

BARKE: For the benefit of the record, this regular meeting at the Orange County Board of Education is called to order at 4:02.

SISAVATH: Trustee Sparks?

SPARKS: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Valdes?

VALDES: Yes.

SISAVATH: Trustee Shaw?

SHAW: Here.

SISAVATH: Trustee Barke?

BARKE: Here.

SISAVATH: Trustee Williams?

WILLIAMS: Present.

BARKE: All right. May I have a motion for adoption of the agenda?

VALDES: So moved.

SPARKS: Second.

BARKE: Thank you. All those in favor?

SPARKS, VALDES, SHAW, BARKE: Aye.

BARKE: All right. I don't think anybody's opposed. Are you in favor, Ken? Oh, is he gone? Okay, never mind.

HENDRICK: I think he had a conflict; he'll be back in after the inter-districts...

BARKE: Okay. All right, so it passes 4-0. And then a motion for the approval of the minutes.

SPARKS: So moved.

VALDES: Second.

BARKE: All right, all those in favor?

SPARKS, VALDES, SHAW, BARKE: Aye.

BARKE: All right. 4-0. All right. And now we are going to leave this. Oh, do we have any comments?

HENDRICK: We have none.

BARKE: Okay, great. So, we're going to now go to closed session until 5:00 PM.

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

BARKE: Thanks for your patience. We're excited to see everyone here tonight. We'll start with our invocation. And our invocation is with Nelson Cook, Coaches of Influence. Thanks for being here tonight.

NELSON: Thank you for the privilege of being here. It's good to see you all again. Is everybody in here happy?

AUDIENCE: Yes.

SPARKS: Woo-hoo. Super happy.

NELSON: Oh, I tell you, what is that 30%? Okay. Well, before I pray, I just want to share a brief fable that applies to all of us and it's about this. There is a donkey and a tiger arguing about the color of grass. The donkey says, "It's blue", the lion says, "It's green". They decide to go to the lion to have him make the final judgment. They tell him about it, and they say, "What color is it"? And the lion says, "It's blue". The donkey runs off away. Just happy that he won the argument. The tiger stands there and he says, "Why did you say that? You know it's green". And the lion says, and this is the principle I think we all need to think about. He said, "You never argue with a donkey". He says, "Because you are too regal of an animal to do that". And so are you and I. We have all been made in the image of God, and we are too regal to get caught up with all the secondary issues of life that allow anger, disunity, frustration, all the stuff that goes on. We can be better. We can do better. Right? Right?

AUDIENCE: Right.

NELSON: Thank you very much. Okay, I will pray now. Father, I want to thank you for this board. I want to thank you for the privilege of being here. Thank you, for each person that has been committed to serving on this board, some for a longer period of time. Lord, I pray for them to have wisdom, knowledge, understanding, and discernment that they would know the way you would have them to go. Because when we allow the final decision to be made by you, it will be eventually or immediately the right decision. I thank you that the Bible says, "In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you". And as some people know, my first wife died of brain cancer, leaving me with three little girls, but what a privilege to raise them as difficult as it was. Now my current wife has cancer, but we are walking day by day

knowing you are in charge of our lives, and we are living the best lives. Circumstances do not determine our attitudes and the way we resolve problems. Thank you, Lord God, for your love and mercy and grace that you pour out on us daily. May we be open to receive it. May this board be open to receive it, and may we accomplish great things for you and the kingdom and this Orange County education system and I ask it in the wonderful name of Jesus, and everybody said.

AUDIENCE: Amen.

NELSON: And everybody said.

AUDIENCE: Amen.

NELSON: Thank you very much. A little feeling there.

BARKE: All right, next I'd like to mention, I think some of you have heard before you've been here before that we have Sam and Arvin here from Beckman High School for their government class and I'd like to invite both of them up to do the Pledge of Allegiance. Come on. Come on. Right here. You guys do know the pledge, right?

WILLIAMS: Go ahead and get at the dais. This is a time for your command presence. Speak to us and command us.

ARVIN: I'm sorry, but I get like nervous. Is it okay if someone else does it?

BARKE: Just tell everybody, just put their hand over their heart and begin with you and we'll...

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We'll follow.

ARVIN: Okay. Put your hand on your heart and ready to begin.

ARVIN AND SAM: 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: Good job.

SPARKS: Well done, gentlemen.

BARKE: All right, and before we move on with a meeting, we would like to take a moment of silence. A lot has been going on in this country and beyond and I may not mention everything, but I do want to mention the assassination of Charlie Kirk. I want to mention the two-year anniversary of the October 7th attack, the church event in North Carolina and the Michigan incident. And like I say, there's others, but those are some things that we would like to take a moment of silence if you'll indulge us, please. All right, we're now ready to move on. Thank you. And I apologize for the no notice on the Pledge of Allegiance. You never know what's going to happen at these meetings. Do we have public comment?

VALDES: Madam president, would you like me to pinch-hit for Trustee Shaw?

BARKE: Yes, please. Thank you, Jorge.

VALDES: The first public comment tonight is from Tiffany Craft and Heidi Landgraf is on deck.

TIFFANY: Hello, good evening, and thank you for the opportunity to share public comments tonight. Thank you for the wonderful invocation and the prayer and thank you for the moment of silence this evening. As I stand at the podium, I am reminded of the robust seeds that Charlie Kirk sowed and the beautiful legacy that will be reaped from what has been sown. He planted a seed of patriotism and love for our country, especially the American dream and civic engagement. He planted a seed of knowledge of the virtues that our country was founded upon and carried a deep love for those virtues. Above all, he planted a seed of unapologetic faith teaching us and showing us through his actions how to live out that faith. To all the constituents and community members that show up to these meetings. Thank you. To all who share public comments. Thank you.

