that, "Your team, IIA, has exercised due diligence in addressing this matter. We have found no evidence to support the allegations. Accordingly, we are closing our investigation." So today, I want to say clearly on behalf of the fifth graders in Ms. Greengard's class, we did not cheat. Ms. Greengard did not cheat. She gave us strong instructions all year and Mr. Schmitter investigated fairly. And finally, thank you to the ETS and OCBE for clearing us of false allegations of cheating. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you for that wonderful update, Lucas, we appreciate you following through on that. Thank you.

SPARKS: Thank you.

BARKE: All right, I think that's the end of public comment. So next I'll ask for a motion to approve the consent calendar.

SPARKS: Motion. So moved

WILLIAMS: And second.

BARKE: Wonderful.

WILLIAMS: Roll call.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

BARKE: Great. Do we have any charter submissions, Renee?

HENDRICK: We do.

BARKE: Okay.

HENDRICK: You have some lovely binders in the back that [inaudible]. We have the STEMbridge Academy is the new countywide charter petition. It was submitted in June. The public hearing will be September 3rd and board action on October 8th.

BARKE: Great. Okay. So, everybody remember their binders.

WILLIAMS: Okay.

BARKE: And maybe for those that aren't here remotely, we can deliver them.

HENDRICK: We will deliver them. Yes.

BARKE: Great. Okay. Board recommendations. Let's see here. Adopt resolution 20-25 in opposition to, did we do that?

WILLIAMS: No. May I make the motion to do such?

BARKE: Of course.

WILLIAMS: Yeah. Okay, very good.

BARKE: Of course you may.

SPARKS: I'll second it.

BARKE: Okay. Oh, gotcha. Okay. Sorry. Because I saw it earlier.

WILLIAMS: Right? You just signed it.

BARKE: Yes, yes. Actually, I asked to do that, so I'm thrilled that we're doing that. I'm just a little bit confused. Sorry about that. Anyway, we agree with Heidi's comments and we agree that it is overreach by Sacramento and that we really want to protect our charter schools and not give them more laborous activities to do. And financially it would be very hurtful. So, for many reasons that are in the resolution, does anyone want me to read it? It's online. I can read it if anybody wants me to, but it's basically to talk about Sacramento overreach. Would you like me to read it?

SPARKS: Yeah.

BARKE: Okay. All right. So, I'm going to go ahead and read it. "Whereas the Orange County Board of Education is committed to supporting a wide array of educational options to meet the diverse needs of all students in Orange County. And whereas the board recognizes the value of flexible learning models such as charter schools and non-classroom based programs in supporting student success.

And whereas the board is concerned that Assembly Bill AB 84 could significantly impact the funding and operations of these alternative educational programs, potentially limiting access to educational opportunities for students who thrive in these environments. And whereas the board believes that AB 84 could negatively affect students' access to robust educational experiences and real-world learning opportunities. And whereas the board is worried that AB 84 could divert

funds from student-centered programs to increased oversight and record keeping, which could undermine the ability of certain schools, specifically charter schools and non-classroom based programs to deliver effective instruction. Therefore, be it resolved, the board opposes AB 84 and urges the California state legislature to reject this bill as it would have detrimental impact on the board's mission of supporting appropriate educational opportunities for all students in Orange County. The board will advocate for policies that support student learning while also promoting educational choice and flexibility for families and schools. The board will work with stakeholders including parents, community organizations, school districts, and other county boards of education to raise awareness about the potential negative impacts of AB 84 on students in schools.” And it will be adopted today on the 9th of July. So, all right, so we had a motion, was there a second to your motion?

SPARKS: Yeah second.

BARKE: And Lisa seconded. Okay, so I think we just need roll call.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

WILLIAMS: May I make a couple statements?

BARKE: Yes. We're moving on to item number 15 and I'll turn the floor over to you.

WILLIAMS: Well, I was just going to make some statements on 14 then I'll go to 15.

