

**BARKE:** Welcome, everyone. Hello. Welcome everyone. We're going to go ahead and start our meeting. And for the record, it is 5:05. Darou, will you please do roll call?

**SISAVATH:** Okay. Trustee Sparks?

**SPARKS:** Here.

**SISAVATH:** Trustee Valdes?

**VALDES:** Here.

**SISAVATH:** Trustee Shaw?

**SHAW:** Here.

**SISAVATH:** Trustee Barke?

**BARKE:** Here.

**SISAVATH:** Trustee Williams?

**WILLIAMS:** Present. I'd like to make a motion to adopt the meeting of February 2nd, 2026.

**SPARKS:** Second.

**BARKE:** Okay. Before we do that, I'd like to make a couple of amendments to the agenda, if you'll just bear with me. Sorry. You guys are great. You're on it here. I'd like to move number 19 to right after the Pledge of Allegiance due to a very long agenda in a busy room. That's going to be very quick. I'd like to do number 19 immediately following the Pledge. And I'd like to table number 20, since a lot of new information is available, lots of feedback, and a very long agenda.

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

**BARKE:** You'll second that. And...

**WILLIAMS:** Is there a second?

**BARKE:** Yes.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay.

**BARKE:** Yes.

**WILLIAMS:** If there's a second. The motion is to remove number 19 and 20, is that right?

**BARKE:** It's to move up number 19 to right after the Pledge of Allegiance and to table number 20.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. And my only objection to that, Mari, is that there's been a lot that has been said about this board. A lot has been said that we're puppets, we're rubber stamped, and we're bought and paid for by packs. And I think this is an opportunity here for us to, as a board, have an input in a very important subject matter and that's supporting high-quality charter school petitions.

**BARKE:** Well, I think those that know us know that we do only support high-quality charters. And if it's a discussion, I just would like it to happen at a future meeting because I just don't think tonight is the night. And I think there's a lot of information out there. And I do believe that most of the public knows that we only do approve high-quality charters. We don't approve every charter. We do have a high bar to pass for new charter. I'd like to go ahead...

**WILLIAMS:** With all due respect, Mari, I had the floor and you interrupted me. When items come before the board, and we've been talking about this for years now, this is the only time that this board has an opportunity to publicly have an input in resolutions and things that come from the staff. And to just take it off. And I'll give you a little bit of insight to where I'm going with this. I recognize that there's a lot to this and the resolution in its current language is not acceptable.

And I'd like to change that. And what I'd like to do is to make a subsidiary motion that there will be an ad hoc committee created. And I'll be more than happy to chair that. And if another one of my fellow board members wants to be a part of that, they're welcome to. But I would like to have board input into important language in an important resolution. And just to just put it off and then bring it back with no public board input, I think is an injustice to the process of governance. Governance isn't perfect. We've had and made a lot of, we've learned a lot about charter schools. It's kind of like making sausage sometimes. It just doesn't come out the way each and every single time. So, I'd like to leave it on the agenda and when it comes up, make the motion to lay it on the table and to create this adjunct committee and have board input and then bring it back to us. Whether it's March or April, at least it'll have board input. And I think that's significant because just having something come from staff and having something that the board doesn't have input in, now it comes before us. Now we're just delaying it even more. So that would be my request.

**VALDES:** I prepared quite a bit for number 20. I'm surprised that there's a motion to just simply take it off.

**BARKE:** Dr. Sparks, any comment?

**SPARKS:** What's the procedure when we have a motion in the second, then we vote?

**BARKE:** Yes.

**WILLIAMS:** Well, I offered a subsidiary motion. The subsidiary takes place first, and then you go back to the original.

**ROLEN:** And we usually do when we come to that agenda item, but it's okay to do it now. It's okay to have the discussion about the original motion to table. And then when that vote is

complete, there's a different discussion on the subsidiary motion. You have to make the motion articulate it. And then second and discussion.

**WILLIAMS:** My subsidiary motion is to keep it and remains on the agenda, but I'm just giving you a hint of what I'm going to do is to lay it on the table and make a motion to create a ad hoc committee. And Jorge, I know we feel very passionately about these things. You're welcome to be on it. We serve very well. We have resolutions sometimes that come before us. I put them, Jorge, put them where we come in and they're in draft form and they need to be changed and need to be altered, and there needs to be wordsmithing done. And I think this resolution as is is the same. I don't think there's, we've taken lots of risks as a board. We came out and had some of you may recall, we had a public forum on Common Core, the California Healthy Youth Act, where we stood up for parents to protect the innocence of their children. We had back in July and August of 2000, that forum where we wanted to keep schools open and stood out against mass. And we took a lot of risks. And so, this is, to me, not that type of a risk. I think it's very simple. It's very important though. So that's my subsidiary motion. Needs a second to move on.

**ROLEN:** Dr. Williams, I think we need a vote on the original motion and discussion on the original motion before we move to the subsidiary motion.

**BARKE:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Are you sure that's right.

**ROLEN:** I'm acting like I'm sure that's right.

**SHAW:** I thought you took the subsidiary first.

**ROLEN:** Okay, I'll defer. I'll defer to the parliamentary.

**WILLIAMS:** This is...

**SHAW:** I'm not the parliament.

**ROLEN:** Oh, you brought a book? I didn't bring a book.

**WILLIAMS:** Yeah. Yeah, you go on the subsidiary motion.

**BARKE:** Okay. Well then, if you get a second, we'll vote on that. If not, we'll vote on my original.

**VALDES:** I second Dr. Williams' motion, subsidiary motion.

**BARKE:** Any further discussion?

**SHAW:** Well, I'm just looking at the room here this evening folks, and I want to be very deferential to my colleagues. Of course. I just think we got a lot of people here who are not wanting us to belabor this, so I don't see a problem in just maybe waiting until a future meeting for that. So.

**BARKE:** All right. So, all those in favor of the subsidiary motion, which is not to take it off the agenda.

**VALDES, WILLIAMS:** Aye.

**BARKE:** All those against?

**SHAW, SPARKS, BARKE:** No.

**BARKE:** Okay. So now we'll go back and vote on the original motion, which is to table number 20. All those in favor?

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

**BARKE:** All those opposed?

**VALDES, WILLIAMS:** No.

**BARKE:** Okay. So, we will remove it from the agenda tonight. Thank you for your patience. I'm sorry, I was trying to keep the meeting short and didn't anticipate all of that. All right. So, I would like to welcome up Reverend Ray Jordan to the podium. He's the senior minister or the senior interim minister at Corona del Mar Community Church.

**HENDRICK:** We have not seen the pastor yet. He had confirmed, but we heard parking is a little bit of a problem.

**BARKE:** Okay. All right, come on up.

**SHAW:** A professional.

**WILLIAMS:** We love you.

**RABBI STEPHEN EINSTEIN:** It's always a joy for me to come here. I'm always warmly welcomed by the members of this board and I thank you. And I'm here as part of the group that will be receiving the resolution on International Holocaust Day. But since I'm here, I'm happy to offer a prayer.

**BARKE:** Wonderful. Thank you.

**RABBI STEPHEN EINSTEIN:** Eternal God. We come here tonight and many of us with concerns on our heart. We ask you that even if we don't always agree on every single matter, that as it says up there, we are one Nation under God and that means that all of us are brothers and sisters. We're all siblings because we are all your children. Let us always relate to one another in a caring and a loving manner, no matter which way a vote may go. Amen.

**AUDIENCE:** Amen.

**BARKE:** That was beautiful. Thank you so much and I appreciate you doing it on the spot. Next, we're going to have the Pledge of Allegiance led by our own Dr. Lisa Sparks.

**SPARKS:** All right, join me please.

**AUDIENCE:** I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

**BARKE:** Okay, so now we are going to call up, actually I'm going to turn it over to Mr. Shaw who asked to have this put on the agenda to just give you a brief recap.

**SHAW:** Sure. Well, there's a annual International Holocaust Remembrance Day. That is January 27th, and we recently commemorated that. So, I ask that we make a resolution as a board recognizing International Holocaust Remembrance today. I did have an opportunity today, I'm going to get it wrong. What was it called, the...

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Countering Hate.

**SHAW:** What was it?

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Countering Hate.

**SHAW:** Countering Hate event. Thank you. At UC Irvine, where they were discussing how ways to stop antisemitism and other hateful things that might happen in schools or other places. I was able to listen to a discussion about AB 715, a bill our board officially supported last year that will hopefully help discourage and dissuade antisemitism in the state of California. So anyway, they made a very nice framed resolution, signed by us on the board. So, do we still need to vote on this?

**BARKE:** Yes, we do need to vote on it. All those in favor of our resolution?

**SPARKS:** Aye.

**VALDES:** Can I vote twice in favor?

**BARKE:** Yes, you may vote. No, sorry can't allow that. Can't allow it. But all those in favor?

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

**WILLIAMS:** Parliamentary procedure. Sorry. We had a motion, a second right?

**BARKE:** Oh, sorry. I will make a motion to approve this. Will you second it?

**SHAW:** Second. Yes, I will.

**BARKE:** Okay, thank you very much. We're trying to rush things along here. All those in favor?

**WILLIAMS:** Discussion?

**BARKE:** Oh, any discussion?

**SHAW:** Apparently, Ken wants to have a discussion.

**BARKE:** Would you like to have a discussion, Ken?

**WILLIAMS:** Yes. Thank you, Tim, for bringing this before us in this body because I think there's nothing that I have been moved more than being at the Holocaust Museum there in Washington DC. Visiting it year after year after year, seeing the atrocity of what happened in that time period. Thank you to the Jewish community. Thank you for your spirit. Thank you for what you bring to America and the values. I love you all and thank you so much. That's all I needed say.

**BARKE:** Thank you. Would anybody else like to say anything?

**SPARKS:** That's a hard act to follow, but I echo your sentiments.

**BARKE:** Yes, and I absolutely echo it. And I truly am thrilled that we're able to do this this evening to recognize, I know we're a few days late. I was actually there. I think I was in Seal Beach the day that it was done. But I'm thrilled that we're able to do that for the Jewish community. May I now ask for a vote? All those in favor?

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

**BARKE:** Any opposed? Hearing none. It passes 5-0. I'd like to present this to you and if one of you would like to come up in just a few moments, just a couple of words come up to the podium. Do we want to take a picture or do you want to go up? Do we all want to go up? Yeah, let's all go.

**SHAW:** Let's take a picture.

**WILLIAMS:** Please the Jewish community.

**BARKE:** I'll come up for a photo. Okay.

**BEAN:** I am rolling over here.

**PHOTOGRAPHER:** I can't see Ken's face. Yeah. Perfect. There you go. 3, 2, 1. Gotcha.

**ALANA:** So, I know you all have a lot of important items here, so we don't want to take up any more of your time, but I did want on behalf of my community members to say thank you to this amazing board. You've all been such so supportive of our concerns and our issues. At this Countering Hate conference that Tim attend and I was as well. They talked about one of the things that we're always blamed about is, oh Jews, you always talk about the Holocaust, enough already and it's hurtful. But as a daughter of Holocaust survivors and as one who lives here in Orange County, I think there are a couple of reasons why we should never stop talking about it. And it's not really about us Jews just necessarily. Yes, the Holocaust with a capital H was where 6 million Jews were killed in a concerted state effort to basically wipe out an entire ethnic group.

But they didn't just kill Jews, they killed anybody that they deemed subhuman and not good enough for their Arian race. So, they killed gays, they killed lesbians, they killed people with disabilities, anybody who was not good enough for their Arian race. So, when we see

institutional hate rise, and it didn't start with gas chambers, it started with words, it started with little, oh, this is nothing really right, and then all of a sudden it became institutionalized. So, for us as a Jewish community, when we're seeing hate crimes against the Jews representing 70%, the state of California just issued their hate crimes report. 70% of hate crimes, the religious-based hate crimes were against the Jewish community when we represent only 2% of the actual population. So, 2% versus 70%. So, when we all go, something's going on here, there is a reason for it. And we come from families who were persecuted, who were pursued, we get nervous for a reason. And how do we fix that? By education, by telling the stories, by sharing our stories. This is why this board is so important. This is why all of our schools, we have to tell those stories because when we don't tell them, we don't learn from the past whether it's about us or about anybody else. This is what happens when hate goes unchecked. And so that's why it's important for us. Yes, it is about us, but it's also about everybody else. So, thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you so much, Alana. Appreciate that. All right. And we got so busy with approving the agenda. We did not go ahead and approve the minutes, so if I could get a motion for the minutes.

**SPARKS:** Motion.

**WILLIAMS:** Second.

**BARKE:** All right, all those in favor?

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

**BARKE:** Excellent. Anyone opposed? All right, passes 5-0. All right, now we'll move on to the consent calendar. Can I please get a motion for that?

**SPARKS:** Motion.

**WILLIAMS:** Second.

**BARKE:** Excellent. All those in favor?

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

**BARKE:** All right, hearing no opposed that passes. Charter submissions. Do we have any?

**SHAW:** We have the general public comments, right?

**BARKE:** Oh, oh yes, we, I guess...

**SHAW:** These are the general public comments?

**BARKE:** Yes.

**SHAW:** Okay. So, it looks like we have 13, I believe. 14. 13. Okay. Can we do two minutes? So, what I'll do, I'll read a name, and I'm going to read who's on deck, so whoever's on deck can get ready, so we can keep the line moving. So, we'll start with Katherine, followed by Laurie.

**HENDRICK:** And so those of you who have not been here before, here is the timer.

**KATHERINE:** Okay. Hi, I'm Katherine Lu and I represent our educators in ACCESS and Connections. I'm here tonight to ask you to invest in educators who make OCDE's most important, promise real. Dr. Bean, since you took office, you launched the 5-3-1 strategic plan and made something very clear. Your one big audacious goal is ACCESS and Connections, improving outcomes and opportunities for students in OCDE's alternative ed. That goal is the right goal. We serve students who need us the most. Students who are trying to rebuild their lives and the people who hold that work every single day are the teachers and staff in its classroom and programs. Over the past year under Dr Bean's leadership, we've seen the clear intentional steps taken to help support our students. But here's the truth, none of it succeeds without stable experience and committed educators. ACCESS and Connections does not rise because of a slogan.

ACCESS and Connections rise because educator shows up each and every day for a student who has given up on every other system. And tonight, we're asking you to support the people who are doing the heaviest lift in this organization with fair pay, competitive and respectful pay. This board has already shown it understand what it means to pay for leadership. There's management position on today's agenda with over \$15,000 raise. I'm not here to debate that. I'm here to point out the principle behind it. When the work is demanding and expectations are high, compensation must be reflected. That is the reality. So, I'm asking you to apply the same principle to the educators who carry ACCESS and Connections. Dr. Bean, if ACCESS and Connections are truly the centerpiece of your 5-3-1 plan, then fund it like it matters. Let's strengthen it with supporting the educators who make it possible. Let's do it the right way. Invest in the people who open doors, remove barriers and keep students from falling through the cracks. That is all of us in red here. That is how we turn audacious into achievable. Thank you for your time.

**BARKE:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Laurie will be followed by Debora.

**LAURIE:** I came here today for the third month in a row to speak up on behalf of all educators here at OCDE. I'm not going to argue about the fairness or equity and pay. Our superintendent clearly does not care about that or we would all not be here. What I am going to speak about is the staggering amount of public money that sits in our reserves, continues to be added to every year and steadily grows. A growing reserve is clearly not occurring because there is a budget shortfall or we would see some reduction in that number. We haven't in years. What is the purpose? This is not anyone's personal money. This is all taxpayer dollars. Why are we hoarding money? We have over 100% of our annual budget and reserves. Why do we keep adding to it? Literally, why does our budget only allow for a superintendent who has not yet earned his 10% raise and classified staff who not only received raises between 5% and 28%, but also received a COLA on top? Why does declining ACCESS enrollment means certificated staff are not able to receive above a 3.5% COLA? Our payroll is paid out of the same OCDE budget as classified and as your payroll paycheck is paid. With our declining enrollment, interestingly enough, ACCESS tuition still went up 9.5%.