It takes commitment to be here and courage to speak. We need you all. Dialogue and discourse are sacrosanct to our constitutional republic. Please continue to show up. To the Orange County Board and our county superintendent. You are truly a beacon of light and a governmental entity that is a breath of fresh air. In spite of adversity, in spite of the persecution you face. And in spite of the slings and arrows aimed at you constantly, may your light continue to burn ever brighter. I know it will because your priorities, your actions, and your spoken words are motivated by your faith. In closing, I want to express sincere gratitude for your support of charter schools. Each of these schools is a blessing to the communities, families and students served. I offer my strong endorsement this evening for California Republic Leadership Academy and for the approval of its countywide charter. May this beautiful classical education model grow wings and continue to spread throughout our county. And may the demand for this model continue to soar. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you, Tiffany.

VALDES: Okay, Heidi Landgraf is up and Birgitta. Heidi, did I get that wrong?

HEIDI: No, I like it German. It's Landgraf.

VALDES: And Birgitta Lauren is on deck.

HEIDI: That's hard to follow. Wow. Okay. Good evening. Amazing board members and Superintendent Dr. Bean. On behalf of the families and my colleagues at Suncoast Prep Academy, I want to share my gratitude for continuing to believe in us and for your support as a non-classroom based charter school. I feel the leadership of the late Charlie Kirk's truly exemplified leadership. He deeply mobilized youth. He traveled college campuses, held open forums, and challenged students to debate directly with him. Even creating a prove me wrong set up where you welcome tough questions. He wanted students to not just hear ideas, but to engage, push back and find their own voices. This year we are inviting our middle and high school students to participate in young Men's and Women's Civic Leadership Conference on November

7th while discovering their path to civic engagement. The conference is a day filled with inspiration, leadership, and real-world civic action. In a world that often moves fast and focuses on the individual is inspiring to see young people learning to be part of something greater. How their voices matter and how our choices shape the future. Our youth are the future and we need to shape their minds in a way that empowers the future generations. We should all live like Charlie and learn the value of true leadership. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you, Heidi.

VALDES: Okay, Birgitta, you are up, and Mrs. Green is on deck.

BIRGITTA: Thank you. My name is Birgitta Lauren, and I thank you for your great leadership, especially when it comes to homeschooling. I'm a homeschooling mom of two little twins who's been here a few times. You might have remembered them. I'm also a holistic fertility coach, so I wanted to speak on Charlie Kirk. As I see every day, how strong families and intentional parenting shape the heart of our nation. Charlie Kirk often reminds us that or reminded us, sorry, that America's future depends on what happens around our dinner tables, not just in Washington. He's been a strong advocate for homeschooling because it restores parents in the primary. Is there something wrong with this thing or am I speaking wrong? Nurturing faith values and independent thinking. And he's also spoken boldly about our country's declining fertility rates, which is deeply concerning to me, knowing that the fertility rate is down about 70%. We need to restore that and it is possible naturally and holistically. He reminded us that raising children isn't just personal, it's patriotic. When we invest in family, faith in the next generation, we don't just grow households, we rebuild a culture of life, purpose, faith, and hope. Thank you so very much.

BARKE: Thank you.

VALDES: Okay, Mrs. Green, you are up, and Karen Jaffe is on deck.

MRS. GREEN: Good evening, school board. As an Orange County public school teacher and former CTA state delegate. I proudly stand here tonight to honor the life of Charlie Kirk. Charlie Kirk was a once in a generation mind and blessing to our nation. He set an amazing example for young people by encouraging them to have a strong work ethic, live a life of purpose and sexual purity, seek doing good over feeling good, and most importantly, put their faith in Jesus Christ. His legacy is one of courage, dialogue, love of country and faith. After his assassination, many of us in the faith community were in disbelief and pain. We knew we had witnessed the cruelest example of the spiritual battle that rages in our country. A reminder that this is not a gun problem that is destroying our country. It is a rejection of God problem that is destroying it.

We expected our local school districts to be united in the condemnation of this evil act of violence against the Christian conservative community, the faith community. Their decision to remain silent demonstrated how little regard these districts boards have for the faith community. They could have sent out a simple statement like this school board does not condone anti-faith violence. We respectfully stand with our faith community as they mourn. But no, they remained silent. On more than one occasion. I have watched Orange County families of faith address their local school boards regarding the harassment of students of faith whose concerns were later not even addressed. With regards to the over 100 public school teachers that have shamefully

reported, celebrated this horrific assassination. Many parents of faith recognize that attacks on Charlie Kirk are in truth attacks on them, on the conservative faith families who share his values. When teachers celebrated his death, it sends a chilling message that people of faith and conviction are unwelcome in the classroom.

In that sense, we conservative Christians are all Charlie Kirk now. The hostility directed toward him is felt by millions of families who see these comments as attacks on their beliefs, their values, and their children. That is why parents are so deeply upset and rightfully demand better. Parents who are appalled by what their children's teachers are saying or posting, have every right to demand higher standards. I thank this board for the opportunity to have a moment of silence to honor Charlie Kirk. And to the young people listening, I encourage you to live your faith boldly. Be a truth teller. Let it be seen in your classrooms, in your sports, and in your homework assignments. Do it courageously. Be like Charlie. We will honor this beautiful, courageous, God-fearing man by not remaining silent. This immigrant mom and teacher proudly stands with the cries of his grieving widow. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you.