BARKE: I'm sorry. Oh, sorry. Sorry. Go ahead please.

WILLIAMS: These are very spontaneous conversations that occurred. Nothing is rehearsed here, so...

BARKE: Obviously.

WILLIAMS: It's the way life is. Okay. So, Darou you're going to send this to our elected state legislators out of Orange County and then to the chairman of the various committees up in Sacramento for this resolution. And of course, Mr. Thomas Sheehy, who is our lobbyist.

SISAVATH: Okay. And anyone else who wants it.

BARKE: Exactly. Anybody who wants it. I know some charter schools like Heidi was asking for it. So yes, we'll share it far and wide. Anybody who's interested, it's a public document. It will be on our website, but we're happy to send it to you directly.

WILLIAMS: Excellent.

BARKE: Thank you.

WILLIAMS: Thank you for the permission to introduce item number 15, the board ad hoc committee recommendation for the board liaison. This was a very spontaneous ad hoc committee de facto because no other board members were available at the time, kind of hard to get five people into a room at the same time. So, the de facto committee was made up of Tim Shaw and myself. At the interview we had Dr. Bean, Renee, and Greg Rolen. As a historical review, we had something like 10 or 12 applicants that applied. And out of those 10 or 12 that applied Dr. Bean and myself, we reviewed them and we selected three to be interviewed. All three applicants were excellent applicants. They could have filled it, but after quite a considerable discussion and debate, along with the good employer, Dr. Bean, who is always the employer of the county, he agreed that our man who we selected Mr. Brandon Guevara will be, if the board agrees, we're going to vote on that.

He'll be our first board liaison. Let me give you a little bit of background. Brandon is young and handsome obviously. He has a master's in public administration from the Grand Canyon University. He has a political science bachelor degree from UC Irvine. He brings in a lot of experience in public policy, election, volunteer, grassroots mobilization. And he has also a history of working the restaurants and hospitality. So, he has a very nice calming effect to him. He dresses impeccably. The strengths that was rated by our staff. And who is that staff member again, who did this evaluation?

HENDRICK: Stephanie Thomas, the recruiting team.

WILLIAMS: Stephanie Thomas. Again, reach out to Stephanie. She is incredible. Her strengths that she noted for Brandon were comfortable leading diverse community initiatives, public speaking, event coordination, strong work ethic, ability to manage data and communications under pressure and bilingual in Spanish. He's active in community and political outreach across Orange County. And overall, Dr. Bean, if you want to say a few words, you thought that he was going to be a good fit because he's going to work directly under you and Greg Rolen and Renee.

BEAN: Yeah. We're very pleased to take your recommendation and whatever this board would recommend. But I mean obviously Brandon was very sharp in that interview, answered your

questions and our questions very succinctly. [inaudible] brings about great experience that this board is looking for to support the board, so.

WILLIAMS: Very good. And one of the first tasks you've just learned this evening is the start date, if the board agrees will be July 15th and the next day you're flying up to Sacramento to lobby in favor of a bill that we're or...

BARKE: To lobby against.

WILLIAMS: To lobby against. Excuse me. We'll take, Renee will take care of all that. But you're going to lobby against, is it AB?

BARKE: It's AB 249 is the one, yes.

WILLIAMS: Okay.

BARKE: Yes. And if you have time and you're there early enough, AB 84 is being heard that same morning? Yes. Yes. So that's going to be quite a crowded room. I think you'll have to be there very early to get into the room of AB 84. But you can do a me too, I believe if you, yep.

WILLIAMS: Okay. So, Mr. Rolan will help you with all that. Tim, do you have any other thoughts? You were the main board member on that committee.

SHAW: I agree completely with you, Dr. Williams. We had a terrific group of applicants. I always feel that the most difficult of votes honestly are when we have had to choose people. We always have a great pool of applicants it seems. But very happy to support the choice of Brandon. He did a terrific job and the interview and his resume was very impressive. So, I'm positive he's going to do a great job for us and represent us well. So, I'm just thrilled that we've found someone of his caliber to help us out.