If we are to meet the policy of being paid in the top quartile, why doesn't that apply to educators? If we look at our salary schedule and account for differences in contracted days, in order to be paid in the top quartile, we would need to raise our salary per column 24%, 14%, 11%, 10% and 6.2% for the last column. We are only asking for the smaller amount. With all the money hoarding, why would we not also invest in the future of our programs? What is the priority being displayed in OCDE under Dr Bean's watch, educators are on the bottom while Dr. Bean and upper administrative cabinet are the most important. Educators are at the bottom and have to fight to make a living. That is what the public should know and will know. Our superintendent gave himself and his administrative cabinet extraordinary raises. The teachers have to fight for crumbs all while OCDE...

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

**LAURIE:** That's all that needs to be said.

**SHAW:** Debora is going to be followed by Cara.

**DEBORA:** Good evening, President, Trustees, Superintendent and Members of the board. My name is Debora Wondercheck and I'm the founder of the Arts and Learning Conservatory. I'm also the arts commissioner for the city of Costa Mesa and I'm excited to be here this evening to express my support for Suncoast Charter and its countywide charter petition. For nearly 25 years, my work has focused on expanding access to high quality arts education for all children across the county, and particularly students from historically underserved communities. I've seen firsthand how students thrive when learning is personalized, culturally responsive and connected to their interests and identities. Suncoast stands out as a public charter that truly honors families as partners and meet students where they are. Its model allows flexibility and structure with credential educators and accountability. That's the balance that is exactly what many families are seeking today. As an arts educator and a community leader, I'm especially excited about the potential partnerships that bring high quality arts programming to students who might not otherwise have access and to all abilities to Suncoast countywide reach and student-centered approach to create meaningful opportunities to integrate the arts in ways that support creative and confidence and academic growth.

With Suncoast families living throughout the county, the countywide authorization makes sense. So, I thank you so much for allowing me to speak today on behalf of the charter and I respectfully urge the board to approve Suncoast. Sorry, Suncoast countywide charter petition. Thank you.

**SHAW:** Okay.

**HENDRICK:** Can you give us one minute please? Let us fix the timer. Give me one second.

**SHAW:** They're going to mess with the clock for one second. Before we get started again. We let you go, but if you're speaking to an item that is on the agenda, we'll take public comment at that time. Right now is general public comments for items that are not on the agenda. Okay, so if there's someone here for Suncoast or what are the other schools will call you up I think at that time. Is that right? Okay. I'm sorry.

**HENDRICK:** We have another stack.

**SHAW:** Yeah, we have piles for those over there. Are we ready for the clock? No. Should we just go off our phone?

**KAYLIE:** Good evening Board. My name is Kaylie Morrill and I am an ACCESS teacher, but tonight I'm speaking on behalf of Cara Pettite. Her statement begins, "I apologize for not being present to speak in person. My mother's having shoulder surgery today. Other people will speak about the financials of the contract negotiations. I want to speak about the emotional side of this impasse. I have been an ACCESS teacher since April of 2001. As an educational partner, I have participated in trainings, curriculum adoptions, committees, task force groups, and filled out many, many surveys in order to provide all students with rigorous academic opportunities. For most of my career, I felt energized and hopeful, proud to be part of the conversations, my input heard until now. For the past couple of years, I've been told to be patient with the new administration and the new administration and to learn new curriculum from Subject.com, new paperwork and new grading processes. I've been working hard to stay on top of the changes at this point what area am I in to be the best teacher for ACCESS students, but I'm not worth a raise. I'm not deserving of the same benefits as management and classified staff. My morale is at the lowest it's ever been. I feel hurt and underappreciated. I do not feel my efforts are recognized. I'm discouraged. Why sit on another committee to be told I'm a partner in the process when obviously I am not". Thank you for your time.

**BARKE:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Nancy will be followed by Christopher.

**NANCY:** Hi, I'm Nancy Major and as we're going to be hearing from a lot of charter schools this evening, I just came to stand to express my gratitude for the charter schools of the state of California. I've been involved with virtual homeschool independent study charters for over 30 years and seven different charters. I live in San Luis Obispo County now, but I'm in Anaheim at heart since I grew up there. What I've seen over the years is this, it started out very loose and it's tightened up and is working harder and harder to get the accountability that we really need with our families and our students. My personal children, I have three sons who are adult men with successful careers and happy marriages, but before they were born it was predicted that each one of them would be in a vegetative state. When they were not born in a vegetative state. It was predicted that they would never speak or walk. Then it was predicted when they spoke and they walked that all kinds of other terrible things would happen to them. I worked hard and when it took time for my oldest child to go to first grade, they took one look at him and I was a homeschool teacher for my district. They said she's the homeschool teacher, she should teach him at home and that's when we found our first charter school.

This person is a 40-year-old man and he's grown up and has a wife and a career. He has a master's degree in informatics. He's a UX designer developer and he's fine. My next child is severely autistic but has an IQ over 180. He's an optometric vision therapist and has a great life. My youngest has a PhD in analytical chemistry and as equally neuro atypical as my others, they had home, they had me, they had support of our teacher. They had an education that allowed my oldest to be 10 grade levels apart between spelling and mathematics and he now spells just fine

and he's published some novels. So, we're doing great. What the charter schools can bring is a freedom of the method of meeting the standards that we are required to meet in a way that meets the needs of our personal children. It builds bonds between parents and children. That would never change. I feel so grateful that during the process...

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

**NANCY:** Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Thank you. Christopher will be followed by it just says DA.

**MARCIA:** Good evening. Thank you so much. My name is Marcia Garten and I'm here on behalf of Christopher Gonzalez. You had to leave. Is it possible to set the clock so I could see the time actually going by?

**HENDRICK:** Unfortunately, it's not working.

**MARCIA:** Oh, okay. Well, good to know. So, I am here. Chris has given me his information to speak and we both are longtime ACCESS teachers and I just want to thank my colleagues who are so dedicated to helping the most needy students in the entire county. When we think about students who have been incarcerated, who have special needs, special ed, severe anxiety, bullied, gang members, these are the students that we work with and Chris, excuse me, asked me to share some of the value that teachers bring. I think a lot of times people don't realize that we all made choices to come to the classroom. Many of us have come from different careers and we're all here for a reason and part of that reason really is to shape students' futures, to foster academic growth, to model essential life skills like empathy and resilience. And we know how difficult it is in modern times with all the technological challenges that are out there. In addition, the key contributors of teachers are economic impact. A highly effective teacher can increase the combined lifetime of their classroom by over \$250,000. It's not about pennies and cents, but it is about investing in educators who have committed their careers to helping the most needy in this county. How much time do I have?

**BARKE:** 50 seconds.

**MARCIA:** Excellent. As a former toast master. Sorry, 50 seconds. Okay, great. So, I'm just going to touch over a couple of other benefits just to keep things in perspective. There's a holistic benefit for development because teachers nurture non-cognitive skills such as adaptability, confidence, and critical thinking. Of course we have mentorship, role models, community building, and especially nowadays in these very challenging times with all of the horrible ICE things that are happening that's affecting our attendance. I just want to thank everyone for being here tonight and being committed to education for all students in the county and also remember that teachers are committed to their success. Thank you so much.

**BARKE:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Thank you. Okay DA. Followed by Laurel.

**DA:** My son was in special ed and he lost both of his providers over summer. Last year his state exam scores dropped by 100 points. I asked for extended school year, but Theresa Grant denied my request because she says he showed growth in other areas. I really feel like Theresa Grant has bullied me and Suncoast has allowed it. I was anxious because I feel like he had a negative label and Suncoast services haven't been effective and Suncoast doesn't care. Theresa Grant refused to tell me who the psychologist was or what specific evaluations would be used. Suncoast served me legal documents the day before Thanksgiving and ruined our entire holiday season. Suncoast is happily taking money from the state but refuses to really educate my child. He needs intervention but they won't give it to him. He is not being supported and I fear his state exams will drop another 100 points this year.

I feel the administration has been very absent. I didn't even know who the principal was until this year and I had to use ChatGPT just to find out her name and email address. I think Suncoast needs to do more for students who are academically and socially struggling and Suncoast made this year very difficult for us and I can provide my emails and other documentation to prove that my statement is true. I also pray that my children and I won't experience retaliation for sharing our story. And the thing is I absolutely do believe in charter schools, but this year has not been great for us and we lost our providers. I don't know what's going on internally with that, but it is been really hard this year and my child is not getting the support that he needs. And that's all I have to say. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Thank you. Okay. Laurel will be followed by Christine.

**LAUREL:** My apologies. I can't really sit for the whole event, so I would really like to speak to Suncoast issue now. Please may I have your permission?

**SHAW:** Go ahead.

**LAUREL:** Thank you. Good evening. My name is Laurel Ward. I am currently serving the board of Suncoast Preparatory Academy and have been a home educator and advocate since 2005. First, I would like to thank this board, the superintendent and you all for your service and your continued support of school choice. Charter schools provide students and families vital alternatives to brick and mortar schools. Our neighborhood schools serve most, but one size does not fit all. Every student deserves the opportunity to thrive on their own educational journey. I ask you to approve the new Suncoast countywide charter. It will allow our school to continue serving students for whom our non-classroom based model is the perfect fit. Thank you for your time and your dedication on behalf of all the students in Orange County. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Thank you. All right, Christine, we'll be followed by Carol.

**CHRISTINE:** Good evening. Members of the board. My name is Christine Hall.

**SHAW:** Could you move the mic just a little? There you go.

**CHRISTINE:** Sorry. Good evening, Members of the board. My name is Christine Hall and I'm an ACCESS teacher, actually a CCPA teacher, and I've been here a couple times to speak. I'm representing our certificated staff, the teachers who work every day with some of the most underserved and at-risk students in Orange County. We help them meet graduation requirements, build pathways to college and careers, and give them hope for a better future. We even make them tax paying citizens. During negotiations, we learned the Department earned 19 million in interest from loans to charter schools. That's great. Yet teachers who were excluded from the compensation study that was given to all classified staff have been offered only 3.5 increase with no cost of living adjustment. Meanwhile, others receive raises of 10,000 or more and everybody is receiving healthcare. When we talk about our raises, they tell us you have to give up some healthcare or you have to pay more or we always have a give and take, but it doesn't seem like it affects them. A fair 6.5 increase for teachers would cost just 1.4 million. A small fraction of those earnings. As Dr. Bean and Dr. Martinez-Poulin have both said at numerous occasions it was a teacher who changed their lives. We do that every day. It is time for this Department to show the same belief in us. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** Carol will be followed by Joe.

**CAROL:** Good evening. Members of the board, Dr. Bean and Mr. Valdes who I had the pleasure of meeting when you took the time to come out to our site and tour Harbor Learning Center South and Connections. So, thank you for that. My name is Carol Kee. I've been an educator with ACCESS for 24 years as of Thursday actually. And I just wanted to talk about a few things about compensation that hasn't really been discussed yet. As you know we have all my colleagues have been very good about explaining how much passion we have for our students, how much we love our job and why we do this job. So, I'm not going to get into that, but something that hasn't been mentioned is, well first of all, did you know that after 23 years, basically teachers are frozen on the pay scale instead of longevity for experience? There's nothing after 23 years.

And so instead of receiving longevity every other year like we've been throughout our career, there's nothing after that. And for most of us, like many of my colleagues, we all have master's degrees, we have tons of professional development experience and credits. But again, we're frozen out there too because we've hit the end of the line. We're maxed out. So, without a raise and a cost of living each year, we're in essence being paid less, not more for our dedication and experience. And that sounds strange. Last year I received a 1% raise and a one off schedule, not even close to what? 3.5% cost of living. Rate of inflation. So, when we asked why they refused to adjust the pay scale for longevity or even a COLA, we were told that they just didn't want to. Ouch. We're not valued. Well, when I meet people in my community and tell them what I do, they appreciate what I do.

**HENDRICK:** Sorry, your time is up.

**SHAW:** Thank you. Joe will be followed by Amy.

**JOE:** So, I got my own clock going here, so we'll be on the same page here. Okay. So my name is Joe Maduena. I'm a teacher with ACCESS. Been here since 2002. And one reason I got into it because I used to go visit my wife back in the day to have lunch with her and students would come in and have, they would need help. And at that time, I wasn't a teacher, I was just visiting my wife to have lunch with her at the old North Main teen program. And since I went to college, my wife goes, "Hey, you can help these kids". I'm going, well this is my lunchtime and the teacher's right there, why can't she do it? But that just shows the need that teachers like us that teach almost every subject under the sun, math, science, English, history, health, whatever you want. We do that every day in our classes. We don't just have English all day long. It's everything. And so, I started helping these students with some algebra stuff and next time I go to my wife's to have lunch, there's a line waiting to talk to me because they needed help. So at that time I said, well that must be my calling. I need to help these kids. And that's what I did way back in the day. I got my credential. I've been working with ACCESS ever since and this is a great program to help kids and Mr. Bean, you know the facts about ACCESS. We help all the kids and you've said it multiple times, the kids that are in need of the most help, that's who we teach. If I wanted a regular job, I just go to district teach one class all day long and see 30 kids, not even per class and might not even remember half the kids. Where here I know every kid individually. I help every student individually and that takes a lot of time and it's a lot of work. But you know what, it's something that I believe in and I love doing it probably. So, for me, the day that I had my lunch with my wife, made me who I am.

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

**BARKE:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** And Amy.

**AMY:** Good evening. I've spoken here before and I felt compelled to speak again. I thought maybe if I spoke slower, slower or louder, maybe the message would come across that we're trying to get to the board. Again, my name is Amy Sydoruk and I have worked for ACCESS for 27 years. 24 of those in ACCESS and day school settings, also at contract learning at Pacific Coast High School. And now I'm currently at Sunburst Youth Academy and I absolutely love my job. I can look around the room and I know I'm looking at faces of teachers, very highly qualified teachers with master's degrees and beyond and we love our jobs and that's why we're here tonight. Correct.

I'm going to repeat some of my message just in case it was not heard. In ACCESS and Connections are highly qualified teachers work every day. We work every day with students that other schools have completely given up on. We deescalate violence, we rebuild trust, we teach kids how to believe in themselves again. And it's truly transformative work and it's powerful and we all love what we do. We just want to be paid fairly for it. So that's not easy work. It is not easy work. It takes years of training, patience and heart. But we do it because we're called to it. We're not here tonight because we don't love our jobs. We're here tonight because we do love our jobs and we want to keep doing this important work, but our love for our students shouldn't mean accepting less than fair compensation, especially when we see the compensation that's being granted to the people in higher admin positions. I know people have talked Dr. Bean about your 10% raise and we want our county to be competitive among all the other counties, but we also

want the teachers to have a competitive salary among all the other districts in our county. Dr. Bean you once said culture eats initiative for breakfast.

**HENDRICK:** Sorry, your time is up.

**AMY:** What's that?

**HENDRICK:** Your time is up.

**AMY:** My time is up. All right, let's go. We want action this week. Let's go.

**BARKE:** Thank you.

**SHAW:** That concludes the general comment.

**BARKE:** Okay. Renee, do we have any charter submissions?

**HENDRICK:** Yes, but first we have a couple introductions. I'm sorry.

**BARKE:** Okay. Excellent.

**HENDRICK:** We have four students here from Beckman High School for government class. We have Julia Nguyen, you kind of raise your hand. They're somewhere in here. Kiyomi Okamoto, Dazl Sulit and Haluka Nasu.

**SPARKS:** There they are.

**HENDRICK:** There you are.

**SHAW:** All right. Uh oh.

**BARKE:** If only I'd known, I would've had them do the Pledge of Allegiance.

**SPARKS:** I know.

**HENDRICK:** I'm sorry if I had said your name incorrectly, but they'll be here monitoring the meeting.

**BARKE:** Wonderful. Well, welcome. If you have any questions, be sure to come up in the break or after and ask us. We're thrilled to have you here.

**HENDRICK:** And then to your next question, yes, we do have charter submissions. We have, the first one was Orange Springs, which is actually here. You'll be seeing them tonight. They submitted on January 13th. Their public hearing is today and their board action will be on March 4th and that's a material revision. And then we have Orange County Workforce Innovation High School, a material revision. Their public hearing will be on March 4th and board action on April 8th.