VALDES: Okay, Karen Jaffe, you are up. And that is it.

KAREN: Good evening, Orange County Board of Ed. This week, the Jewish people are celebrating Sukkot. It's an interesting historical agricultural holiday filled with odd ancient rituals. One of those consists of building a temporary dwelling outside called a Sukkot. Here in California, that's not so bad. But where I grew up on the East Coast, it was always dicey considering the weather. As we step into the Sukkot, we are surrounded by a paradox. The walls are thin, the roof leaves and lets the stars shine through. The wind rustles the branches, and yet within it we feel safe. The Sukkot is fragile, is temporary and exposed to the elements, but it is also a shelter, a symbol of divine protection and enduring faith. On Sukkot, we remember that true security does not come from concrete walls or iron domes, but from the steadfastness of our spirit and the unity of our people. The Sukkot reminds us that even when everything around us feels uncertain, we can build a space of holiness and hope and belonging. The Orange County Board of Ed has certainly been a guiding light in building such a space as well as you, Dr. Bean. This year,,,,, the meaning feels deeper than ever. As we celebrate under the stars, there are still families who cannot because their loved ones are still being held by barbarians as hostages in Gaza and after I wrote this speech, we heard they may be coming home, please God.

Their absence pierces the fabric of our joy. We cannot sit in our sukan comfort while others remain in captivity. So tonight, we invite our symbolic guests. We also invite them in spirit. We bring their names, their faces, and their prayers into our fragile yet sacred shelter. Charlie Kirk once said, "Faith is courage that speaks softly". That is the Sukkot, a quiet declaration of courage. It is not a defiant strength. It is a faithful strength. The courage to build something beautiful in the open air to celebrate life even when the rest of the world trembles. Sukkot teaches us that fragility and faith can coexist, that the most temporary of dwellings can house eternal values, gratitude, unity, and resilience. As we eat, sing, and rejoice, may we remember those who cannot. May we draw strength from our shared vulnerability. And may our fragile Sukkot become,mes become beacons of unbreakable light for our people, for our hostages, and for all those who seek peace under the canopy of heaven. Thank you.

BARKE: Thank you, Karen.

VALDES: That is it for public comments. Madam President.

BARKE: Thank you, Jorge. Appreciate you pinch-hitting there. All right, next we have a presentation for the Civics Bee Championship and we're going to have Dr. Sparks speak on this.

SPARKS: All right? Yes. So tonight, we have a special recognition for an outstanding student, Arlo Fravien, who's an eighth grader at Walton Intermediate School. Arlo is our state California Civics Bee Champion for 2025. It's a big deal. The National Civics Bee is an annual competition that inspires young Americans to engage in civics and contribute to their communities. Arlo first competed in the regional competition against 20 finalists at the Nixon Library in April, where I had the opportunity and honor to serve as a judge. It was a really exciting event and I hope to be a part of it in the future. It was really, really impressive. So, then what happened is the top 10 students went to the Reagan Library for the California state finals and he took first place. Amazing.

So now Arlo will go on to represent California at the National Civics Bee Championship in none other than Washington, DC. On November 11th, he will compete against 39 other state finalists. And by the way, we expect that next year that we'll have all 50 states participating in this. Really exciting, it's kind of like the spelling bee, but it's the civics bee. So hopefully next year we'll have 50 states. All 50 states. And the winner will receive an award of guess how much? \$100,000. Amazing. There's a lot of motivation there, not only to learn physics, but there's a monetary reward there. Arlo is joined tonight by his mother and father, Charlene and Romain Fravien. We are proud of you, Arlo, for representing Orange County so well. We would like to present you with a special certificate to recognize your outstanding performance and your impressive civic knowledge and wish you the very best at the national competition. And so now we'd like Arlo to come forward to receive the certificate, and I think we'll have a photo.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Okay, everybody ready? 1, 2, 3. Perfect. One more. Perfect. And all right. One, two, and three. One more. Perfect. Awesome. Thank you, guys, so much.

SPARKS: You're going to kill it. You're going to do great. I'm proud of you.

WILLIAMS: Thank you for doing that, Lisa.

SPARKS: Oh, it was so fun. Wow. I mean, it was kind of stressful, but it was fun. Right? Wasn't that day at the Nixon Library? A little bit stressful for all of us. It was our first time, but you did a great job. I can't wait to see what you're going to do with the national competition. I know it's a little nerve-racking, but you're going to do great.

BARKE: It doesn't seem very nervous to me. He looks like he's definitely got this down. All right, may I have a motion to approve the consent calendar?

WILLIAMS: So moved.

BARKE: Second. Anyone?

SPARKS: Second.

BARKE: All right, all those in favor?

WILLIAMS, BARKE, SHAW, SPARKS: Aye.

BARKE: All those opposed? 4-0. All right. Next charter schools. Do we have any charter submissions?

HENDRICK: We have none.

BARKE: Excellent. And Aracely, would you please join us at the podium?

CHASTAIN: Good evening, President Barke, trustees and Superintendent Bean. Today the board will hold a hearing to grant or deny the charter petition submitted by California Republic Leadership Academy, Orange County. The charter school proposes to operate a classroom-based program serving students in grades TK through 12 for a five-year initial term from 2026 to 2031. The charter school operator notified six school districts of intent to open facilities. Fullerton, Huntington Beach City, Irvine Unified, Orange Unified, Saddleback Valley Unified, and Tustin Unified. The board held a public hearing on September 3rd 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 this board. Based on information gathered throughout the review process, including a clarification meeting held with petitioners on September 11th. Staff recommends approval of the countywide petition. Prior to board action, charter school representatives are allotted equal time and opportunity or 10 minutes, whichever is longer, to present evidence and testimony responsive to the staff recommendations and findings published on September 23rd. I now call representatives from the charter school to the podium.