WILLIAMS: Very good. Okay. If there's no further comments, I'll make a motion by this board to assist in approving the hiring of Mr. Brandon Guevara as the board's first board liaison.

BARKE: I will second your motion.

WILLIAMS: Motion, a second. Okay. Being that there's no further questions.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

WILLIAMS: Congratulations Brandon.

GUEVARA: Thank you.

BARKE: Okay, next we have number 16, adopt resolution 21-25 authorizing the categorical exemption of California Environmental Quality Act, CEQA requirements for the reconstruction of Rancho Sonado site.

WILLIAMS: I'll make the motion.

SPARKS: I'll second.

BARKE: Okay. We have a motion? A second. Any discussion? No. Okay, let's go for the roll call.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Yes.

BARKE: Okay, great. Moving on to number 17, I'd like to call Dave Giordano to the podium to conduct the public hearing.

GIORDANO: All right. Well thank you and good evening, President Williams, members of the board. I want to...

WILLIAMS: I'm not president anymore, sir.

GIORDANO: I'm sorry. I'm sorry. My goodness. We switched over earlier, didn't we? I'm sorry.

WILLIAMS: She's much more prettier than I.

GIORDANO: Well, let me start over. Well thank you and good evening Ms. Barke, members of the board. I want to thank you for allowing our superintendent to conduct this public hearing for public input on the Orange County Schools Educators Association proposal to the superintendent. And this is for the '25-'26 school year. And so, at this time, I'd like to ask Ms. Hendrick if we have any public comment cards?

HENDRICK: I have none.

GIORDANO: Okay. Hearing no public comments, we're going to close the public hearing.

BARKE: Thank you.

WILLIAMS: So, we're on 18.

BARKE: Yes. So, we're going to move on to 18 and we'll now conduct a public hearing on the superintendent's initial proposal.

GIORDANO: Yes. So, thank you again, President Barke, members of the board, I want to thank you again for allowing our superintendent to conduct this public hearing. And this is for public input on the superintendent's proposal to the Orange County Educators Association, again for the '25-'26 school year. And at this time, again, I'd like to ask Ms. Hendrick if you have any public comment cards?

HENDRICK: I have none.

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

BARKE: Okay, wonderful. Thank you. Okay, moving on to informational items, communication information and discussion. Now is anyone hitting that discussion? I'm not sure.

HENDRICK: It's just in your packet. That's the information we give you quarterly. Any salary changes.

BARKE: Okay, great. So, does anyone have any discussion on that or is that all right? Okay, then we'll continue moving on to announcements. Do we want to start with the esteemed superintendent?

BEAN: Yes.

BARKE: Okay.

BEAN: All right. As you know, I always like to give updates on our 5-3-1 and the work that our staff has been doing. A lot of things I'm going to share tonight mainly fit under our five key initiatives as a county office of education. Under that initiative, I wanted to share with you this wonderful event that our office, our team collaborated with Supervisor Nguyen, County Supervisor Nguyen and us put together what we called a empowering the future internships and career exploration. As you can see in the lower right picture, we had several hundred people attend this around Fountain Valley to learn more about different career pathways that students and families could learn more about. Senator or former senator and currently Supervisor Nguyen and I, we had this vision to not only reach the students because the students get exposure to this in school, but we wanted to reach the families because we wanted the families the opportunity to learn about what those career pathways exist, what exists, and how they can get their children through it. As you can see, it was a very well attended event and so proud of our staff and Supervisor Nguyen staff putting that together. Also, today I kicked off as a welcome and I'll be there on Friday as well. What we call now the National School Safety Conference that united educators and law enforcement. For the last 16 years, the Orange County Sheriff's Department, as well as Orange County Department of Ed has worked with David Long to put together this safety conference and this year's attendance drew over 500 participants from across the nation.