**BARKE:** Okay, wonderful. Thank you. Okay, next I'd like to call up Aracely to the podium for our first public hearing on Samueli. Welcome. Thanks for being here.

**CHASTAIN:** Good evening, President Barke, Trustees, Superintendent Bean. The board will now hold a public hearing on the charter petition for Samueli Academy submitted on November 21st. Samueli Academy is a countywide charter school serving grades seven through 12th with one location in the boundaries of Garden Grove Unified School District. The school's current charter term originally approved in 2008 is set to expire on June 30th, 2026. Pursuant to statutory extensions codified in law. Samueli Academy is requesting approval of a five-year charter term from July 1, 2026 through June 30th of 2031. The board held a public hearing to consider the level of support for the renewal petition on January 7th and the Orange County Department of Education staff report was published on January 16th. In accordance with education code staff conducted a comprehensive review of the renewal petition, including an evaluation of the school's academic performance, fiscal and governance practices and compliance with applicable legal requirements.

Based on this review, staff determined that Samueli Academy falls within the middle performing category under the state's charter renewal framework and is therefore eligible for a five-year renewal term. The staff report identifies ongoing concerns related to teacher credentialing compliance and student academic performance, including persistent challenges in mathematics and declining proficiency rates among certain subgroups. As a result, staff recommend approval of the charter renewal with conditions requiring the execution of an agreement to address the findings outlined in the staff report. Representatives from Samueli Academy are allotted equal time or 10 minutes, whichever is longer to provide evidence and testimony in response to the staff recommendations and findings. I now invite the charter school representatives to the podium.

**BARKE:** Thank you, Aracely.

**ANTHONY:** Good evening, Board Members, Dr. Bean and staff. It's great to see everyone again rather than share a presentation or a video like last month or invite a line of students, parents and alumni to speak like last month, I'd like to share, just take a few minutes tonight to respond directly to the OCDE staff report regarding our renewal that Aracely mentioned. Forgive me if I glance at my notes. I don't typically do this when I speak publicly, but with the amount of data and the importance of tonight's vote, I want to be sure I'm accurate. Before I begin, I'd like to say how much we value our partnership with OCDE. For the past 15 years, we worked collaboratively and respectfully with Aracely, Maureen and the entire team. That partnership has truly strengthened Samueli Academy and we're grateful for it. In the staff report, as Aracely mentioned, there are two suggested conditions for approval, one teacher credentialing and two math scores and certain subgroups.

Let me address both. First credentialing, we understand the concern and have worked diligently to resolve the issues as they have surfaced. Since our founding back in 2013, 100% of our teachers have been credentialed in their primary subject areas. That is not a case of hiring an English credential teacher to teach math. Far from it. Rather it involves authorization details such as an elective, a specific grade level, or an EL designation. For example, one of our science teachers was teaching digital photography as an elective on the set, excuse me. He has since

earned his CTE credential is no longer misassigned. So today we are down to just two outstanding items, both already in progress. We've also implemented stronger safeguards moving forward, including annual credential and course audits, pre-year HR verification, new course recoding approval protocols. I feel very good about this area moving forward. Second one, math performance.

The OCDE report shows that our percentage of students meeting or exceeding standards in math is below the state average. That's true and I fully accept that. We have work to do and have a clear plan in place. That said, there are important points of context. First, those percentages compare different groups of students each year and don't reflect individual growth. When we track the same students over time, we see clear progress. Back in 2019, you approved our expansion to add grade seven and eight. The goal was simple. More time with students would lead to stronger outcomes. I'm happy to share that last year's 11th grade scores came from that very first middle school cohort. The very first seventh graders you approved were 11th graders last year. And their growth from middle school to now is clear and encouraging. We're beginning to see exactly the impact we hoped for, but just beginning.

Second comparison matters. Even while below the state average, Samueli Academy still outperformed similar schools serving the same demographic, including every other OC charter high school was similar students at the local district most of our students would otherwise attend. And finally, it's important to clarify how performance is measured. Now keep in mind I do agree we need to work on this. I'm just giving you some context. So, clarity on how performance is measured is important. The California Department of Education does not primarily use percent meeting or exceeding standards. Under AB 1505, charter schools are evaluated using distance from standard, a measure that accounts from growth for every student, not just those crossing a proficiency line. When evaluated using that metric from the CDE, our results tell a very different and much stronger story. From the 2024 to 2025 Dashboard, Samueli Academy showed significant improvement across all subgroups in both math and ELA.

Again, context matters. In closing and in OCDE's own findings in their staff report, their quoted as stating, "Samueli Academy has demonstrated an upward trend in California School Dashboard performance colors suggesting that instructional strategies and academic support are contributing positively to student learning and growth". Additionally, Samueli Academy achieves 78% college and career readiness, which is the blue performance level, the highest you can be on the Dashboard on the 2025 Dashboard outperforming the state by 26%. Our UCA through G completion, that is our graduates who meet the UCA to G requirements outperform the state by 24%. Our CTE pathway completion, which I know is something Dr. Bean is a fan of. The percentage of students who complete a career technical education pathway dramatically outperforms the state by 66%. We have a fantastic school culture, very strong financials and a waiting list of over 1,000 students. Moreover, given the school's 99% graduation rate, 92% college attendance rate and 85% college persistence rate, which is more than twice the national average for this demographic and documented academic improvement across all student subgroups, I humbly and respectfully requested the board approve our charter renewal with no conditions. Thank you for your continued support and faith in us.

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

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

**HENDRICK:** We have none.

**CHASTAIN:** As we have no speakers. The public comment period is now closed. The board has three options for action. Approve the charter renewal, approve the charter renewal with conditions or deny the charter renewal. President Barke, I now close the public hearing and return the meeting to you.

**BARKE:** Thank you, Aracely. That was a wonderful presentation. Thank you. I will start to my right. Dr. Sparks.

**SPARKS:** Sure. Well, I love the detail of your presentation and the homework that you've done to come to this moment to address the quote concerns. And the other thing I really love that I do all the time when I'm teaching is talking about how much context matters and that really is the lead of your discussion. And then I loved how you supported that with your data of all the outstanding performance. You're a tried-and-true charter school. We're so proud of what you've done with these kids since 2015 and I'm in full support.

**BARKE:** Mr. Valdes.

**VALDES:** Would you take the podium again?

**ANTHONY:** I thought you might ask that. Yes sir.

**VALDES:** Did you say that you had a waiting list of 1,000 students?

**ANTHONY:** Actually, I said over 1,000 students.

**VALDES:** Really?

**ANTHONY:** For all sixth grades. Absolutely. Now some of them have been on the waiting list for a couple of years and may no longer be interested, but absolutely we've had over 1,000 apply who were not able to offer admission for.

**VALDES:** So, talking about the test scores that Aracely raised in her staff report, we're looking at a 26% for math. At least that's what I saw from the CAASPP scores.

**ANTHONY:** Correct.

**VALDES:** And the state average is 37?

**ANTHONY:** Correct.

**VALDES:** But the kids in Santa Ana are doing 22%.

**ANTHONY:** Correct.

**VALDES:** How many kids from Santa Ana do you have that are going to Samueli Academy?

**ANTHONY:** That's a great question. I don't have the number obviously off the top of my head, but I can tell you is there are number one feeder of all the districts or schools that we receive students from receive the most from that district.

**VALDES:** Would you estimate that it's more than 70%?

**ANTHONY:** Probably not quite that high. I mean we countywide charter as the board knows, and so technically a student from anywhere can come. I can get you that information if you'd like, but I don't think it's that high.

**VALDES:** How many kids qualify for the reduced?

**ANTHONY:** Yeah, so we're just over 80% on any given year.

**VALDES:** Okay. That's all I needed to know.

**BARKE:** Right. Trustee Shaw?

**SHAW:** I will be abstaining on this item.

**BARKE:** Oh, sorry. I remember you told me that. Dr. Williams?

**WILLIAMS:** You might be surprised, but I have no comments.

**BARKE:** Wow. Well, there's not much to say. Dr. Sparks did a great job. I thought it was a beautiful presentation. I love the trajectory of where you're going. I love that you added seventh grade so that you could start earlier with kids and it's obviously paying off. You are a wonderful addition to the community. And so, I would like to make a motion to approve you without conditions.

**SPARKS:** Second.

**BARKE:** All right, we've got a first and a second. I think we had two seconds. All those in favor?

**VALDES:** Can we discuss that a little bit?

**WILLIAMS:** Yes, of course.

**VALDES:** I just want to tell Aracely that I really appreciate your findings. That is exactly what I would expect you to do. I just want to say that with respect to Samueli Academy, there is just so much good going on at that school. I mean just so much good at that school. The credentialing issue. I think Anthony, you're going to fix that, right? I am just not prepared with all the positive that is going on at that school to ask for conditions. I'm just not ready to do that. I think Anthony, the school needs to work on your math scores, but there's too much positive going on there for me to ask for conditions.

**BARKE:** I agree. I agree. And you did answer the questions I thought in your presentation about the credentialing, so I felt satisfied. So, all right, so again, all those in favor of a renewal without conditions.

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

**SHAW:** And I'd like to register and abstain.

**BARKE:** Okay, so that will be 4-1 and it passes.

**SHAW:** 4-0-1

**BARKE:** 4-0-1. Sorry.

**SHAW:** I'm not voting against them.

**BARKE:** Sorry, sorry, sorry. 4-0-1. That's what I meant. 4-0-1.

**ANTHONY:** Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you. Thank you for the work you do. Oh, I'm sorry. Go ahead, Aracely.

**CHASTAIN:** Okay, thank you. We will now proceed to a public hearing to grant or deny the material revision to Ednovate OC College Prep charter petition submitted on November 21st. Ednovate OC College Prep is a countywide charter school that is scheduled to open in 2026-27, serving grades nine through 12. The school requests approval of a material revision to authorize school site locations within the boundaries of Orange Unified School District and Irvine Unified School District. The board held a public hearing to consider the support for the material revision on January 7th, and the staff report was published on January 16th. Staff reviewed the revised charter petition, determined that it meets the standards outlined in education 47605, and recommend approval of the material revision. Prior to board action, representatives from Ednovate OC College Prep are allowed at equal time and opportunity, or 10 minutes, whichever is longer to present evidence and testimony in response to the staff recommendations. I now invite the charter school representatives to the podium.

**KATIE:** Good evening, President Barke, Trustees, Superintendent Bean. My name is Katie Hart. I'm the chief operating officer of Ednovate and I'm joined here by your Chief of Schools Olumide Macaulay. And today we're here to speak on our request for material revision for Ednovate OC College Prep. At Ednovate, our mission is to use our college degrees and careers to make a positive multi-generational change. We focus on serving first generation students of color from traditionally underserved communities. Currently we operate seven high schools, six of which are in Los Angeles, and we do have one existing school in Santa Ana in Orange County. We have over 2,800 students now, over 3,600 alumni at Ednovate, and that is over a decade of existence with our founding being back in 2012. Our current numbers are, we're serving 98% students of color. 79% of our students across the entire network are eligible for free or reduced lunch or socioeconomically disadvantaged.

And then this past year we've had a hundred percent of all graduating seniors accepted into a four-year college or university. And across their entire existence, over 99% of our students have been accepted into a four-year college or university. So, at Ednovate's model, we're really focused on breaking cycles of poverty. We are high school experts and focus on innovative practices to support our students in closing academic gaps and also to support our students in their success for college and beyond, college career and life skills as we say. We don't just look at one aspect of our students, we actually focus on six different aspects and our whole child approach. And we focus on all of these aspects on a weekly basis with all of our students through our innovative whole child approach report card, seeing our kids across the board. And this helps our students prepare to graduate, lead and uplift their communities, which again, we call positive multi-generational change. We're also focused on our students beyond high school, as I mentioned. So, we're helping support our students throughout college and beyond.

A couple of outcomes that we're proud to share is, again, that 99% acceptance across our entire existence at Ednovate. And also, the comparison of just 35% of students of color throughout the state of California are even eligible to apply to CSU and UCs. We're also recognized by the state as distinguished schools for our schools at this time. And we're recognized in 2021 as the CCSA Charter School Network of the Year. 100% of college acceptance has been attained at our Santa Ana campus here in Orange County, and 92% of staff were retained last year. We're also very proud of the support that we provide for our students with over \$4 million in scholarships last year for our Orange County campus alone.

So why expand into Orange County? We originally came to this board in the summer of 2024, very excited as we sought input from the community and also the Orange County business community to see if our model would be needed in Orange County. We believe that we can be part of the solution, not only to support a workforce that Orange County is needing for the next generation, but also to support our students here in Orange County who want to stay in Orange County, give back to their communities and be successful in college and beyond. And that's what really energized us in this phase of growth and expansion. So in July of 2024, we were approved by this board to open four new campus locations at a new charter petition here in Orange County. Last year, unfortunately, we had to delay our initial opening, which was planned for August of 2025 due to facilities challenges. This is not a new challenge for charters, but unfortunately finding high quality approved and reasonable facilities for our schools is our biggest barrier to growth in Orange County. So we again went back to our community and particularly some of our community partners to try to break through this barrier. And so that is what we were here tonight to ask your approval on is give us a bit more flexibility in where we originally identified we were going to go. We knew we had to cast a wider geographic net.

So, we are asking to also incorporate the city of Irvine and the city of Orange in our approved geographic areas. And this is based off of two potential promising partnerships with local organizations on facilities projects in the future. Both of which are undergoing due diligence and or entitlements at this time. And we are continuing the conversation with both organizations. So, we thank this board for your support throughout the years in helping us achieve that great 100% college acceptance for our students in Santa Ana. We thank the charter school division for your partnership and collaboration and we also very much greatly appreciate your recommendation for approval on this material revision. Thank you very much.

**BARKE:** Thank you.

**CHASTAIN:** The public hearing is now open for 15 minutes of public comment. Trustee Shaw, are there any speakers for this agenda item?

**SHAW:** None.

**CHASTAIN:** Okay. The public comment period is now closed. The board has three options for action, approve material revision, approve the material revision with conditions, or deny the material revision. President Barke, I now close the public hearing and return the meeting to you.

**BARKE:** Thank you. And thank you for your presentation. This time I'll start to my left with Dr. Williams.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. So, I will make a motion then we put the motion and then we second it, then we begin the discussion. So, if you don't mind, hate to follow parliamentary procedure to stickler point, but I'll make the motion for the material revision for the school.

**SPARKS:** Okay, I'll second.

**BARKE:** Second.

**SPARKS:** Oh, go ahead.

**BARKE:** Okay.

**WILLIAMS:** I do have some questions, Katie. Correct? How did you navigate the delay in school and keep your budget from borrowing funds to continue?

**KATIE:** Well, without opening the school, we were spending very minimal in the preparation to open the school. So, our team at the network level supports most of the growth work. We did hire in a principal early to begin starting the cultivation of those community partnerships and the groundwork of the academic model that would support that new school. But largely the growth work is done by our network team and so we really only hired one extra person during that founding year and she actually went out and did a lot more community engagement work for us, which helped us understand some of those unique needs of each of the communities as we were going through and just re-engaging with folks. So, we were able to kind of repurpose that additional role that we had originally hired. But we did make the call to delay fairly early too, so we made that call in December because we knew we wouldn't have the facility secured in time.

**WILLIAMS:** What does your budget look like?

**KATIE:** In regards to...

**WILLIAMS:** So, have you received funds for your school?

**KATIE:** From the philanthropic community funds?

**WILLIAMS:** Just any funds?

**KATIE:** We would not receive funds for our school until we had the first day of school. So, we support through network-wide support and also philanthropic partners to support that founding and enrollment year.

**WILLIAMS:** So right now, you have no budget and you have no debts and you're just waiting to open the doors to begin?

**KATIE:** Correct.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. That's it.

**KATIE:** Thank you.

**BARKE:** All right, Mr. Shaw.

**SHAW:** Well, I guess I've probably heard it a thousand times from our charter schools. Facilities are tough and I understand what you need to do here. Are you at liberty to discuss in any greater detail the facilities you're looking at or, I mean it sounds like you've identified some sites, but can you tell us more about that?