GARY: Well, good evening, Madam President, members of the board, Superintendent Dr. Bean. First of all, we thank you for the favorable staff recommendation. We, of course, hope that you'll prove the recommendation tonight. I think that recommendation is based upon the working relationship that we've developed over the last few years, as well as the quality of our petition. So we humbly ask for your support tonight. Just as a quick reminder, CRLA is a virtuous leadership classical education program. It's a unique program. There's a niche. Parents love it. We're teaching young people how to engage in dialogue civically, how to talk with people they disagree with and how to solve problems together, among other things. And I think that couldn't be more relevant in any time in our history than today. We're here specifically because of the wait list. We have a lot of families that would like to get into our program, but we just don't have space.

So, with the approval of this petition tonight, should you do so, we'll be able to house the growth and the demand of our families. Also, I just want to point out that we've been preparing for this and training for this and we have a strong team and we're fortunate that we've been able to attract people that have experience as principals with administrative credentials that are willing to take positions on our team because they believe in the mission and we just have awesome people. So,

I just really would like our team to raise their hands, please. Our founder, also our staff, and Roy with our back-office provider.

These folks are really amazing and they're ready to help us launch our next school with your approval tonight hopefully. The last thing I'd like to say is last week we were fortunate enough to be approved for a capacity grant by the Charter School Growth Fund. The Charter School Growth Fund is a national organization, not a government entity. They're just a philanthropic organization and they raise funds to help high-quality charter schools replicate around the country. They don't select many schools to partner with. But after a year of conversation with them, they've selected us with a capacity grant that's going to help us do quite a bit over the next coming year, working towards a longer term financial grant from them as well. So anyway, we're grateful for that partnership. We're grateful for the partnership with the Orange County Office of Education. Your staff is awesome. We love working with them. We're grateful for them. We love you and our goal is to make you proud. So, we thank you. Thank you.

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

SHAW: Do I have them?

CHASTAIN: As there are no speakers. The public hearing is now concluded. The board has three options for action on a countywide petition. Approve the petition, approve the petition with conditions, or deny the charter school petition. President Barke, I now close the public hearing and return the meeting to you.

BARKE: Thank you, Aracely. All right, we'll start with Dr. Sparks, if you have any questions.

SPARKS: Well, I really don't have any questions. You guys have put such a solid proposal together. We've heard from you many times. I'm so impressed with what you put together and I'm ready to approve.

BARKE: Excellent. Tim.

SHAW: Remind me, Gary, how many do you have on your wait list?

GARY: 330.

SHAW: 330 right now. Okay.

SPARKS: I think you need to stand up there.

HENDRICK: I'm sorry, just because we're recording. Sorry.

SHAW: I repeated his answer for the mic, but all right.

GARY: I'll just say 330 on the wait list. I'll say the petition anticipates us opening with 180, so we don't feel like we'll have any problem filling up those 180 spots.

BARKE: All right. And it is going to be a really quick hearing since Jorge isn't here, so I really don't have any questions either. You guys do a great job. I know your results are the best in the county for classical education. Very impressive. I have visited, I've been to your events. You guys just do a great job. I know the community appreciates you as and excited that you'll be expanding. So, we're very excited about that too. Oh, Ken, sorry. Sorry, Ken, would you like to make some comments? I apologize. Before I was leaning to the right and I forgot. Sorry.

WILLIAMS: That's okay. No problem. I'm used to being forgotten.

SPARKS: I don't think so.

WILLIAMS: Gary, so for the record, your current charter is doing very well. You're at maximum capacity. And what is the wait list for the northern county?

GARY: Between our two schools, we have approximately 50 on the wait list for the North County School, 270 for the South County School.

WILLIAMS: Okay. So, the South County is anticipated to open when exactly?

GARY: Our decision will be based upon the families that are on the wait list. And those are primarily in the Saddleback Valley Mission Viejo area. That's where probably 85% of the wait list is in that area. So, our decision is driven by that piece alone, where the families currently live.

WILLIAMS: Okay. And how much do you have in the bank right now to start your new school with this grant that you just shared with us?

GARY: The grant is a capacity grant that they're going to help us hire consultants to do a couple of things, really develop our strategic growth plan included in, that's going to be quite a bit around our educational program, doing a detailed market analysis anyway, there's a lot that we'll go with a strategic growth plan and then also a financial plan to go with that. So, the grant will cover those specific activities. But financially, knock on wood, I mean, we are very prudent with our finances. We don't spend anything on anything that we don't need. So well basically, we're just awarded the California Department of Education, let us know that we will be awarded the \$800,000 startup grant for the Yorba Linda campus. That's going to help tremendously. They're just waiting for the superintendent to sign it, but the staff has said it will be approved. So yeah, we're in a good, solid financial setting, I would say. I think we have about 60 days of cash on hand generally, but we've been able to really, and we're going for a Prop 39 facility, so we won't need a lot of cash to put down for a facility. We'll just need to bring on staff early so we can get them ready to go.

WILLIAMS: Do you anticipate a fall 2026 start date?

GARY: Oh, 100%. Our goal is to open the next campus fall of '26.