BARKE: That's amazing.

BEAN: Actually, across the globe. We have another country attending this as well.

BARKE: That's cool.

BEAN: We kicked that off today. Really great event. If you guys have time in the next couple of days, we would love for you to come join us at the Delta Hotel Anaheim Garden Grove. Also, we wanted to highlight our students in Orange County. We had students, historians that led California or represented California in the Nation, National History Day. And as you can see here, it was—the event happened in June and the locations at University of Maryland. Quick fact is that our students here in Orange County earned four national medals and three finalist honors and one special award as you can see here in the picture of that particular student contributing California's first place medal count for the second year in a row. We have really smart kids here in Orange County.

This is a picture of a wonderful fifth grade class at Martin Luther King Jr. at Santa Ana. Fifth grader has recently completed a 10-week curriculum presented by OCDE on youth substance youth prevention program. Then applied their learning by creating an educational and fun music video. Unfortunately, we couldn't get the video to show you, but it's pretty cool. Remember last

month we came in and asked for you to approve the application for the Golden Bell. Well, this is that work in action. On June 26th, we invited several as a statewide capacity building provider. We have invited several counties from across our state, 11 of them to come in for a strategic planning session and led by our county office of education. As you can see, those are leaders across California. So very proud of the work we do under TUPE. And I really think that we're going to get that Golden Bell Award for that program. And then finally just give you some updates on ACCESS, our big audacious goal. And Mari, you went to this.

BARKE: Amazing.

BEAN: It was just amazing when we go to Sunburst graduation...

BARKE: It is.

BEAN: Every five and a half months, but they graduated recently, 171 cadets. And I got the honor to follow a brigadier general who spontaneously just wanted to make remarks. And he went up there and...

BARKE: He's amazing, every year.

BEAN: Every year. And of course, I had to follow him.

BARKE: You did great.

BEAN: Which was, I'll never do that again.

BARKE: You held your own.

BEAN: All right, well I appreciate that. That was the kind of you, but never do that again. Okay. Never follow a general. Anyway, it's a great, great opportunity. I wanted to share this with you that the momentum under the leadership of Dr. Maria Poulin, who's sitting back there, the momentum of the work we're doing with ACCESS is building and it's such a positive momentum. We've created a ACCESS 2030 vision plan based on all the input from all of our sites and teachers and leaders. And they put together five goals to get us to 2030. And people are feeling very excited. Changes are happening, certainly in ACCESS, but really positive changes. Thanks to the leadership of Dr. Poulin and Dennis and myself. We just wanted to share some of those updates and look forward to next year at this time to share more about ACCESS 2030.

BARKE: Very exciting. Very exciting. Renee, you want to?

HENDRICK: So, we have our next board meeting is Wednesday, August 6th at 5:00 pm and the submission deadline is July 23rd, and packet should be delivered on August 1st.

BARKE: Okay.

HENDRICK: That's all we have this time.

BARKE: Okay. Legislative updates.

HENDRICK: Actually, Tim has asked to share an item with that. So, I think, oh, Greg is right here to get it ready for you. I'll do it for Greg. And so, I guess it's a little bit of background. We have our two stars that were testifying, and so we wanted to show you what that looked like. And this is in an opposition to 249, is that correct?

BARKE: Yes.

SHAW: Good morning. My name is Tim Shaw. I serve as a trustee on the Orange County Board of Education. This is the third time. In the last four years, we've been discussing legislation that would move the elections for our board. Only this time we'll change the elections for five county boards of education. Governor Newsom previously vetoed this idea last year in the form of SB 907, signing costs and the need to respect local control. And that was when it was only affecting the Orange County Board of Education. SB 249 will obviously have higher costs and more blatantly strip away local control. Our board voted unanimously to oppose this bill because it is unnecessary. Respectfully, we do not believe senators and assembly members from around the state need to decide when we hold our elections. This is certainly a matter that can be left for local government to decide.