**KATIE:** We have, so right now I'll try to keep it pretty high level, but right now we have been engaging in conversations with Santiago Canyon College for about a year now, and we're also working with the district to determine if there is a partnership on their campus for a dual enrollment high school program. We find a lot of mutual benefit in that programming and have also heard the desire. We have dual enrollment at our Santa Ana campus already and have a partnership with Santa Ana College, so we're hoping to recreate that in partnership with San Diego Canyon College, but they take their time and their process and we're working through that and being patient with them and making sure that we have really clear alignment on academic model and also on the facility side of the house. So that is in Orange.

In the city of Irvine we've been working with an afterschool program called OC Music and Dance. They have been engaged in the community as a great afterschool program since 2017 and they were partnering with the city of Irvine to create a new beautiful building at the cultural terrace in the Great Park. And so, as they were working through all the details of their diligence, they reached out to us as a high-quality operator and thought that there could be some really great synergy there and also to help support both organizations because they're an afterschool program and so they don't need all of the facility during the day. So we've been partnering with them on due diligence working with the city of Irvine as well to see if that's possible. We are still in entitlements and due diligence on that project and so I am not able to tell you much more detail other than we're going to continue along and we have not committed anything to either of these projects, but we come here in the spirit of partnership and transparency with this board to seek your approval for that material revision. So we know that we are already able to go into those communities and also have gone through all of the requisite processes to do so.

**SHAW:** Well, it sounds like that's promising. There'd be a lot of synergy, so my fingers crossed that that works out for you.

**KATIE:** Thank you.

**BARKE:** Trustee Valdes.

**VALDES:** Katie, I think I expressed my concern last month regarding the math test scores in particular at the Santa Ana campus, which I was told was in the teens, which is below the Santa Ana Unified numbers and that's concerning to me. But I was also told by our esteemed legal counsel that I should not consider that for purposes of today's vote, but I am watching this issue. This issue is really important and I feel a duty on behalf of the kids of Santa Ana, the ones that go to your school and in particular, someone has to stand up for them. Someone has to hold the executive director, in this case, the chief operations officer accountable and ask the hard questions about particularly the math test scores. So I'm not going to hold that issue up for purposes of today, but I'm watching that issue and it's important and I don't feel like I'm doing my job on behalf of the kids if I don't hold you accountable to answer, look at root cause, look at your curriculum, figure out how you can improve so that the student outcomes are better. So those are my thoughts for today.

**KATIE:** Absolutely. Thank you. And we share your commitments to ensuring that our students are doing very well and we look forward to continue the conversation with you as well.

**SPARKS:** I would just add, I know you all have been working so hard doing all your due diligence in every category from academic to facilities and all the barriers that new charter schools have to face, even though you're not new. We know your curriculum's very sound, your track record's very sound. You won this award, the charter school of the year...

**KATIE:** The Charter School Network.

**SPARKS:** Network, yeah. And that's amazing and well deserved. So, I'm in full support of the vote.

**KATIE:** Thank you.

**BARKE:** Well, great. I've heard a lot of great information and I'm also in full support. I appreciate that these partnerships sound like they're great and very promising and I'm familiar with both programs and so I wish you the best of luck and I will go ahead and call the vote unless anyone has more discussion since you have a motion and a second. All right, all those in favor?

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

**BARKE:** Okay. Sounds like 5-0. Thank you.

**KATIE:** Thank you. Thank you very much for your time.

**CHASTAIN:** The next item before the board is a public hearing on the renewal charter petition submitted by Vista Condor Global Academy on December 15th. Vista Condor Global Academy's original charter term expired on June 30th of 2023. Pursuant to statutory extensions codified in law, the charter term has been extended through June 30th, of 2026. The purpose...

**BARKE:** CRLA was the next one in our book.

**CHASTAIN:** I'm so sorry.

**BARKE:** That's okay.

**CHASTAIN:** CRLA. Here we go.

**SHAW:** They need to arm wrestle over it.

**CHASTAIN:** All right. Today the board will conduct a public hearing to grant or deny the material revision requests submitted by California Republic Leadership Academy, which was submitted on December 1st. CRLA Orange County is a countywide charter school approved for a five-year term from July 1, 2026, through June 30th of 2031. They're scheduled to begin serving students in transitional kindergarten through grade 12 in 2026-27 school year. The school is requesting approval of a material revision to add an independent study option, which they're calling the classical education flex program to its educational model. The board held a public hearing to consider the level of support for the proposed material revision on January 7th, and the staff report was published on January 16th. Staff reviewed the revised charter petition and determined that it meets the standards outlined in education code and recommend approval of the material revision. Representatives from CRLA Orange County will now have equal time and opportunity or 10 minutes, whichever is longer, to present evidence and testimony in response to the staff recommendations. I invite the charter school representatives to the podium.

**GARY:** Good evening, Madam President, Members of the board, Superintendent Dr. Bean, Gary Davis, executive director of the CRLA schools. At the last meeting, I gave a pretty in-depth presentation about what the CRLA classical education flex program would look like. I very much appreciate the staff report and recommendation. We value the relationship we've built with you all and your staff and just respectfully request that you support staff's recommendations tonight and I'm happy to answer any questions.

**BARKE:** Thank you.

**CHASTAIN:** The public hearing is now open for 15 minutes of public comment. Trustee Shaw, are there any comments for this agenda item?

**SHAW:** Looks like we got a whole lot of nothing.

**CHASTAIN:** All right. The public comment period is now closed. The board has three options for action. Approve the material revision, approve the material revision with conditions, or deny the material revision. President Barke, I now close the public hearing and return the meeting to you.

**BARKE:** Thank you very much. Thank you, Gary for that very concise presentation. Loved it. And to keep with parliamentary procedures. I'm going to go ahead and make a motion to approve without condition to the material revision.

**SPARKS:** Second.

**VALDES:** I second. Sorry.

**BARKE:** Okay. And we have a number of seconds so now we can proceed with the discussion and we'll go ahead to the right again with Dr. Sparks.

**SPARKS:** I was going to make a motion so I have nothing further. I'm in full support.

**BARKE:** Excellent. Trustee Valdes?

**VALDES:** Gary, your test scores are fantastic. The finances are great. So, I have no questions.

**BARKE:** Mr. Shaw?

**SHAW:** Well, CRLA is obviously one of our shining jewels out there and I think, remind me again, what was your wait list?

**GARY:** We just closed open enrollment. We have 600 students.

**SHAW:** Oh, sorry. She wants you to go to the mic.

**HENDRICK:** Sorry, we're recording so we need you to be there.

**GARY:** So sorry. Yeah, it was 322 last year. We just finished open enrollment. We have 600 applications for probably about 180 spots, so it's over 400 now I would say.

**SHAW:** I mean I just find that just a testament in and of itself. Everyone wants to go to your school, so that's great.

**BARKE:** And Dr. Williams?

**WILLIAMS:** Again, no comment. Excellent job, Gary.

**BARKE:** Yeah, I love just that you are being creative in just thinking outside the box and bringing something that will even draw in more of the community. So, I think it's wonderful and I will now call for the vote. All those in favor?

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

**BARKE:** Okay. 5-0. Thank you.

**CHASTAIN:** Vista Condor.

**BARKE:** Yes. Thank you.

**CHASTAIN:** All right, I will continue. So, their charter term was extended through June 30<sup>th</sup> of 2026. The purpose of today's public hearing is to consider the provisions of the renewal charter petition and the level of support for the school. Vista Condor operates a TK through five charter school located in Santa Ana and based on applicable state performance criteria, Vista Condor is classified as a middle performing charter school and its renewal is being considered under the renewal standards set forth in Education Code 47607. Consistent with those standards, the board will consider academic performance as well as the educational program, fiscal condition,

governance practices, and compliance with applicable law. Before public comments, the charter representatives are allotted 15 minutes to address the board. I invite the charter school representatives to the podium.

**COLLIN:** All right, I think we're putting the slides up. First of all, good evening, President Barke, Members of the board. Superintendent Bean. Pleasure to be here. My name is Dr. Collin Felch, superintendent of Vista Charter Public Schools and I was the founding principal of Vista Condor Global Academy back in 2018. I'm joined here by Condor's current principal, Ms. Roxanne Alessandros. Actually, before I get going, I want to take a moment to ask all of the parents, students, and staff that are here on behalf of Vista Condor to please just stand in support. Thank you. Yes, some of them are hiding. So, a little bit about Condor. First, our student enrollment is 377. Actually, I checked today it's at 378. Our socioeconomically disadvantaged population is at 97%, actually 97.2%, which is one of the highest socioeconomically percentages in the entire county district or charter. One thing I do want to mention that is unique about our program is we provide transportation, free transportation to and from school, home to school for close to 50% of our students.

Many of our students and parents would not be able to attend the school if it was not for us being able to provide that transportation. As we march along, a little over half of our students are classified as English learners and again, that is one of the highest percentages in the entire county district or charter. 11% of students with IEPs and I'm very proud to say 96% parent satisfaction. As you can see by some of the support here. Condor over the years with our enrollment back when we opened in 2018, our first year we were at 132 and we've steadily grown and almost tripled our student enrollment since that first year. And that's something that we're very, very proud of. And again, we're here for the parents, we're here for the students and the parents continue to want our program and continue to advocate it and recommend that to other parents as well.

As we look at the Dashboard, and this is a screenshot from the recent California School Dashboard. My eyes and many of your eyes probably first go to the academic metrics. So English learner progress, especially when over half of our students are classified as English learners, ELA and math achievement and we are categorized in those three areas in the yellow, but I'm happy to share that each of those three areas we did see improvement as we really move closer to the state averages despite the demographics that we serve. I included the informational purposes because I also want to make sure that I highlight some of the work that we've done in science too. It's easy to overlook that. And our science scores are in the green on the Dashboard and actually very close to the state average.

I also want to mention it's not just highlighting the positives. I want to mention that one red and that was in chronic absenteeism. We did have a bit of a rough year when it came to chronic absenteeism last year, and I'm not trying to hide behind that data, but as we really looked deeper into that and really took action related to that. I'm happy to share that last year, according to the Dashboard, we had 28.4% of our students chronically absent. Our data this year that I just shared with our Vista board a week ago shows that up through now we have reduced that to 16.3%. We've almost cut that in half and I know we're only halfway through the year, but if we maintain that, that will actually get us to a better rate than the state average was at last year in the Dashboard.

That is in large part to a lot of the work that our staff does. And over this past year, I know that Vista Condor has added an attendance clerk who has done remarkable work related to attendance and chronic absenteeism. I also want to do a deeper dive into our academic data and highlight some of the work with iReady that we've seen over the past year or so. And so across the board, this is in iReady reading last year, every single grade level, the majority of the students gained over a year's worth of learning from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. Some of the grade levels, if you look at fifth grade for example, the median student gained over a year and a half of learning. So, some pretty remarkable achievement there. As we look at some of our significant subgroups, our English learners, our Hispanic or Latino students, our socio disadvantaged students and our students with disabilities all have also shown incredible growth in reading over this past year, well exceeding the state's benchmark. And as we look at math, many of the same is true, we did in third grade, we were slightly below 100%. However, looking at last year's third graders, this year's fourth graders, we're continuing to see impressive growth this year.

And as we look at our subgroups when it comes to math, we also see each of our significant subgroups. We're also outperforming, learning over a year's worth of material over this past year. And at this point I'd like to hand it off to our principal, Ms. Alessandro.

**ROXANNE:** Thank you. And now I get to talk about the fun stuff, the heart of what makes Vista Condor the amazing place that it is. And for those who have come to our school and been there in person, you know that there is, for lack of a better word, a vibe of positivity at Vista Condor that is unmatched. From parents and community to trainers and PD presenters and maintenance workers. Everyone comes to Condor and says that they've never been to a school that has the positivity that sees a staff that is so dedicated to their students and that really is what we are all about. So, I'm going to tell you a little bit about the great things that we have at Condor. So, first, the high-quality instruction based on research-based best practices. As you can see from our data, is really showing growth in everything that we do.

The caring staff, teachers, as noted by those who are here tonight to support us and work in so many ways to support our children. Nurturing classroom environments, including in every single classroom thanks to our community coordinators, a calming corner in each room to provide that SEL support for our students. We have art and music classes for every single student, a continuous recognition of student achievements through monthly awards assemblies, recognizing their academic as well as behavioral progress. We have developed an intensive MTSS process that we worked with you all here at OCDE to develop a process to identify and provide support for our students in need. And most importantly, I think a focus on cooperative learning in everything that we do.

We are a community school and we are so fortunate to be a part of this program and we have an amazing community coordinator who will speak here in a minute. There she is, Ms. Zoila. Thank you. We do, they do everything from hosting parent workshops, in-house community center with resources including food, clothing, lice kits, hygiene products, emergency backpacks, and a community library and so much more. We have held toy and clothing drives. We have a weekly food pantry for our community and we also throughout the year, host resource fairs for our parents and families. Oh boy. Okay.

We create and manage community partnerships with organizations such as Serve the People, the Knowledge Mobile, Healthy Smiles and Think Together. So, our students get eye exams, free glasses, dental exams. The Knowledge Mobile brings books and the kids are so excited to see and check out books from the Knowledge Mobile and a whole lot more. As Dr. Felch mentioned earlier, we do provide transportation to our students to and from school, and that is also not just at the end of the school day, but for students who stay for afterschool program for clubs and athletics. We also provide transportation for them. They work very hard to include our parents and community voices in our school decision-making process. And we provide support to families finding housing and other resources, especially in today's climate that many of our families are facing. And we have a program in which we support our, almost over 100, I think McKinney Vento students.

Some of the great programs that we provide our students beyond the school day Think Together as our afterschool program. And they do an excellent job of providing a place for our students to be after school that is safe. It provides them a meal, support for their education, fun activities. We have a list here of just some of the clubs that we offer our students after school from tutoring, leadership, art, music, international dance, cooking and STEAM activities, as well as the science olympiad. So, you can see here a picture of our students who are in our Brazilian dance class after school and athletics is growing. We currently have boys and girls volleyball and soccer and more to come.

**COLLIN:** And so, we would like to thank you for your support and your ongoing support of Vista Condor and we do have staff that are here if you have any questions. Thank you.

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

**SHAW:** Okay, we do have Javier.

**JAVIER:** Good evening. Dear President Barke, Trustees, and Superintendent Bean. I'm the Orange County local advocacy managing director for the California Charter School Association, CCSA. CCSA is a statewide membership and professional organization representing more than a 1,250 public charter schools across California. Our mission is to support high-quality nonprofit charter schools and to advocate for fair, equitable charter policies that expand excellent, excellent public school option for students, families, and communities. I'm here to express this CCSA support for Vista Condor Global Academy charter renewal petition. Vista Condor Global Academy is a member in good standing of our association. CCSA has worked closely with the leadership of Vista Condor Global Academy and is confident in the quality of the educational programs they provide. The school is meeting the needs of their community and offering learning environments that families value and choose. Approval of the Vista Condor Global Academy charter renewal will allow these schools to continue and where appropriate, expand their ability to serve students effectively. For this reason, respectfully, CCSA respectfully urge the Orange County Board of Education to approve Vista Condor Global Academy charter renewal petition. And if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you.

**SHAW:** Thank you.

**CHASTAIN:** The public hearing is concluded. President Barke I now close the hearing and return the meeting to you.

**SHAW:** Oh, we had more speakers. Did we miss a pile over there? Did I blow it?

**HENDRICK:** I'm not sure if there was a confusion. [several inaudible words] Suncoast, I wonder if they got mixed in. Okay, so do you know the names? We'll give you the 15 minutes and why don't we do that. Just call it that way.