WILLIAMS: Okay. And you're going for Prop 39 funds?

GARY: Correct.

WILLIAMS: Through Saddleback Unified School District. And how is that going as far as the dialogue and the rapport that you have with the district?

GARY: I think we're in the beginning stages of developing the dialogue, but the outreach with the families has gone very well, and we'll have plenty of signatures in order to have that discussion in earnest.

WILLIAMS: Very good.

BARKE: Thank you, Ken. I apologize again. With all that being said, I'd like to make a motion to approve the charter school California Republic Leadership Academy to operate as a countywide charter school for an initial five-year term, beginning July 2026 through June 30, 31.

SPARKS: I'll second that.

BARKE: Excellent. We have a first and a second. All those in favor?

BARKE, SHAW, WILLIAMS, SPARKS: Aye.

BARKE: 4-0. Congratulations. Okay. Moving right along. All right. Oh, this is a Jorge item, so we'll come back to nine if that's all...

SPARKS: Here he is.

BARKE: Oh, Jorge, just in time for number nine.

SPARKS: Just in time.

VALDES: Thank you for that, Madam President had to deal with something important. So, this is item number nine is really an extension of some of the changes I have proposed over the last few months to the MOU that the charter schools sign. And it came about when I had some interactions with the parents of the IIA parents maybe six months ago. And whereas I kind of thought a charter school was certainly going to have a complaint procedure, certainly going to communicate it to parents. A lot of them told me they didn't know that there was a complaint procedure, didn't know where to find it, didn't know that the school even had one. So, I just think this is good governance. Obviously, the charter schools are authorized by us, and I would expect that every charter school have a non-UCP complaint procedure in place, whatever it is. I would expect that that would be affirmatively communicated to parents on an annual basis and put up on their website, et cetera. And where, like I said, whereas I kind of think that this is something pretty obvious, it's obviously not obvious. I think it should go into our MOU where the charter

schools see it, and our charter division basically points it out and requires it. So that's why I think this is an important amendment or addition to our standard MOU.

BARKE: Thank you. Jorge.

WILLIAMS: Did you make the motion, Jorge? I'm sorry. Maybe I'm...

VALDES: I'm going to make, because I think we discussed this last time already, so I'm going to make the motion to approve the changes to the MOU in paragraph nine or paragraph nine of the MOU.

WILLIAMS: Okay. And I'll second that.

BARKE: Okay, great.

WILLIAMS: I have questions.

BARKE: Okay. First and second, and we'll start with Dr. Williams for the questions.

WILLIAMS: This is to Jorge and our council. So, the earlier discussions that we had on this MOU process, there were lots of different factors and metrics that we're going to use. Is that language in this current process? Mr. Rolan?

VALDES: I'm not sure what you're referring to.

WILLIAMS: Okay. So, we talked about earlier about the issues of controversy, the issues of curriculum, the issues of advancing certain policies.

VALDES: This is a different part of the MOU. We already passed that, I think it was two months ago. What I've added since then is to simply have a non-UCP complaint procedure in place. If you take a look at page 48 of the packet, and you'll see the red line. Every charter school has to have a non-UCP complaint procedure. Every charter school has to communicate it to parents on an annual basis. That's essentially all this says.

WILLIAMS: Right. So just for the record, so the non-UCP is going into this because parents in the past have not had the opportunity to vet their concerns, to vet their complaints in a way that gets to leadership in that particular charter school. Would that be a reasonable summary?

VALDES: Well, okay, the reason why I added this or came up with it was because of my interaction with the IIA parents. It was about five or six months ago. And like I said, whereas I seem to think that this is pretty obvious, it's just not obvious. It doesn't seem to be happening across the board. I think a good policy, I think this is good governance on our part to require the charter school to have this. And that's why it should go into the contract that they sign when they get renewed.

WILLIAMS: Right. And so, I'm just trying to make this obvious for the record. In the IIA situation, there was no avenue for parents to get their complaints and concerns to the executive director and leadership.

VALDES: Several of the parents told me when we were talking about some of the issues at IIA, they did not know that there was a complaint procedure in place. And whereas I think I determined that IIA did have one, the parents did not know that they had one. And that's part of the problem.

WILLIAMS: Right? So, we're going to pass this, and now each charter school has to have this process. Are they going to be required to post it and to inform their parents of such opportunities?

VALDES: I always think of my colleague Lisa Sparks, and not going too far in the things that I write because Lisa, kudos to you, but I don't want to tell the charter school how to communicate it. What I wrote is it can be communicated in the way the charter school would like. If you would like to propose a change to that, I'm happy to talk about that. But that's the way I wrote it, is that the charter school will make the decision on how it gets communicated.

WILLIAMS: It's going to be up to Aracely and her department to make sure that that part of this MOU is implemented. Is that correct?

VALDES: I'm sure Aracely would have to say that that's acceptable to her. Perhaps that's acceptable to her. That that's a sufficient communication.

WILLIAMS: Very good. Getting back to my original, now that we've clarified that for the record, thank you very much. Getting back to the original thoughts, A few months ago we talked about this and we passed something. Is what we pass a part of this MOU document here that we're looking in front of us?

VALDES: What we did with respect to curriculum and the other governance issues is a different paragraph. This is in paragraph nine of the MOU.

WILLIAMS: And what paragraph is the other issue of governance and public policy, and curriculum? If you can get that to me.

ROLEN: It's B3.

WILLIAMS: B3. What page is that?