A valid argument exists for both the general election or the primary election. Turnout does tend to be higher in November. So, it can be argued that results are more representative of the district. It is also true that the November ballot tends to be much longer giving the voters many more contests to wade through. The problem of ballot fatigue is well-documented. In our county, we hold the election in the primary allowing the voters to make the contest for county board of education, a contest of high importance, not a contest buried beneath pages of other races. We believe that elevates the importance of these offices. Our neighboring county to the north, you may have heard of Los Angeles, does not hold elections whatsoever for their county board of education. If the members of the legislature are interested in bringing a better democratic representation to a county board of education, obviously Los Angeles County would be the place to start where they are appointed and not elected at all. So, we ask that the legislature respect local decision making and reject SB 249.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you. And you have two minutes as well.

BARKE: Good morning. Mari Barke, vice president of the Orange County Board of Education. I'm also here to express my concern regarding the continued efforts by our state legislature to reallocate taxpayer funds towards shifting our elections from the primary to the general election, giving the pressing issues our state currently faces such as rising crime rates, homelessness, ongoing fire recovery efforts, escalating gas prices, it's disheartening to witness this matter repeatedly prioritized. This is also my third time going through this. Moving our elections to the general election creates confusion as well as voter fatigue. The primary election provides an important opportunity for us as board members or candidates to distinguish the role of the county board of education from the local school boards in the cities we represent. We all represent several cities, and in each of those cities, they have as many as two to four board members running. And so, by lumping us in, it's created quite a bit of confusion for them. This distinction

is vital, especially since each of those cities already has so many other candidates on their ballot in November. Considering the state's current budget concerns, I do not believe that that Assembly Bill 249 should be a legislative priority. Furthermore, I'm puzzled as to why this bill is being reconsidered, especially after the Governor vetoed it last year, citing the importance of local control among other issues. Thank you for your time this morning and consideration of this important matter.

Okay, good job, Tim. Any other...

WILLIAMS: Good job, Mari.

BARKE: Thank you. Any other legislative updates?

SHAW: Just to make sure everybody knows that it was, we might've said the AB 249. It's actually SB 249. The author of the bill is a State Senator Tom Umberg. When a senator authors a bill, it's Senate Bill 249 as opposed to when an assembly member offers it, offers it. But it did pass that day out of the assembly elections committee. It's gone to the Assembly Education Committee where it'll be heard next week. We've been raising those arguments. I really appreciated what Mari's argument was about distinguishing when we're elected to versus what. When I'm talking to people about being on the board of education, the Fullerton High School District takes in much of my area and people might be like wondering, are you running for the high school board? No, no, the county board. Having our elections happen at different times. I think that was a very good point, Mari, to kind of give that distinction to the voter as well. But anyway, it's continuing. It's been passing committee, so we'll see what happens at the assembly education committee.

WILLIAMS: Tim, I have a question for you. Is that bill being heard next Wednesday also?

BARKE: Yes.

WILLIAMS: What time is that bill being heard? Do we know?

BARKE: 1:00 pm.

WILLIAMS: At 1:00 pm. And what's the other bill, Mr. Rolan that we're going to send Brandon up to?

ROLEN: AB 84.

WILLIAMS: AB 84. Okay. So maybe can we get Brandon up the date on 249? And can you do both that same day?

ROLEN: Yes.

WILLIAMS: Is that possible?

BARKE: You could do a me too, for sure.

ROLEN: He can do me too. And he can probably sit in the well and testify just like our distinguished board members did.

WILLIAMS: Okay. So, a lot of learning.

ROLEN: Welcome, Brandon.

WILLIAMS: Very good.

SHAW: Mari, weren't you going next week too?

BARKE: Yes. Yes, I am planning on going next week.

SHAW: I had some more stuff going on that day, so I'm afraid I can't go out myself next week.