**CHASTAIN:** Okay. I will reopen the public hearing and you can continue with public comment.

**HENDRICK:** We'll do, you have six, we'll do three minutes each.

**COLLIN:** Okay.

**SPARKS:** Or less.

**HENDRICK:** Four. Yeah. You have four left.

**SPARKS:** Three or less.

**HENDRICK:** Three or less. Yes.

**SPARKS:** Three minutes or less.

**HENDRICK:** Yeah. Yes, if you could, that'd be great.

**COLLIN:** Miles Durfee, please come up.

**MILES:** I'd like to take the next, can you hear me? Microphone's on, can you hear me?

**WILLIAMS:** Yeah.

**MILES:** Okay. Great. I'd like to take the next 30 minutes. Oh, wait, sorry. Good evening. Superintendent Bean who's just stepped away and Members of the board of education. My name is Miles Durfee and I'm the board chair of Vista Charter Public Schools. Thank you for your opportunity to speak tonight in support of the renewal for Vista Charter School in Santa Ana, where we now proudly serve nearly 400 students. I want to begin with a sincere message of appreciation. Because of your board and the leadership of this board and the commitment to public education, families in Santa Ana and across Orange County have real choices. Choices that allow students to find the learning environment where they can truly grow and succeed. Vista Condor exists because this board has consistently valued school choice, student opportunity, and educational innovation.

That partnership matters and we don't take it for granted, so thank you. At Vista Condor, we are focused on continuous improvement. Our leadership team, as you've seen, our teachers and our staff, work hard to strengthen academics, support the whole child and create a safe, stable school community where students feel supported and challenged. We are also grateful for the families who choose to be a part of our school and for the students who show up each morning ready to

learn, they are the reason we keep improving and they are the reason when this renewal matters. So tonight, we appreciate your partnership over the years and we respectfully ask for your continued support when Vista Condor comes back to you next month for your formal renewal vote. Thank you again for your time and your service and your dedication to all of the Orange County students. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you.

**COLLIN:** Ramsie McHugh.

**RAMSIE:** Good evening, Members of the board, Vista families, fellow charter schools. My name is Ramsie McHugh and I'm a proud fifth grade teacher at Vista Condor Global Academy. During my very first interview, I was asked, are you looking for a school or are you looking for a family? That question has stayed with me and over time it has proven that choosing family was the right answer. It speaks to what makes Vista Condor truly special, the connection. At Vista, teachers, parents and staff work together every day to support the whole child academically, socially and emotionally. I've watched students overcome challenges with the support of our entire staff as we brainstorm and problem-solve together to ensure no child is left behind. As Condor has expanded through the years, so have our students, growing in ways beyond academics or rigor, gaining confidence, curiosity and resilience, preparing them not just for the next grade, but to be thoughtful and engaged global citizens.

In my time, the four years, I've had the privilege of teaching multiple students from the same family, partnering closely with parents and watching my former fifth graders thrive in middle school. I've seen Vista serve as a bridge breaking down barriers to support students, free access to physical and mental health services, a team of positive role models, sports and clubs. Most importantly, I've watched children find safety within our walls. Vista Condor is a place where students build lifelong connections and friendships and where teachers do too. This is the community we have built. Now imagine what we can accomplish in the next 10 years. With your continued support, Vista Condor can continue putting our children first and being a partner within Santa Ana community. Thank you.

**COLLIN:** Zoila Lubin.

**ZOILA:** Good afternoon, Board Members. My name is Zoila Lubin, and I am a parent of two current Condor students and one graduate who is now in high school attending Meridian, by the way. My family has been part of Vista Condor community for eight years and I am extremely pleased with both my children's academic success and their overall experience at Vista. While all of my children have done well at Vista, I want to share the academic journey of my 10-year-old son. I might cry. He began Vista Condor in kindergarten as a nonverbal student with autism and ADHD. At that time, I worry deeply about whether he would ever speak, read, or write. However, Vista Condor gave me hope. Each year my husband and I met with the special education team to review his IEP goals and progress, and I want you to know that every year we have felt supported, heard, and confident in the decisions we have made together.

Over the past five years, my son has received support, speech therapy and individualized instruction. He has participated in various afterschool clubs including art, drama, which he loved,

and tutoring. Today, I'm proud to say he is working independently and he has truly been a positive journey and I don't know where we would go if Condor didn't exist or continue. Vista has helped my child advance in reading, writing, and math. This year, he is reading at third grade level and although this is a year behind, I never thought he would be able to sit and read. He is full of personality and if you met him, you would know definitely a character and he is loved and accepted by his teachers and classmates. That sense of belonging has made all of the difference in his growth and in his desire to never leave Vista because I test them like what if we leave next year and they give me a hard no every time. Vista did not give up on my child, they believed in him. That is why I am here today. I strongly support the renewal of Vista Condor Charter School. This school provides not only academic rigor but the patience, expertise and heart that students like my son need to succeed. I hope you will allow Vista Condor to continue this important work for families like mine and for our community. Thank you and have a good night.

**COLLIN:** Amanda Tobin.

**AMANDA:** I have my own timer and I'm going to try to talk fast. Ooh, I need to be in front of the thing. My name is Amanda. I have been a Vista parent. This will be my fourth year. I've got a fourth grader. I have two fourth graders this year and my notes are out of order. Okay, I got this. Okay. Vista Condor is not a perfect school. The parking lot is forever a challenge. PE is only twice a week now and I know in my heart of hearts the kids would do better if they had PE every day. The outdoor space is too small. The school day is too long. I start with my complaints because in reality they highlight the beauty of Vista greater than if I just repeated all the true wonderful things the rest of your speakers will say. My kid's school is so safe that I complain about the parking lot being congested.

My kid's school is so active and engaging and dedicated education that I complain about limited physical activity. My kid's school has a small outdoor space because they've chosen security, accessibility and resources over acres of field. My kid's school is so responsive to the community's preferences that school days are longer to accommodate the desires of staff and students who prefer extended winter and summer breaks. Even greater than these things is the fact that I can take my woes directly to administration and discuss and work through them together. I can text the principal in the, does it keep coming in, oh, it's not me. I can text the principal in the afternoon about a concern with one of my kids and I will get a response from her off the clock when she should be spending time relaxing and avoiding my nonsense until the next morning.

Where is she? Turn your phone off. Vista is not my perfect school, but it's the best I could ever ask for. There is constant communication and collaboration between staff, students and parents. Vista allows parents to contribute in meaningful ways and be involved in the development of their child's education. Vista truly is a community school that connects to all aspects of the community, not just the student immediately and the immediate family. When our communities are connected, stronger and safer, our kids do better. When we switched to Vista, I was one more incident away from homeschooling barefoot in the forest, which I'm really not cut out for. We had just left a different charter where my then five-year-old witnessed students being physically abused by a para and nothing was done about it despite multiple reports. Kindergartners were being screamed at so intensely they were afraid to go to the bathroom and walk around the rest of the day with pee-soaked clothes to avoid getting in trouble.

On more than one occasion, I witnessed a kindergartner wandering through the parking lot alone. I'm skipping stuff because I think I'm taking too long. When we toured Vista, I was blown away by the kindness, connectedness, responsiveness of the staff and the security of the campus. There were limited ways in and out. The school was very well supervised and after my daughter's first day at Vista, I could see her relaxing. She would tell me regularly how kind everyone is. Dr. Felch was at the drop-off line most mornings welcoming her and alleviated any concerns she had for the day, which to be transparent was often a lot back then. She felt so safe I could leave her to learn without a pain in my stomach. I'm skipping so many things, I talk too much. Vista allows stability for kids who do not have it elsewhere. Kids in foster care and kids experiencing poverty and housing instability often move schools constantly. I'm a foster parent and a foster parent friend of mine has had a kiddo who right now who's been in nine schools in the last two years.

**HENDRICK:** I'm sorry, your time.

**AMANDA:** I'm done.

**COLLIN:** And we have one more. Last but certainly not least, Condor, fifth grader, Josue.

**JOSUE:** Good evening. Members of the board, admin, teachers, parents, and fellow students. My name is Josue Ochoa Castro. I'm a fifth grader at Ms. Waterford's class at Vista Condor Global Academy. I am also the president of my class and a member of Condor student leadership. I have been a student at Vista Condor for three years. Let me take a second to tell you how my educational career at Vista began. I transferred to Vista Condor from Davis Elementary in Santa Ana. After my grandma received surgery and wasn't able to walk me to school, my mom found Vista and signed me up because they offered free reliable transportation. There are many things at Vista Condor that I enjoy that Davis didn't have. Mostly are the clubs offered. My old school only had two. That's a shame. My favorite parts of Vista are the festivals and the activities in and outside of school. I like our new science curriculum, amplify science, which is introduced this year and gives more complex activities that could happen in real life and experiments that can solve problems that the world is facing. For example, currently we are learning about the global water shortages. As I mentioned before, I enjoy the activities and clubs that Vista Condor offers, as well as the festivals and dances that are planned by teachers, staff, and even students at our school.

We plan them a few weeks or months before and we asked for feedback to make them fun and exciting. Additionally, my school offers many clubs for their students. Clubs that I have been a part of are basketball, volleyball, science olympiad, leadership, Brazilian dance, and piano class. Currently in science olympiad club, we are learning about physics and teamwork as we build paper roller coasters. This will be our first year participating in science olympiad as a school. I know my school also offers robotics, art club, boy scouts, girl scouts, cooking club, and this year a traditional Vietnamese, I don't know how to pronounce it, dance. I also like that if you are unable to attend afterschool clubs, Vista Condor Global Academy offers fun experiences during the day. We have music class twice a week and this year we'll be performing the musical Wicked. Also, we have art once a week. I like the fact that everyone gets to do their art the way they like. Another thing we have that our students like is PE. We have a good program called active education with two amazing coaches. We just don't have fun. We also do exercises before

we have fun, so we're ready for the activities and athletic tests. Thank you OCDE Board Members and the entire audience are giving me your time.

**CHASTAIN:** The public hearing is concluded. The staff report will be published on February 17th and the board will take action on March 4th. President Barke, I now close the hearing and turn the meeting back over to you.

**BARKE:** Thank you, Aracely. Thank you for the amazing presentation and the public comment. That last public comment was quite impressive. I'll start to my left with Dr. Williams.

**WILLIAMS:** This will be my second time voting for approval of this incredible charter school. Just real quick, the absenteeism, what do you attribute that to?

**COLLIN:** A multitude of factors. Even though we don't collect the data, we have a high immigrant population and so one would assume that that had an impact, especially last year. But at the same time, many of our families just had difficulties getting to school, whether it was transportation related or sickness or so on, and many of our families struggle to make ends meet and so sometimes it's a matter of do I watch my kid or go to work or so on, and so there's a lot of factors that play into that, but we have found that communicating very closely with our families, each case is unique, has really helped decrease that from last year to this year.

**WILLIAMS:** And the attendance clerk was helpful in...

**COLLIN:** Very much. Very much.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. If I can ask you, what are your financial reserves at this time?

**COLLIN:** Again, I don't have the exact numbers off the top of my head. I believe Vista Condor specifically is, I want to say between \$2 to \$3 million, but I could also get back to you.

**WILLIAMS:** That's fine.

**COLLIN:** But very strong balance.

**WILLIAMS:** No more.

**BARKE:** Great. All right, next. Trustee Shaw?

**SHAW:** I guess as a comment, your first slide that you had up, I think it was 97 or no, excuse me, 51% English language learners, 97% socioeconomic disadvantage. Did I get that right?

**COLLIN:** Correct.

**SHAW:** So I guess this is my comment when we're sometimes evaluating how our charter schools are doing, and of course this board, we want to have the bar high, but I think maybe sometimes contrary to popular beliefs, so some of our charter schools are serving populations that are very disadvantaged or might be they're learning English, they're this and having these categories and factors that make it maybe so not, maybe life is very rarely completely black or

white. And so, I wanted to just point that out that how well you're doing considering the population of students you might be serving. In my old age, I need to be reminded sometimes of things. Can you remind me, how do we define chronic absenteeism? I wondered that.

**COLLIN:** Yep. Chronic absenteeism is defined by missing 10% or more of the days in school, so essentially having 90% attendance or less.

**SHAW:** I see. And you're attributing your recovery in that regard. What is the secret sauce? What was it you were doing?

**COLLIN:** Really early intervention, making sure that we are very carefully tracking students who are even trending towards chronically absent as early as three absences. If we see that a student is missing three or four or five days, we intervene very early on before it gets that much worse, and so we found that early intervention, that individualized, just meeting the families where they're at and trying to figure out what it's going to take to get the student to school. And many times it might be transportation related. A significant portion of our budget goes to transportation, but it makes a difference. And so, truly finding out early on what the barriers are to attending school and then really working through those barriers with the family.

**SHAW:** Great. Good job. Thank you.

**COLLIN:** Thank you.

**BARKE:** Mr. Valdes?

**VALDES:** Collin, your principal made a reference to McKinney Vento students. Are those homeless students?

**COLLIN:** Homeless or foster.

**VALDES:** What is the percentage of homeless kids that you...

**COLLIN:** I should know this off the top of my head, but I would have to get back to you on that number. I know that Ms. Alessandro said that there's over 100 of the students, so you could...

**ROXANNE:** Between foster and homeless close to 100.

**COLLIN:** Close to 100, so probably...

**VALDES:** 100 just at the Condor School?

**COLLIN:** Is it? It might be between Condor and...

**ROXANNE:** Maybe between Condor and Heritage.

**COLLIN:** Yeah. We could get that data to you if you would like that.

**VALDES:** How large is the Condor school?

**COLLIN:** 377 students.

**VALDES:** Okay. Well, I really like the parent comment showing the responsiveness of the school. That's always big for us, so I really like that. And that's all I have to say.

**SPARKS:** Yeah, I would just add that I like that you put context behind the numbers that you presented. I really appreciate that because it's not one size fits all. Every school's different, every family's different. And the key is communication, and that's my expert field and I teach university students and graduate students in the art of persuasive campaigns as well as interpersonal communication and the combination you guys are doing. You meet families where they are and you figure out where the problem is for in terms of early intervention for increasing the adherence, for the absentee issues or any other holes and issues that you see with families and communication is the key. So, I'm really proud. I knew you were doing that, but it was kind of nice to hear it from the parents as well, and I appreciate your parents coming out with your kids late at night. We got to get those kids back home. But yeah, I'm fully supportive of what you guys are doing and very proud of what you've accomplished.

**COLLIN:** Thank you.

**BARKE:** I'll just wrap it up with saying you're doing amazing things. I've been on the campus several times as you know, and I'm always impressed with what is going on through the innovation and everything you're doing, and I even remember during the pandemic how hard you worked to keep your students safe, bring them back to a safe environment as soon as possible. You had safe school buses and you did a lot to keep the kids engaged, which was so important during that time. I don't think you suffered some of the learning loss that other schools did, so you deserve great applause for what you're doing and I appreciate it. We all appreciate you and look forward to seeing you back next month.

**COLLIN:** Thank you.

**CHASTAIN:** The board will now conduct a public hearing on the countywide charter petition that was submitted for Suncoast Charter School and they submitted on January 2nd. Suncoast Charter School proposes a non-classroom based program serving students in TK through grade 12. The charter operator has provided notice of intent to open facilities within the boundaries of Fullerton School District, Fullerton Joint Union High School District, Tustin Unified School District, and Placentia Yorba Linda School District. The public hearing is being held pursuant to Ed Code 47605.6 to consider the provisions of the charter petition and the level of support for the proposed countywide charter. Prior to public comment, representatives from Suncoast Charter School will have up to 15 minutes to address the board. I invite the petitioners to the podium.

**WINDI:** Am I ready? Okay.

**SHAW:** Okay. Now, are we doing this right now?

**BARKE:** After.

**SHAW:** Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. My apologies.

**WINDI:** Oh, wait. How do I do that? How do I make it go over there?

**BEAN:** I think they're taken care of it.

**WINDI:** Oh, thank you. Not my area of expertise. Oh yeah, it's in the middle. Oh, well. Okay. It looks like we're ready. Okay. Good evening. My name is Windi Eklund and I'm grateful to be here this evening alongside members of the Suncoast community, including our school support team who will be sharing during tonight's presentation. What the heck? Okay. We are a TK through 12 public non-classroom based charter school serving approximately 1900 students across Orange County and neighboring counties. Our program is grounded in a strong family school partnership with credentialed teachers, providing guidance, oversight, and individualized support. Students learn at home while remaining connected to their local communities. We are here this evening to request approval of a countywide charter that would replace our current single district charter. I broke the mic. At Suncoast, everything we do is rooted in a deep respect for families as primary guides in their children's education. Our mission, vision, and values shape a homeschool program that is flexible, relational, and responsive to the diverse needs of the families we serve. Our vision centers on a strong academic foundation, trusting families, honoring individuality, and preparing students to engage meaningfully and the world around them.