VALDES: What we passed already was on pages 41 and 42. What I'm proposing is on page 48.

WILLIAMS: Right, right. This is just for my own curiosity. So that's on B2, Greg?

VALDES: Page 41 and 42.

ROLEN: 3.

WILLIAMS: Okay. Thank you.

BARKE: All right, any other discussion?

SPARKS: Yes.

BARKE: Okay.

SPARKS: I like it. And thank you for the shout out for academic freedom. I think it's important that there's overall policy, but that the charters can adopt in their own unique ways. One clarification I think for the public would be maybe coming from Mr. Rolen or maybe from you, Trustee Valdes is the difference in the uniform complaint procedures and the non-uniform complaint procedures.

VALDES: I'm going to defer to either Aracely or Renee, or perhaps Mr. Rolen on that.

ROLEN: Well then, I'll defer to Aracely.

SPARKS: Let's all defer.

ROLEN: Let's all defer.

SPARKS: Someone answer the freaking question.

ROLEN: The UCP process is governed by state regulations, very prescriptive. There's only certain things you can make A UCP complaint concern. Trustee Valdes's intent was to allow parents to complain about more generalized things that are not necessarily included in the UCP process.

VALDES: I guess that sort of begs the question, Greg, what are the items that you can include in a UCP complaint?

ROLEN: Williams complaints, books, facilities. There's a lot of anti-discrimination language in the UCP complaints. Sometimes it's restricted to employees and doesn't deal with parents or students, so it's a cough gas thing. But there are ways that a school district or a charter school can say that does not fall within our UCP complaint procedure.

SPARKS: So essentially, it broadens the complaint pathway.

VALDES: Right.

SPARKS: Which is a good thing in terms of, not that we want everyone complaining, but we want the voices to be heard, I think is what I'm understanding.

VALDES: I think it's a breakdown in communication when parents have to come here and ask us to get involved. This really needs to be happening at the charter school level. And I think this is part of the process where we're going to force that to happen. And I hate to see parents come here and they come occasionally and they say, "Our charter school's not listening, our charter school isn't doing this". And then one of us gets involved and I'm usually the one that gets involved. I just think that, well, I want parents to know that if they come here and say something to this board, I am definitely going to listen. I'm going to take action on it. I just think that this is part of good governance in requiring our charter schools to do this.

BARKE: Great. Anything from you, Mr. Shaw?

SHAW: No. Thank you, Jorge, for your hard work on this. That's great.

BARKE: Yes, Jorge, appreciate your time diligence in getting this to the finish line. With that, I will ask for the vote. All those in favor?

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

BARKE: All right. Passes 5-0. All right. Okay. Next, we have information items and who will lead the discussion on that?

HENDRICK: It's just in your packet for your information. This is regarding your board policy and the education code. And so, it shows I think there's four positions that receive promotional opportunities which had that increase above \$10,000. It's just listed in there.

BARKE: Okay. Okay, great. All right, thank you. So noted. Any questions on that? Anybody want to chat about that or everyone good with that? Nope. Okay. All right, well then, we'll move along because that doesn't require a vote. And now we're moving to announcements. Dr. Bean.

BEAN: Yeah. Did we have board liaison announcement first?

BARKE: Oh.

HENDRICK: Yes, but we're going to let you go first because I don't know if I sent it to them.

BEAN: Okay.

HENDRICK: So doing that right now.

BEAN: All right, so Shane, you'll pull that up? All right. Okay. So again, the report was centered around the 5-3-1 and today in particular, I want to show a couple of events and programs from the five initiatives. First one is integrating artificial intelligence. Want to let you know that Wes Kriesel, who is our AI lead, has been invited to speak to the Curricular and Improvement Support Committee. That's the CISC committee that the 58 county superintendents have. And so, he's been invited to that to actually speak about our framework that he has created. I would like to one day provide you that framework. You could actually probably get it online at

our website, but it's an incredible work that he's put together that got recognized by the county superintendents.

And so, they asked him to come and speak. He's doing a fabulous job on how we implement AI at the county office of education and how we can support districts through the implementation of AI as well. Another good news, piece of good news is although enrollment has declined for the past three years, we actually see an increase in students that are enrolled in CTE or Career Technical Education, as measured by any student that has completed two courses in CTE. So, as you can see in 2023, a little over 8,000 were enrolled in CTE Pathways. And then in this past year, over 11,000. And so, this is really good news because remember our mission is to lead the nation in college and career readiness. It's important for us to focus on helping our students get jobs, whether they get jobs out of high school out of college, we can see that students across the county, more and more students are getting into that despite the decline in enrollment.

Oops. All right. I want to share with you this center of this triangle. If you notice at the very top is our students. Those are students and ACCESS Connections. All the work that we do lift our students and that's why they're at the very top. But the center of the 5-3-1 is about instruction. And I wanted to share with you that the trend across the state, among the counties, among the California Department of Education, School Board of Education is to focus on literacy and the science of reading. And so, you are going to see much more funds and grants poured into our school districts around the science of reading. And so, a couple of weeks ago, Dr. Lee had invited Dr. Grace Kim to come and share the science of reading with her educational service division. It was very fascinating session that she put on, but that's all to say that academics should be the center of our work. In particular, literacy and language through content area.