BARKE: It will not be the same without you Tim, but I'm sure Brandon and Greg can cover it. But we appreciate because we know how busy you are, Tim, and the fact that you have been up there testifying consistently is very appreciated by this board and community.

SHAW: My privilege.

WILLIAMS: Absolutely. And to you President Barke, it is difficult traveling up there, taking away from your personal time and making that trip. It's a one or two day trip and sometimes the outcome is already known and that makes it even more frustrating because it's always along the party line vote that these votes are taken. We have the political majority up there who just wants to weaken this board and wants to take away local control, and we're always sitting there fighting them. This is our third year in a row, so it's a lot of fatigue that sets in. So, I want to thank you and Tim for doing that.

BARKE: It's my pleasure. Regardless of the outcome, our voices need to be heard. And last year we testified and the governor vetoed the bill, so I don't understand why he might not do that again, but we need to let him know how important it's to veto the bill. We'll be back next Thursday and we'll report out and maybe even have a fun video at the next meeting. All right. board member comments.

SPARKS: I would just want to put a shout out to Tom Sheehy and Brena Sheehy because they really do a lot of help in guiding us when we go up to testify.

BARKE: Yes.

SPARKS: And also Mr. Rolen also helps us a lot.

BARKE: And when we can't make it for certain meetings they cover for us. There have been times when board members like today, if there were here, we couldn't make it because we're

here. So, there's times that they do cover us at meetings and they do guide us very, very well. Yeah, good comment.

WILLIAMS: I have no comments.

BARKE: Okay. Any comments from Tim?

SHAW: I just wanted to say thank you to my dear colleagues for electing me as the vice president this coming year. I'm very honored and excited to do that. Serve alongside the great President Mari Barke.

BARKE: Thank you Tim. Jorge.

VALDES: I guess I would just say I'm having a great time in Memphis, Tennessee. If you've never been in here before, they have a really, really nice downtown area, great restaurants. We had lunch at BB King's restaurant. We're probably going to go to Graceland on Saturday. I'm at a baseball tournament with my son, which is a week long. And the baseball part of it is a very arduous experience. But the Memphis Tennessee experience has been fantastic.

BARKE: Well, we are so thrilled that you're having a wonderful time and thank you for taking time away from all the fun and family to join us tonight.

SPARKS: And I just want to add one...

VALDES: Wouldn't have it any other way.

SPARKS: I just want to add one comment. I want to thank President Barke and Vice President Shaw for being willing to step up and do the executive committee work. It is a lot of work, and so I really appreciate you all doing that.

BARKE: Well, thank you. I am honored to be elected as president. I look forward to serving the next year. We're going to have a great year. We're going to do great things for the kids, for the community. We're going to fight where we need to fight. We're going to bring things up that we need to take care of. I'm looking forward to it. And I know with my esteemed colleague Tim Shaw, it'll be great working with him. I've worked with him for a while. Looking forward to Brandon, our new board liaison as well. It's going to be a great year ahead and our wonderful staff, Renee and Darou, and we can't do it without you guys. We love our superintendent, we love our council. We're really looking forward to everyone working together and everyone in the audience, all the support, and we really enjoy what we do here. Thank you for giving us this opportunity to serve you.

WILLIAMS: A motion for adjournment?

BARKE: Yes, Dr. Williams. Oh, just one quick thing, just Darou, will you send us information on the safety conference the next couple of days in case any of us can go, just the timings and the location and then if we can do that, I would love to do that. And yes, you may adjourn. Yes.

WILLIAMS: Oh, just for the record, there's no closed session, so nothing to report out.

BARKE: Oh yes.

WILLIAMS: So that has to be for the record.

BARKE: I'm sorry, Greg, did you want to say anything?

ROLEN: What he said.

BARKE: Okay, perfect. Perfect. Thank you.

WILLIAMS: I make a motion for adjournment, President Barke.

BARKE: Well, thank you. Meeting is so adjourned.