We are seeking countywide authorization to serve families equitably and to establish a centrally accessible community center. Our families are geographically dispersed and enroll in our program, not because of their location. Making countywide access essential. Families survey data shows that if our program were unavailable, over 96% of families would continue homeschooling through another charter or privately. Because districts do not offer this model, the new authorization will allow us to retain these families in public education without disrupting local district enrollment. Countywide authorization will ensure consistent access to services and supports without the fragmentation and fiscal burden that can occur under multiple district authorizations. Steph.

**STEPH:** Our enrollment growth reflects a responsible, intentional, and controlled approach. Each year, growth has been carefully planned to ensure we maintain strong family support and program quality. This slide shows our enrollment growth over time. The gray portion represents students on our wait list, including over 1,000 students. We were not able to serve due to enrollment limits we set. Growth has been entirely organic. We have never advertised. Families find the program through the homeschool community built on longstanding relationships and trust. That trust reflects the work of the school support team and the leadership of Windi Eklund. Who's more than 20 years of advocacy in the homeschool community inform our direction since our team assumed leadership. Our families intentionally seek a flexible home-based public education option. Many have had challenging experiences in traditional settings and understand their parental rights. Nearly 60% of our students have never attended their local school district and more than 75% were already homeschooling. We see strong enrollment in TK through third grades, reflecting new families choosing to homeschool. Gretchen.

**GRETCHEN:** Relationships come first. Families remain with the same education specialist year to year, ensuring consistent, responsive communication and trusted relationships. We walk alongside families through challenges and transitions by working together to adapt plans,

navigate learning differences, and help students stay engaged. Through collaboration we ensure students are supported as they grow. Instruction is built around student interests, complimented by flexible pacing and blended curriculum resources to promote engagement, mastery, and academic progress. We remain with students and families over time providing dedicated support to ensure all of their needs are met. With support such as MTSS and reengagement in place, students feel secure enough to take risks, stay connected to their learning, and continue making progress. Nicky.

**NICKY:** Our community engagement reflects the heart of the homeschool community. We build connections thoughtfully by honoring family choice, developmental needs, while creating space where families can truly belong. Shared experiences create natural opportunities for families to connect around learning. We have field trips, enrichment and gatherings where students can engage with peers, explore learning beyond the curriculum, and build relationships that foster a sense of belonging. Our parent academy supports parents as partners in learning, helping families feel confident, navigating homeschooling within a public school, and they're prepared to guide their child's learning journey. Okay, I'll just go. Suncoast Social, our private online community allows families to build relationships, receive timely updates, and engage consistently. We support homeschooling through long-term whole family relationships. Families work with the same education specialists across ages and years, building trust and understanding, guided by thoughtful matching, coaching and family choice. Katy.

**KATY:** We provide layered support through MTSS, special education, academic supports and interventions and social emotional services. Supports are coordinated and adjusted as students grow, face new challenges and move through their educational journey. Parents know their children best. When challenges arise, we begin by listening to our families. We partner together to understand the needs and identified shared solutions. El Dorado Charter SELPA has formally recognized us for strong IEP compliance, proactive family engagement, and effective support structures. We stand out among independent study charters for prompt parent consent to IEPs with a high rate of IEP meeting compliance and have shared our best internal practices to inform SELPA wide guidance for other LEAs. General education and student services work hand in hand for students with learning differences or specialized needs. Our special education team partners with families and education specialists to design supports that honor the homeschool model. Bethany.

**BETHANY:** Our families intentionally choose a non-classroom based model, valuing flexibility, individualized pacing, and respect for their educational rights. This directly affects participation and interpretation of assessment data. Despite opt-out challenges, you'll see that our CAASPP participation has increased significantly over the past three years. Rising from the low thirties to 75% in '24-'25. On the Dashboard, participation penalties significantly impact our distance from standard scores, even when students demonstrate growth, low participation can mask those gains. Despite these challenges, we are steadily improving year over year in both math and ELA. Our participation and distance from standard growth were not driven by mandates. It came from intentionally building trust, consistent relationships, and helping families understand why assessment matters within our homeschool charter model. Dashboard data confirms measurable growth across every student's subgroup with the majority showing gains of 100 points or more last year. This chart compares two years of growth in math and LA across the state, county and Suncoast, and it tells a clear story.

Our participants are demonstrating significant gains in both ELA and math. Our data shows that 66% to 67% of our students are demonstrating year-over-year improvement. Through our long-term strategic assessment plan outlined in our LCAP, we are intentionally working to increase participation and as participation rates increase, the remaining non-participation is largely attributable to families who are firmly exercising state recognized opt-out rights, making further gains more complex. Our focus remains on outreach, preparation and reducing both logistical and emotional barriers while respecting our family's rights. Our first priority was increasing participation, recognizing that many families were experiencing state testing for the first time. In some cases, early participation included students who clicked through portions of the assessment, did not fully engage with questions or were unable to complete the whole test. We recognize that lack of familiarity with testing experience and testing anxiety can be significant barriers. For participating students, our focus begins with building confidence and reducing anxiety by helping them feel prepared and comfortable with the testing experience. We also work intentionally to remove access barriers through device lending, technical support, clear communication and family centered preparation. Through MTSS learning style coaching, curriculum adjustments, small group instruction, and targeted re-engagement counseling informed by assessment results. We are addressing student achievement gaps. We've expanded our testing team, increased the number of locations for testing, extended testing windows and integrated CAASPP PFT and growth testing into a single coordinated effort. Ronna.

**RONNA:** During the '21-'22 school year, Suncoast Preparatory Academy faced a pivotal moment with the possibility of voluntary closure. In response, Windi stepped forward to serve the homeschool community and mobilize community support to stabilize and preserve the school, protecting family's access to educational options in Orange County. In the '22-'23 school year, we began to grow and establish a stable foundation, serving more students and expanding our program offerings. In '23-'24, we sustained healthy enrollment, expanded staff expertise, and began building a financial reserve to support responsible long-term planning. Today we are fiscally secure and operationally stable, supported by healthy enrollment, a strong wait list and sound financial practices. This stability allows us to grow intentionally investing in staff expertise, strengthening programs, and building reserves to respond thoughtfully to future needs while remaining grounded in our mission. Erica.

**ERICA:** This growth reflects a strong partnership with the OCDE. Our recovery and stability demonstrate effective oversight, sound governance, and a shared commitment to accountability. Professional learning is embedded in our daily work. In this area, staff regularly collaborate through small group cohorts and focused in service to share best practices. Professional development is intentional and accessible. In-house trainings are recorded, organized, and available year-round, allowing staff to revisit learning when it's most relevant and ensuring continuity. We invest in continuous professional learning through a range of partners with OCDE, serving as a key resource. Offerings provide timely role-specific training that supports staff growth and responds to evolving needs. Professional learning is supported and intentional. Staff aren't left to navigate opportunities on their own. A dedicated team helps connect them to targeted external trainings. We engage in formal reflective improvement cycles through LCAP development, WASC accreditation and ongoing evaluation of our systems and outcomes. Our work is supported by regular OCDE oversight, including our annual oversight visit, which provides meaningful feedback and accountability. In May 2024, our school was granted a six-year WASC accreditation, a milestone that reflects our growth, stability, and commitment. Kim.

**KIM:** At Suncoast, we believe success isn't one size fits all. Graduation reflects each student's unique journey, growth and persistence. Students reach their goals through pathways designed around who they are and where they're headed. Graduation reflects a long-term partnership that carries students competently into their next chapter. We are very proud to have reached a 97.4% graduation rate.

**WINDI:** Suncoast is built on trust, partnership, and responsiveness. That foundation continues to guide our intentional growth shaped by data reflection in the lived experiences of our families and staff. With stability in place, we can focus on what we do best. Walking alongside families, honoring each student's individuality and supporting learning with care and purpose. Thank you for your time and your thoughtful consideration of our families as you evaluate approval of our countywide charter, allowing us to continue serving our unique and diverse community.

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

**SHAW:** Okay, now we got 15 minutes and 33 speakers. So, as you can see, I hate to think that anyone has spent all this time waiting and come here and not speak, so we're just going to have to be respectful and kind of...

**SPARKS:** 10 seconds each.

**SHAW:** 30 seconds at the most so we can move everyone through. Okay.

**VALDES:** You can just say me too.

**SHAW:** All right. I'll call a name and who's on deck. So, we'll start off with Alison followed by Zachary.

**ALISON:** Go there?

**SPARKS:** Yeah.

**SHAW:** You can go back there. You got a mic there.

**ALISON:** I'm Alison Johnson. I have two kids with Suncoast, Zachary and Lily. We've been with Suncoast for a couple of years and before that we were PSA and we would go back to a PSA if we didn't have Suncoast. The best thing about Suncoast is that they partner with families. They really, truly, truly care about each individual child and their unique journey and education and we really appreciate that.

**SHAW:** All right, Zachary followed by Lily.

**ZACHARY:** Hi. I am a student of Suncoast and I really appreciate what they do and care for me.

**SHAW:** All right. Lily, followed by William.

**LILY:** Hi. I am a student of Suncoast and they help me learn.

**SHAW:** Okay. William followed by Rebecca.

**WILLIAM:** My name is William Sena and I'm here with my wife Elena, and our daughter Lucia, who is in the TK grade at Suncoast Prep Academy. Initially ,she started a public school dual immersion. We were excited to drop her off on the first day, but as weeks transpired, she never assimilated even though the class loved her and she excelled learning, she was not happy and our happy, outgoing little girl was missing. After a few months, we pulled her out. We applied to Suncoast and were accepted. We were so happy we got to join her classes online and in person. We get to share in her learning experiences. At Suncoast, we have a happy student who loves participating in classes and learning on a daily basis and looks forward to going to classes.

**HENDRICK:** I'm sorry, your time's up.

**WILLIAM:** Oh, okay.

**SHAW:** We're moving tonight. Rebecca, followed by Heidi.

**REBECCA:** Okay. I am going to be really, really quick and to the point. My son started three years ago with Suncoast. He is autistic. He has just been diagnosed with ADHD as well. He has gone from being nonverbal to verbal and he will tell even his swim teacher the best things about density and dinosaurs and so we have been able to change his learning and have him be fun learning. We actually came because Bethany set up a meeting in the very, very beginning before we were enrolled because we tried to get into our district and no one returned my phone calls, so thank you.

**SHAW:** Okay. Heidi's here.

**HEIDI:** I know. Isn't that weird?

**SHAW:** Heidi will be followed by Michelle.

**HEIDI:** Okay. I'll go short though. As a former public school teacher and I appreciate you guys, you know I do. It's both meaningful and personal for me to stand before you tonight, along with our amazing families and colleagues from Suncoast Charter, for the past four years, I've had the privilege of serving as an education specialist, Suncoast Preparatory Academy, and you've shown your support at the very onset of your belief in our school as our authorizing agency. During that time, your leadership and support were instrumental in ensuring that our school was able to continue when we faced the very real possibility of closure. Because of your guidance, oversight and belief in our mission, Suncoast not only remained open, but as you've heard from our reports each month...

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

**HEIDI:** It has grown. Okay. You guys know it has and anyway, we'd like that countywide petition to have a learning community center. Thank you.

**SHAW:** All right. Michelle followed by Gabriela. No, Michelle. Okay. Gabriela. There she comes.

**GABRIELA:** Speed read. Okay. Thank you for allowing me to speak tonight. I just want to talk about my daughter. She's a senior at Suncoast and she's a dedicated and capable student. She's done well on her CAASPP and done all the things, but our prior charter school just did not work for her. They were not allowing her to do the things that she wanted to do to grow to be the best of herself, and so we came onto Suncoast and we love the program. She did not need a necessary stress. She still maintains a high academic standard and we love that she has a balanced teenage life.

**SHAW:** All right.

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

**SHAW:** Charisse, followed by Patricia.

**CHARISSE:** Hi. I'm a retired Fortune 100 executive and homeschool parent. My son is not, he's off at college now, but I am always going to be on the side of parent choice and I pulled my son out of Orange County public schools after eight weeks in Irvine because of issues with bullying and inappropriate things done by teachers and he had also, he was very great advanced and the school couldn't accommodate him.

**SHAW:** Okay, thank you. Patricia followed by Chip.

**PATRICIA:** Oh, you're Patricia?

**SHAW:** Sorry.

**PATRICIA:** What's the last name?

**SHAW:** Franchini.

**PATRICIA:** Yes, that's me.

**SHAW:** Sorry.

**PATRICIA:** Hi, my name is Patricia Franchini and I have two kids in homeschool. The reason that I moved to homeschool is because I have a son who sees probably over 11 specialists and he also has autism and the school system does not mesh well with his medical needs and my husband is also in the active duty military, and so Suncoast has really allowed my son to progress. He was actually at a first-grade level when he was in fourth grade and being at Suncoast, he's now at grade level for two years. He's been there, he's at grade level and so as my other son is in fourth grade, he's at a sixth-grade level in some things. They have progressed immensely. Thank you so much, Suncoast.

**SHAW:** Chip, followed by David.

**CHIP:** Thank you very much. My name is Chip Ahlswede. I am the district director for Senator Tony Strickland and on behalf of Senator Strickland, we're urging you respectfully to support this application because what Suncoast is doing is providing opportunities for students looking for a different academic experience than the traditional model. And parental involvement and school choice has always been a big issue for us that we want to continue to support. And thank you. And Tim, you didn't have to walk me off.

**SHAW:** David followed by Colleen. No, David. Okay, Colleen.

**COLLEEN:** I had good afternoon written on here, but I'll go to good evening now. Good evening, Board Members. My name is Colleen Cohen. I'm the middle and high school community support coordinator at Suncoast and also a homeschool mom. After more than 20 years in education and as a parent, I always ask what is best for students. For my child and for the hundreds of families we support, Suncoast has consistently been that answer. My family has benefited from multiple options at different times. My daughter graduated from OCSA, which was a perfect fit for her while Suncoast provided the flexibility and individualized approach my other child needed. Thank you.

**SHAW:** Okay, Amanda followed by Vicki.

**AMANDA:** My name is Amanda Campos and I'm the parent of two students at Suncoast as well as serving in the student services department. Parent involvement and school choice are huge for our family. Before Suncoast, our oldest son was attending a different public charter that began discouraging parent involvement. Safety was a growing concern and he wasn't being challenged and we noticed his confidence, his light was being diminished. After joining Suncoast, we saw our son start gaining his confidence back, exploring new interest in an overall improvement in his studies and wellbeing. We knew we made the right choice for our family. Please continue to support Suncoast. Thank you.

**SHAW:** Vicki, followed by Alfonso.

**VICKI:** Hi, my name is Vicki McClure and I'm an education specialist with Suncoast as well as a longtime homeschool parent of four grown children. Thank you board for your dedication to Suncoast to charters. I've heard great things about you and I so appreciate it. I've worked with charter schools for 20 years and I've found Suncoast to be one of the most supportive charters for families. It's just the best and I've been able to have a student from kinder to 12th grade and watching them graduate. It's just an amazing environment for that. I'm excited about the new charter opportunity. I'm sorry, the community center would be a great place for families to meet, so hopefully thanks.

**SHAW:** Thank you. Alfonso followed by Scott.

**ALFONSO:** Hello my name is Alfonso and I'm here to represent EL students. I'm an EL student, former EL student and EL teacher, and I'm here to represent the families that see us as a safe haven, especially in these moments. And here to also tell you how important it is that these children do not only see themselves as English learners but multilingual learners. And we have developed a program here that actually works and is making a lot of efforts to make the students achieve what they have to. Thank you.

**SHAW:** Thank you. Scott, followed by April.

**SCOTT:** Hi. I am a community member in support of Suncoast and I just retired after 30 plus years working in public education at the college level. And one thing that I did is every time we had a student that stood out against the crowd and had an extra level of resourcefulness and knowledge of the world, I would ask them, how did you get to be this way? Nine times out of the 10 they said, “homeschool” or “charter school”. And that sold me on this model and that's why we started homeschooling our daughter.