Also, another event that highlights and lifts up this idea of literacy is the literacy and language network. This is the first network of our year with representatives from English language art leaders and coaches, and [inaudible] from the districts. And so, they met as a language and literacy team. It was a well-crafted meeting and they really talked a lot about, again, literacy. Something that I want this board to know is that USA has a birthday 250 years next year and we were asked by the USA 250 committee to help celebrate this monumental event. What we decided to do is we worked with several community partners on what we call USA 250 Orange County theme song competition. It's a competition for all of our students across Orange County. We're working with Orange County Music and Dance, USA 250. We've all come together and hopefully our students will have the opportunity to our high schoolers to compose an original song. And then we will choose the songs that we played throughout the different celebrations July 4th, 2026. So whichever the winners are, they'll be able to not only get a prize, an award, but they'll also get their songs featured in these celebrations.

BARKE: Wonderful.

BEAN: Yeah. Amazing. And then we wanted to also share that Dr. Marika Manos and Dr. Tao, who worked, have worked very hard on our Vietnamese and Cambodian and Hmong model curriculum, were invited to speak to our California State Board of Education on the model curriculum. And they did very well and they represented Orange County Department of Education very well. All right. And then I wanted to put this in there because our very own Chief Technology Officer Carl Fong, was awarded, or what was the award exactly called?

HENDRICK: He's actually was featured in an article for the California School of Business Officials. It's a statewide organization and they did a story on him and he was their cover GQ person. So, quite an honor, very wide, big organization.

BEAN: So not only is he our IT guy, but he's our GQ guy, but he also received the service award today for 40 years of service.

BARKE: Wow.

BEAN: A big congratulations.

BARKE: Is he here?

HENDRICK: No, he's in his office listening online. He's walking around.

BARKE: Congratulations.

BEAN: And then in Orange County Department of Education. We're about really lifting up the amazing programs and things that we do. Well, this comes from our communication team. They have created the first ever electronic directory of staff here as well as across Orange County districts, school board district offices. If you go to this website, click on that QR code, you can search any employee and where you can get a hold of that individual. Electronic. And you can make it one of your favorites or homepage on your phone so you have access to it all the time. It's pretty cool.

BARKE: Wonderful.

BEAN: And then just really quickly, in the area of lifting our students and ACCESS and Connections, Warming Hearts every year, we've been doing this for 25 years, where our employees will present gifts for underserved students during Christmas and their families. My family participated in this last year. If you'd like to participate in this as well, let us know and adopt a family. So just to contact Analee and she can help support that. All right.

BARKE: Thank you.

BEAN: You're welcome. And that is the superintendent report.

BARKE: Wonderful. Renee.

HENDRICK: In your packet, you have a couple items. One is the Williams annual report letter and you have the next board meeting is November 5th, and submission deadline for that is October 22nd. And the board packet delivery will be on Halloween, the 31st. With that, I think they're going to be able to pull up Brandon's presentation as we speak. Some technical difficulties. There you go. After. Well, I think it was more of my technical difficulties, not IT's.

BARKE: Nice of you to take credit for that.

GUEVARA: Hello, everyone. I'm not used to being up here with the sun still up. It's actually an early meeting today. I hope everyone's doing good. Honorable trustees. Dr. Bean, thank you for having me up here. This is our month interview for September for the board liaison position. And pardon me, is it the big green button? I've never used this one before.

BEAN: Yes. The green button. Green go.

GUEVARA: Awesome. Okay. Last month, if you all recall, I briefly went over our goals going forward for the position. This was in September. And I want to touch base briefly just where we're at with that because I believe we've had a really good month in terms of exposure and progress and where we're at with the position. I'm just going to briefly, very briefly go over what we went over last month. I outlined some ongoing goals, which is to deepen our relations with Orange County Charter school leaders and local school board officials and faculty and all that good stuff throughout the county.

Short term, we want to build connections with our statewide county board of education members. And near term we wanted to finalize a formal concrete description of board liaison responsibilities. And midterm we wanted to expand our partnerships with our community groups, our organizations, our 501c3s and all that good stuff. And I'm just going to briefly outline our progress that we've made. It's not up there, but I wanted to kind of keynote it because Jorge actually brought this up a couple of months ago about a newsletter for the board. And if any of you have had the chance to look at the OCDE website, it is gorgeous. It has all the information, it's so succinct, it's so easy to manage. And we kind of envision the same thing for the Board of Education website. And the newsletter is going to fit in similarly how to the OCDE newsroom is or that's what we envision, I should say.

And we've made great progress with that. We are collaborating with community stakeholders with nonprofits like the Freedom Committee. And just yesterday, I attended an event where Dr. Bean spoke with Olive Crest, which is a foster home. Correct me. How would you identify that organization?

BEAN: Organization that supports foster youth.

GUEVARA: Yes, our underprivileged youth in the community and even state senators we're partnering with. And so, as Tony Strickland likes to say, state senator, he says "Government that is closest to the people is best to the people". And we believe with this position, we can bring our board of trustees closer to the people and make our board trustees more approachable, understandable, and really humanize them. And that's what we envision with the newsletter. So we're really excited for that. I know I am at least. But moving on to here, what we've done this month, we've attended grant openings for schools like the Magnolia Charter, the Magnolia Charter, Magnolia Science Academy Charter, I should say.

We've attended several events with charter schools. We've familiarized ourselves with charter school staff, faculty, allowed ourselves just to kind of touch base with them and see where their needs are. And so, the board has a better understanding of where they're at. In the short term with county boards across the state. We are fortunate enough to be on a decision-making committee with the ACCBE, which is the Association for the California County Boards of Education. So

we've had, it's a newer organization if you haven't heard of it, but we've had a big hand in developing how that organization is going to function, what its priorities are, and we're really excited about how that's going to function going forward. Near term, we have our, with regards to the job description, it's a bit of a challenge because our responsibility, or my responsibilities, I should say, are seemingly every day expanding as the role becomes more and more integrated in our community.