**SHAW:** April, followed by Stacy.

**APRIL:** Hi, my name is April and I had this big speech planned out, but I only have 30 seconds. So, I have been homeschooling my kids for about seven years and I'm currently homeschooling my daughter through Suncoast. I am so grateful for their support, especially through their special education department. My daughter was previously diagnosed with sensory processing disorder and Suncoast has allowed me to cater to her learning style. Her learning style was not conducive to traditional classroom learning and through Suncoast I was able to provide her the environment and learning tools needed to thrive. Thank you.

**SHAW:** Okay, Stacy followed by Sabrina.

**STACY:** My name is Stacy Bray. I've been an educator for over 30 years. I know I'm not that old, but I really am. I am a little coasters teacher at Suncoast and I teach Lucia and her dad spoke, but you didn't give him enough time, but this is why we do what we do. This little girl is thriving and I love to see her happy, joyful face during our little coaster classes. Thank you.

**SHAW:** Thank you. Sabrina. Followed by Shaunna, I think.

**SABRINA:** Good evening. My name is Sabrina Harding. I had a speech as well, so I'm just going to try to do my best here. Public speaking is not my strong suit. I have three out of my four children who are enrolled in Suncoast. They range from second through high school and they're really flourishing in our charter school. So, with the most important thing said, I ask that you please approve and continue for our charter to support our students. My kids have out of all of them, they've have, some of them have IEPs and 504s and they're just doing amazing and I like to thank all the amazing staff here and other parents. Thank you. Good evening.

**SHAW:** All right, Shaunna followed by Jamie.

**SHAUNNA:** My name is Shaunna Koza and I'm an MTSS literacy intervention teacher at Suncoast. Absolutely love my role because at Suncoast we truly value understanding how each unique student learns best and provide targeted interventions that support both the student and their family. Our flexible model is highly effective and I've had the privilege of being part of so many family stories guiding their children to grow in confidence as they learn to read and write. Please continue to support Suncoast so that all our students can keep learning in ways that work best for them and their families. Thank you.

**SHAW:** All right, Jamie followed by Amy.

**SHANNON:** Good evening, Trustees. My name is actually Shannon Smith, Jamie did my card for me. I'm here to show my support for Suncoast. I've had the privilege of working the last 30 years as a founder and operator of charter schools in six different states. Over the last 18 months I've had the privilege of getting to know Windi Eklund and her team. And really what has stood out the most to me getting to know Windi and her team is how her staff understands the students and families that they serve. This is a team that is intentional in their planning, thoughtful about their academic outcomes, and despite having about 2,000 kids, these people know every one of the students and families that they serve and it's remarkable. So, thank you.

**SHAW:** All right, Amy followed by Savannah.

**AMY:** Good evening, board of education. I know many of you guys, you guys are amazing. Thank you for being here to hear the voice of the people and the parents. As a councilwoman in the city of Westminster and a mother of three boys and a wife as well, I know the important it is to have schools that partner with parents like Suncoast that put children first. Suncoast has been an incredible blessing to my family, providing a safe, value-driven environment where my children are challenged academically and support us individually. Schools like Suncoast give our family real choice. And...

**HENDRICK:** I'm sorry, your time's up.

**AMY:** Thank you so much.

**SHAW:** Okay. Savannah followed by Jana.

**SAVANNAH:** Hi. We're actually going to do Savannah and Jana together, so it's going to save some time here. So, we are school psychologists for Suncoast Preparatory Academy. We support students and families who experience significant anxiety, attendance challenges, and limited success in traditional school settings. Since enrolling at Suncoast, we have seen measurable improvements in student engagement, emotional regulation, confidence, and academic growth. Families report reduced stress, and a renewed trust in the school system.

**JANA:** Suncoast fills a critical gap by providing flexible data-driven whole child supports that are essential, not optional for many learners to remain engaged and successful in school. Thank you for your time and consideration.

**SHAW:** Thank you. Okay, we're going to have Terri followed by Kaya.

**TERRI:** Hello, good evening. My name is Terri. I'm from Duarte, California. I'm here as both a parent and an educator at this charter school. Because of this charter, I'm able to work while being present with my kids and support families who want the same many in the room with us. Our families together and my children receive instruction that is tailored to who they are. That means Mondays they get to learn outdoors for nature school. As you can see, they're still in their outdoor school clothes. Other days they receive various instructions such as literacy. And also, we're going to go on field trip on Wednesday. When families have flexibility and children receive personalized learning. Students thrive, families stay connected, and communities grow stronger. Thank you.

**SHAW:** All right. Kaya followed by Andi.

**KAYA:** Hi, my name is Kaya and I love that I get to do field school.

**SHAW:** You should love it. All right, Andi followed by Audrey.

**ANDI:** Hi, I'm Andi Kowal. I'm a parent and also a board member, and I just want to look around and appreciate every single person that's here supporting this wonderful charter school. I am one of those parents that if Suncoast did not exist, I would file a PSA. And my parents, my parents, my children who I have homeschooled the whole entire time really benefit from this charter. My son is an advanced reader. My daughter was a little bit later reading, but she's now way advanced and I'm just grateful that we have the resources. So, thank you.

**SHAW:** Thank you. All right. Audrey, followed by Tim.

**AUDREY:** Good evening, Board Members. And we would just like to say that we love our charter and we love our schools and our teachers. And...

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I like my homeschool program and my charter.

**SHAW:** All right, Denise followed by Alexis.

**TIM:** Hi. Oh.

**SHAW:** I'm sorry. I thought that was, sorry about that.

**TIM:** That's all right. Tim Kowal, Huntington Beach. I belong with the last two speakers. Suncoast supports my children and anything supports my children, supports my wife, without whom I would just be a wreck. So, without Suncoast I would be lost. Thank you.

**SHAW:** All right, where were we? I think Denise, followed by Alexis.

**DENISE:** Hi, good evening. My name's Denise Santangelo and I have the pleasure of serving on the board of directors of Suncoast. And I think to sum it all up for me is I just want to express my appreciation to this board for their support of Suncoast, but for their broader support of the homeschool charter public school charter. These educational models require a high degree of oversight, accountability, and fiscal responsibility. Public charter schools operate under rigorous audit standards, compliance requirements, and performance expectation. This is work that we take seriously and we recognize the partnership. Thank you.

**SHAW:** Alexis. Followed by Annamarina.

**ALEXIS:** Hi, my name's Alexis and this is Joanna. I'm an employee at Suncoast Charter School and through my work I've seen firsthand the impact Suncoast has on families. Many come to us discouraged after students felt anxious and overlooked in traditional settings. And at Suncoast, those students regain confidence and rediscover their love for learning. Our homeschool model empowers parents while providing strong guidance, resource and individualized support. Families find flexibility, connection, and a community that truly cares about their child's success

and wellbeing. Suncoast is more than a school, it's a lifeline for families seeking a better path, and I don't want her to grow up in a world without Suncoast.

**SHAW:** Okay, Annamarina.

**ANNAMARINA:** Good evening. Thank you for having us this evening. I have taught in traditional public schools in Virginia and in California, and this is my first year as an education specialist with Suncoast. And what I can tell you from the heart, I'm not going to go off my long speech, is that what I noticed in my students and my families that I did not see in a brick and mortar public school was a genuine love of learning. And that is what makes me so passionate to be here with Suncoast tonight and something that I hope will continue in the future with your support. Thank you so much.

**SHAW:** All right, that was it.

**SPARKS:** Good job, guys.

**CHASTAIN:** The public hearing time is now concluded. The staff report will be published on March 24th, and action will take place on April 8th. President Barke, I now close the public hearing and return the meeting to you.

**BARKE:** Thank you so much. I will start on my right this time with Dr. Sparks.

**SPARKS:** Wow. Well, you guys did such a great job of just condensing your passion into 30 seconds or less. I'm so proud of you and thank you all for giving us the opportunity to support you. I'm so proud of you parents and kiddos for showing up when it counts. We know you're working so hard behind the scenes to create school choice for thousands of families. Well, yeah, well almost 2,000 families. So, I appreciate all the effort that you go into that every day. I know it's not always easy, but we're here to support you, so thank you.

**BARKE:** Trustee Valdes?

**VALDES:** I have to say, I've been sitting on this board for three and a half years and this may be the biggest support for a charter school I've seen. Would you take the podium now? I have a few questions. Okay, so you serve 1,900 kids right now?

**WINDI:** Yes.

**VALDES:** Is that all in Orange County?

**WINDI:** It's actually Orange County and adjacent counties, we're non-classroom based so we can serve multiple areas.

**VALDES:** So how many are Orange County?

**WINDI:** Do we have that number, Parker?

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** He's pulling it up.

**WINDI:** He's pulling it up.

**VALDES:** Okay. So, I am remiss because I don't know a lot about this charter even though we authorized them. So, I just have some fundamental questions and I guess the first one is you're asking for a material revision?

**WINDI:** No. We're asking for a new countywide charter.

**VALDES:** Right. Okay. But you already serve the kids countywide. So, the question I have, it sort of begs the question, what do you need a countywide charter for if you already serve kids all over Orange County?

**WINDI:** We were actually approved on a denial within the boundaries of Saddleback Valley Unified, which is not near where most of our families live. So, asking them to go there for our community center, they're not going to be able to make it there. So, if we can have countywide, we can locate our community center somewhere that families can get to it.

**VALDES:** Okay. All right. So, this is really the impetus of this, or the reason for this is because you want to create a community center and you want to put it sort of in the center of the county so that everyone has access to it. That's the reason.

**WINDI:** Yeah.

**VALDES:** Okay.

**SPARKS:** I think Parker has the information.

**WINDI:** Woo hoo Parker.

**PARKER:** Good evening. We have 642 students currently in Orange County.

**VALDES:** Okay. Do you have any idea where you're going to put the community center that you want to have?

**WINDI:** We're looking at Fullerton, Tustin or Placentia-Yorba Linda, my hometown.

**VALDES:** Well, let me tell you, I'm from Tustin and Tustin would be great.

**WINDI:** Right? Tustin would be great. Yes. Tustin is very central.

**VALDES:** Well, it's actually, if you look at Orange County, Tustin is directly in the center of the county.

**WINDI:** Right. Yes.

**VALDES:** Okay. So, a couple of the speakers said they would file a PSA.

**WINDI:** Yes.

**VALDES:** What's a PSA?

**WINDI:** It's a private school affidavit, so it's one of the legal paths for homeschooling in California.

**VALDES:** Okay. Talk to me a little bit about how the school operates just on a day-to-day basis from the student's perspective. So, they get up in the morning, right? Their parents there, it's 8:00 AM, they get on a computer, they're logging in. I guess, talk to me how this works.

**WINDI:** So, some of our students might log in and do curriculum on computers, but a lot of our students are learning out in the community. They go to different classes. We have classes, we have field trips. So, a lot of our learning is happening real life, not on a device.

**VALDES:** So how much is that real learning? How much is on a device?

**WINDI:** We don't have any specific required device learning. So, it would be if they choose to do that, and then the family and the education specialist work together to determine how much time that would be.

**VALDES:** So, when the teachers teach, right, there's no campus, where do they teach?

**WINDI:** So, we do have our online synchronous classes.

**VALDES:** I apologize. I know very little about this charter and I'm just trying to figure out like how this works.

**WINDI:** It's a very confusing model. So, our parents actually do serve as the home educator, and so they're helping their children with the curriculum and it's typically a homeschool curriculum that we help them select. And then they're doing a book curriculum, not an online curriculum, but we do have online if that's what works best for the student.

**VALDES:** Okay. I saw a psychologist was up there saying that she works for the school. If a kid needs psychological support, is that something that's done in person or is that done on a computer?

**WINDI:** It depends on the child's needs. So, if the team decides the child needs in-person services, we arrange for that. And if the child can flourish with the online services, we do online services. So, it all depends on the team decision.

**VALDES:** Okay. All right. Well, I mean, clearly there's a lot of support for this model. I am always in support of parents, and I apologize for the questions. I just really wanted to know how you, oh, is there any office at all where there's a staff?

**WINDI:** Not right now, no.

**VALDES:** So, you work from home?

**WINDI:** We all work from home.

**VALDES:** Wow, okay.

**WINDI:** People like it.

**SHAW:** Is it my turn?

**BARKE:** Yes, sir.

**SHAW:** I may have blown this. Can I use my time to ask Javier, did you want to say something? Where did Javier go?

**SPARKS:** He's here.

**VALDES:** He's back there.

**SHAW:** Did I miss you? Sorry.

**JAVIER:** Hello. So, I've been working with Mrs. Eklund to talk about the petition. I really respect her advocacy, her model. We've been talking about different options for families in Orange County. So, I definitely commend and congratulate this program. So that's all I can say right now.

**WINDI:** Thank you, Javier.

**SHAW:** Thank you, Javier. I was teasing Heidi a little bit in my comments, but I did want everyone to know she's one of our regular friendly faces in the audience. Well representing every month. Suncoast is represented, not with so many of you, but she's here.

**WINDI:** We didn't figure you want to see all of us every single month.

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** We're all on YouTube.

**SHAW:** Okay. We do appreciate Heidi. I was really impressed with that stat you were showing about the number of students that were on the wait list and you haven't done a thing ever to market or try to, and it is just they're flocking.

**WINDI:** Yes. It's all word of mouth.

**SHAW:** And I think that's really remarkable. So, our board has always tried to be of the mantra of supporting school choice, and that can take any number of forms, but obviously homeschool or charter school, private school, there's different ways that looks. And obviously this is a model that's really flourishing. Congratulations.

**WINDI:** Thank you, Tim.

**BARKE:** Dr. Williams.

**WILLIAMS:** What is your budget per year?

**WINDI:** Delano. Delano helps me with all of this. So, hang on. He's going to come. I know, right? I'm so nervous. I can't even think straight.

**DELANO:** It's okay. I've been here before. Roughly about \$27 million were projected in our first year, give or take. And I believe that's in the charter petition. But don't quote me on that exact number offhand.

**WILLIAMS:** And what are your reserves?

**DELANO:** Currently for this particular charter that we have, it's roughly about \$4.7 million.

**WINDI:** We're working on that.

**WILLIAMS:** One last question. Jorge asked because he doesn't know the origins of where you were. Could you please tell the people your story, how you got started and what you did during COVID and how you just took in people who needed the school and you lost money?

**WINDI:** Yeah, I was actually on the board at Suncoast at that time, and we were struggling to, okay, let me go back. So, I don't know if you're all aware, but the legislature actually cut funding for non-classroom based charter schools during COVID. So, if we had growth, we weren't paid for that growth. They did what was called a hold harmless and kept the money in the districts that the children had left. And so, we had to let kids in to serve them because they needed a school and wouldn't get paid for them.

**WILLIAMS:** And you didn't do it for any funds at all.

**WINDI:** Right. Right.

**WILLIAMS:** That's the type of people they are.

**BARKE:** I remember those days. Anything else? Yeah, I was going to bring up, I remember 2021 and you really came to the plate and stepped up and you deserve a huge applause for what you had done. I mean, to hear now that you are, what did I hear? Financially secure and operationally stable. Wow. I mean that's huge. I remember those times when you almost closed and so you've come a long way. I'm thrilled to see what has happened here. It just shows it with hard work and commitment and passion. Anything's possible because I wasn't sure we would see this day a few years ago. And I'm thrilled that we are. And just what you guys are doing for the community to have all these people here and they're wonderful stories. We love seeing Heidi. Heidi does keep us up to speed, so we know you've been progressing well. Love the t-shirts, love the spirit. Let's see, what else did I make notes about? And I love that I heard so much about how you treat each individual child especially, and that you know each child, and that's just a real testament to how you care about your students and your families. And so, you guys are super lucky to have this school and I'm thrilled that you're back here asking to broaden what you're doing. Yeah. Look forward to seeing you again next month.