It's a bit of a challenge, but it's a blessing that it's a challenge because it means that there's a lot of work that we're finding needs to be done and that can be done and that can be done for good. And lastly, we are, again, kind of similarly on that same talking point. We're just consistently generating new opportunities for community outreach in places that maybe we didn't really know existed before or maybe just flew under the radar. And like I said, just with Olive Crest, the Freedom Committee, and I'm sure more will be uncovered as we go forward. But very briefly, I believe that is it for me today. And just quick photo compilation of a bunch of things we went over. If you look in the bottom left, it's a beautiful campus in Anaheim and Jorge's district. I was lucky enough to attend with Dr. Bean and Dennis, and other staff. We have our heroes. We have an event here where we're appreciating our heroes in our community, our first responders. We have events with our state senators, we have events with our military, we have events with where the board's official positions on certain legislation and the list just goes on and on. I didn't want to bore you guys with too many pictures, but if you could just humor me there, and I believe that is it for me today.

SPARKS: A picture's worth a thousand words you know.

BARKE: Thank you, Brandon.

GUEVARA: That is very true.

WILLIAMS: I do have something, Brandon, before you leave. Could you please remind my colleagues about the opportunity to give these certificates that we've been talking about?

GUEVARA: Yes. If anyone in the room is familiar with what state senators do, you'd oftentimes see them attending grand openings. Or just recently, there was a mural that opened up in Huntington Beach and they'll present a certificate of recognition and it's a symbolic gesture from the state office recognizing it could be an organization, a nonprofit, individuals, even. And we envision the same thing for the Orange County Board of Education. And we're really excited to see how that unfolds. We think it's a great way just to really touch base and again, bring government closer to the people so that we can operate better.

BARKE: Love that idea. And we have done a little bit of that in the past when we've been asked, but we do forget, so we need to prioritize that.

GUEVARA: It's a big county, so there's a lot there.

BARKE: Yeah, absolutely.

SPARKS: Brandon, I would just say I appreciate the work you're doing and the expansion of the position and you adapting to those requests and these blessings in disguise. And so just keep us posted on what you think is working, what you think needs to be tweaked and adjusted. But we appreciate you being open to all these ideas as this position kind of formulates into what you think it should be and where we see help and aid. We really appreciate it.

GUEVARA: Thank you.

BARKE: Yeah, great job.

GUEVARA: Thanks so much.

BARKE: All right, next legislative updates. Tim, do you want to cover that?

SHAW: Sure. I wanted to thank and congratulate Governor Newsom for signing Assembly Bill 715. It was a bill our board had taken a position on trying to combat antisemitism and thankfully the governor signed the bill here just a few days ago.

BARKE: Yep, he did.

SHAW: So, thank you to the governor. Very happy for that. Let's see...

BARKE: How about defeating AB 84?

SHAW: Well, you can go ahead.

BARKE: Well, and also, I think we're all excited, especially those in the charter community that AB 84 died, so we don't have to deal with that and hoping that we see SB 414 come forward. So that was good news for school choice and school freedom. Anything else you want to cover on the legislative?

SHAW: No, there's a few more days left for signing or vetoing, so I guess we'll have to report on what he does the rest of the week at our next meeting. But...

BARKE: Absolutely. Any other committee reports? No. All right. Board member comments. Any board member comments?

SPARKS: Not really. I enjoyed the Olive Crest event yesterday. I was able to introduce Dr. Bean and make fun of Tim a little bit.

SHAW: Why would you do that?

SPARKS: You weren't there. They announced that you were there. So, I said, well, you get the one with a little bit better hair. So that was just kind of fun. No, it was good. It was a really great event. Really meaningful.

BARKE: Okay, good. All right, I want to start by, I understand that it's Darou's birthday tomorrow. Does anybody want to sing?

WILLIAMS: Yep, we do. Yes.

AUDIENCE: (singing) *Happy Birthday to you. Happy birthday to you. Happy birthday, dear Darou. Happy birthday to you.*

BARKE: All right. Yay. All right, and I just wanted to mention a few other things. We have been out in the community. We are at the Heroes Appreciation Lunch, a bunch of us, a bunch of us, including amazing staff. I enjoyed the CSDC conference, just ended this morning. So that was great to see Aracely and Anna, and Felipe, there as well as Greg. So that was great. And to see a lot of our charter leaders that were there. I believe I saw Gary Davis there and some others. What else did we have going on? I recently had an opportunity to speak at the Reagan Library alongside Andrew Hayes, who's a trustee in San Diego County, and Senator Tony Strickland, and Pete Peterson from Pepperdine University. So that was a great opportunity to talk about education, and I guess that's about it for what was going on this month. So yeah, that's it for me. Just keep lots going on. So, we'll keep up the great work being out in the community and expanding school choice. Thrilled to expand CRLA to a countywide charter. Congratulations on that. Thank you for coming out and thank you for not bringing all your speakers back because it allows us to end our meeting quite early. Oh, and Greg, our last but not least, to report out on closed session.

ROLEN: As to closed session number one, the board heard a report on a matter of existing litigation, but no action was taken. And that's it. That's why I'm last and least.

BARKE: I said last but not least.

ROLEN: I know.

BARKE: All right. Do I hear a motion to end the meeting?

WILLIAMS: So moved.

SPARKS: Second.

BARKE: Yay. All right.