**WINDI:** Thank you. Yes.

**BARKE:** Okay.

**CHASTAIN:** Ready?

**BARKE:** Yes. We are now moving on to Orange Springs.

**CHASTAIN:** Correct.

**BARKE:** Okay. Is this okay if we took a little 10-minute break here? Would that work for everyone? All right.

**WILLIAMS:** Yes. Thank you.

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

**BARKE:** All right. We are going to start. Yeah, we're going to get started. Tim will rejoin us in a few minutes. Aracely, I think you, oh, actually we're going to do a quick public comment because say Sailee has to leave. We're going to go ahead and let her do her public comment and then we'll go back to the charter.

**HENDRICK:** And this is a public comment for item number 18.

**BARKE:** Yes. Three minutes?

**HENDRICK:** Yes.

**BARKE:** Okay.

**VALDES:** Is there any chance that we could move 18 to now and then, we just go to 18 now?

**SPARKS:** We can't just move it up?

**WILLIAMS:** I think on the unanimous consent, the president has a past precedence to do that. If that's a consensus of the board. I have no objection to it.

**BARKE:** I'm just a little concerned that the charter school has been waiting and are you guys okay? Okay. Is it going to be five minutes? Is that the presentation is not going to...

**VALDES:** I don't think it's longer than that.

**BARKE:** Okay. Okay, great. Then we'll go ahead and I'll make a motion to move number 18 up right now.

**SPARKS:** Second.

**BARKE:** Okay, great. All in favor?

**WILLIAMS:** Second. All in favor?

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

**BARKE:** 4-0. Okay, there we go.

**SPARKS:** Done.

**BARKE:** And that way we'll have Tim back in time for the charter school. Okay. You may go ahead start. Thank you.

**SAILEE:** Good evening, Superintendent Bean, Board, and the general public. My name Sailee Charlu and I'm a junior at the Orange County School of the Arts in Santa Ana. I want to discuss the importance of bilingual education and what it means for enhancing educational outcomes in our community. Attending school in Santa Ana, a city that is 96% Hispanic, I noticed that many core enrichment and in-school programs are offered only in English when one in five California students are dual language learners or English second language learners. And over 80% of those students speak Spanish. Yet less than 10% of these students have access to bilingual programs. This English only model has not met with the changing diversity and dynamics among our students today, especially when there is an extensive peer reviewed research proving that providing a dual language learning environment specifically for Hispanic students has shown significant academic and social benefits translating into long-term educational achievement, while allowing students to feel confident about their culture and language in society today.

It is both an academic and civic asset. To help address this gap, I founded two nonprofit bilingual education programs, Habla Arte and the Lit League for creative expression in public speaking in elementary and middle schools, impacting more than 5,000 students. After completing our 15-hour workshops, students show a 25% increase in artistic engagement and public speaking performance, greater participation and confidence, and finally succeeding in an environment that praises both languages. These programs prove what's possible, but they don't reach everyone. To many dual language and English learner students, they still lack access to bilingual learning in both core subjects and enrichment programs. In a state as diverse as California, we can do better. Today, the Orange County Board of Education will consider the resolution to support access to bilingual education that I drafted with support from Trustee Jorge Valdes and support by Santa Ana Mayor Amezcua, to simply recognize the importance of bilingual education to at least bring awareness to the issue. Because at the end of the day, academic tools of support, confidence, public speaking and cultural identity are not luxuries, they're necessities. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you, Jorge. I'll turn it over to you.

**VALDES:** To my colleagues, I would say it was about November we got an email that came to our offices and that I always try to, we all do try to respond to our constituents and their email requests. I took a meeting, I think it may have been on the day of the November meeting, I can't remember, but I had a meeting with this delightful young junior from OCSA, and we talked about her bilingual education resolution. And as you all know, my kids who are eight years old go to El Sol Academy in Santa Ana, which is a bilingual education school. I think I was sort of the natural fit to respond to that email. Anyway, we had a delightful conversation for about maybe 45 minutes, and we went through the resolution that she presented. I did ask her to make

some edits to the resolution, I think to align with this board's values and vision. And she did, when I got it, I made some more revisions. This is sort of a third draft at this point, but I think it's a good one. I'm responding to our constituents and this very delightful lady's request. It's a resolution that I can support in its current form. And I'm asking for your yes, vote tonight.

**WILLIAMS:** Sorry, you're making the motion?

**VALDES:** I am making a motion Dr. Williams for a yes on the resolution for the supporting access to bilingual education.

**BARKE:** I will second your motion and now we can go to discussion now Dr. Sparks.

**SPARKS:** Well, I myself had the opportunity to learn another language, but we in a study abroad program and it really changed my life and allowed me to then adopt other languages. Not that I'm fluent anymore like I was 25 years ago, but I know enough and I just think it's invaluable. Anytime that we can give our students and the younger that you give students the research shows, as you all know, the younger that we catch students and educate students in bilingual education, it'll stick with them a lot longer for life and it won't be as difficult as it is with more adult learners. So, I'm super supportive of bilingual education.

**BARKE:** Excellent. Dr. Williams?

**WILLIAMS:** I like the language, I like what's said here. I believe in the concept of dual language immersion. Words have meaning. Would you be in opposition if we added the language and or dual language immersion wherever we see bilingual education?

**VALDES:** And or dual language immersion?

**WILLIAMS:** Right.

**VALDES:** So anywhere bilingual education, anywhere those two words are together and or dual language immersion.

**WILLIAMS:** Yeah.

**VALDES:** Well, you know...

**WILLIAMS:** I'll tell you and why. It goes way back to 1998. I was on the board in '96 and there was a resolution, if we can remember, Proposition 227 bilingual education that was very politically divisive. It passed the state voters by 61%. And then we had a period of about 16, 18 years where we had the English immersion era, and then we had Proposition 58 that passed by a large number, 73% in 2016. So, it's just wordsmithing. I'm going to vote for it regardless. I'm just trying to be consistent in language.

**VALDES:** I'm not opposed to it. But if you would vote for it in its current form, I think my preference would be to ask for the vote this evening Doc. I think, how many places would that change?

**WILLIAMS:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. And maybe we can have if dual language immersion bilingual education, what is the sentiment of the education community on the preferred description?

**BEAN:** Well, they're both important and they're both a different approach to actual education. So bilingual is certainly explicit instruction in a second language. Dual immersion is full immersion throughout the school year or the school day in another language. So, they're synonymous, but different approaches, if that makes sense.

**SPARKS:** Why don't you just have both bilingual, or you can even say multilingual or dual immersion?

**BARKE:** And or and slash or?

**SPARKS:** Yeah, just to keep it flexible.

**VALDES:** Well Sailee, what do you think about that?

**SAILEE:** Yeah, like someone mentioned, there are two different approaches, but I think and slash or is fine just to kind of satisfy the needs of both the trustees. But yeah, I think definitely they're two different approaches. But recognizing the importance of both has value as well.

**WILLIAMS:** You are a future politician, Sailee.

**SAILEE:** Thank you.

**VALDES:** Okay, so that's going to say bilingual education and or dual immersion everywhere bilingual education would have that additional language after it.

**SPARKS:** And or dual immersion. Yeah.

**VALDES:** Okay. I mean that's fine with me with those changes.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. Before I make a formal motion, I just want to make sure you're okay with that.

**VALDES:** Yeah.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. I make a motion to wherever bilingual education is that we add after that and or dual language immersion. That way it kind of keeps everything in the same vein of thought and teaching and that they're both valid. And I see legal counsel looking at me.

**HENDRICK:** Well, we're just going to ask the question because you already had a motion. A second on the table.

**WILLIAMS:** This is a subsidiary motion.

**HENDRICK:** Thank you.

**VALDES:** Okay, so I guess we're voting on these subsidiary motion first.

**WILLIAMS:** Yeah, you vote subsidiary, then you go to the main.

**BARKE:** Any further discussion before we vote on the subsidiary motion?

**SPARKS:** Which is adding the and or dual.

**BARKE:** Exactly.

**SPARKS:** Okay.

**BARKE:** Okay. All right. So, we'll call the vote. All those in favor of the subsidiary motion with the and or.

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

**BARKE:** Anyone opposed? Nope. All right. Passes 5-0 with the edits.

**WILLIAMS:** Now you have to go to the primary.

**BARKE:** I do. Even if that one passes?

**WILLIAMS:** Yeah, because adding the language to the subsidiary, now you have to go to the main motion on the floor.

**BARKE:** All right.

**SPARKS:** That doesn't make sense.

**WILLIAMS:** Yeah, it is.

**VALDES:** You made the change.

**BARKE:** Yeah, we didn't do it last meeting.

**WILLIAMS:** It's a part of our parliamentary procedure.

**ROLEN:** You have the book.

**BARKE:** All right. All those in favor of the original motion, even though the other one's already passed, say I.

**WILLIAMS:** I.

**BARKE:** You're saying I to the original one?

**WILLIAMS:** So, the subsidiary motion is placing the language into the primary motion.

**BARKE:** Oh, I see.

**WILLIAMS:** So, we voted to place it. Now we have to vote for the main motion.

**BARKE:** Okay. All those in favor...

**HENDRICK:** But you have to put the language in.

**SPARKS:** But the language is in now the main motion.

**WILLIAMS:** Right.

**VALDES:** Oh, I see.

**SPARKS:** Oh, well that's different.

**BARKE:** All those in favor of the main motion with the added language say aye.

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

**BARKE:** Any opposed? Hearing none it passes 5-0.

**SPARKS:** I'm glad we have clarification.

**WILLIAMS:** Congratulations out there. Good job.

**BARKE:** And thank you so much Springs for your patience. We appreciate it.

**CHASTAIN:** Now we're going to go back to Orange Springs.

**BARKE:** Yes.

**CHASTAIN:** All right. We will now open a public hearing on the material revision request submitted by Orange Springs Charter School on January 14th. Orange Springs is a countywide charter school serving students in transitional kindergarten through grade 12 with one location within the boundaries of Santa Ana Unified School District. The school is requesting approval of a material revision to remove the cap on enrollment for independent study in a seat based school and add one additional school site within the boundaries of Santa Ana Unified School District and extend the implementation timeline for opening locations in Anaheim Elementary School District and Anaheim Union High School District to 2028-29. And in Saddleback Valley Unified School District of 2029-2030. This public hearing is being held to consider the level of support for the proposed material revision. Representatives from Orange Springs Charter School will now have up to 10 minutes to address the board regarding the proposed material revision. I invite the charter school representatives to the podium.

**KATHLEEN:** President Barke, Members of the board, Dr. Bean. It's great to be here tonight. My name is Dr. Kathleen Hermsmeyer and I am the superintendent of Springs Charter Schools and Orange Springs particularly, which we're talking about tonight. I also wanted to introduce to you someone probably, she's been here many more times than I have. Michelle Shane Sapanara, and she's our assistant superintendent of student services. So, we're delighted to be here tonight to talk about our material revision. That one. Okay. So, the main things we're going to talk about,

yes, we are delaying a little bit our timeline for opening those centers because it's harder to find locations than we expected. So, I'll just say we're not at a place where we can say we'll open in the fall, but, tonight the presentation is going to be about two things, expanding our operation to an additional site in Santa Ana. And then the second one is to offer non-classroom based, more based instruction than the cap. As you know as a seat based charter, you may know this, but we're capped at 20% of non-classroom based enrollment. We call it flex based enrollment. For us, that means hybrid students or students that are homeschooled, but use our center for enrichment. They don't come five days a week.

So, for us at Springs, as you may not know, I'll tell you, we have eight schools in total in our network. It's all in Southern California and over 13,000 students total. We have two charters in Orange County, we have Citrus Springs and we have Orange Springs. And generally, our model is for all of our schools to have a continuum of services at each school site as opposed to the charter that was here earlier that is basically homeschool only with no centers. We are the opposite. We're the exact opposite. We're basically homeschool within the centers and the students come one or two days a week, sometimes even three days a week in some of our centers, but not in Orange County. And so, for us, we like that continuum of services because a parent can elect for their child to be in a hybrid program two days a week.

And then if it doesn't work out, if they're not doing the home study days, they're not completing the work, we can gently suggest that they move to the five-day program because the children have to be doing school five days a week. And so that's why we like a continuum because the parent can have actually two or three kids and they're in different programs, but they're all at the same school. So, we really like that. And we also, besides the seat based, we have hybrid, we have enrichment classes for homeschoolers. And in addition to that we have drop-in services. So sometimes parents will bring their children for English learner classes or special ed support services or even like we'll have science fair, spelling bee, et cetera, that they come to do, or a field day. So, we have events at our sites. Okay.

And, oops, let's see. Oh, it's the right one. Okay. I'm confused by the, okay. All right. So, we didn't bring public tonight because we knew where we were on the agenda and we didn't want to. All right. So, I felt like this slide represents our public support. We have 1,081 students in Citrus Springs that is, all those students are home-based virtual or in our hybrid programs. And we have 77 seat-based students with 11 home-based students at Orange Springs because we're capped with the home base there. So, for us, this would be very beneficial to our charter to be able to rightsize the balance of enrollment between both schools. We can provide that continuum of services. It will allow us to provide more to those students at the center. And it allows us to align our student placement with the actual service delivery model at the center. So that's why we would like to be able to lift the cap. And by the way, in the charter that you did approve two years ago before we opened, this year is our first year of opening. It did say once the moratorium was lifted, the charter would revert to an NCB charter. However, we agreed collaboratively with your staff that we would take this to the material revision because just to make everything signed and sealed and delivered. Right. All right, so now I will hand it over to Michelle.

**MICHELLE:** Well, I'm excited I get to share the opportunity for our Springs community. We have entered into talks with Scholarship Prep on the site on Grand and Santa Ana. It's like six driveways away from our current location. It's really a unique opportunity for us to expand, but

while maintaining that continuity for our families and our students, it's really a turnkey facility. It has 17 fully built out classrooms allowing us to move quickly without any construction delays or costs that are usually associated with that major construction. So that will support our ability to grow the programs and enrollment as Kathleen discussed, while remaining fiscally responsible. We will retain our current site, which is six driveways away. It is kind of difficult to find if you've been there, it is behind a church. It doesn't have any frontage on Grand. But we will retain that facility specifically. It's really hard to find the beautiful playgrounds and fields that we have, which are really valuable assets for our kiddos to make sure that we can maintain that student enrichment and physical activity for our students as well as any community building. Last but not least, with any material revision, we're required to update any of the legal changes that have been made since the initial approval that might've been legislated or mandated. And so, what we have done is take this through Young, Minney, and Corr and we have made sure that those updates are also in there to maintain compliance. I want to thank you very much for listening to us tonight and having us here. We appreciate you seeing and all the support that you've given to our charters over all of our time together. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you.

**CHASTAIN:** Hearing is now open for 15 minutes of public comment as there are no public comments for this item, I will now close the public hearing. The staff report will be published on February 17th, and the board will take action on March 4th. President Barke, I now close the public hearing and return the meeting to you.

**BARKE:** Thank you. All right, I will start on my left with Dr. Williams.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. If you want to come up, my questions may be critical, but it's only because of what we've been through and what we've learned with failures in charter schools.

**KATHLEEN:** Yes.

**WILLIAMS:** And the biggest concern I see is you haven't opened and you're still negotiating with space.

**KATHLEEN:** Right.

**VALDES:** They've opened up.

**KATHLEEN:** We've opened. We are open at the center that's six driveways away from the building that we're...

**WILLIAMS:** We're only talking about the Orange Springs. Right?

**KATHLEEN:** Right.

**WILLIAMS:** We're not talking about Citrus Springs.

**KATHLEEN:** No. But Orange Springs...

**WILLIAMS:** That's virtual.

**KATHLEEN:** Yeah, no. Citrus Springs has hybrid students and virtual and homeschool students. We separate them in our minds, but they're really all independent study students. And so, all those children attend the same center currently, but we will be moving our seat based kids and hybrid kids to the center that's six doors away.

**WILLIAMS:** And that's the Orange Springs because you're capped, correct?

**KATHLEEN:** Well, yes.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay.

**KATHLEEN:** Yes. I mean this material revision has the two aspects. It has being able to be non-classroom based so that we can expand our hybrid footprint because that would help us with our enrollment. And our enrollment brings in our revenue.

**WILLIAMS:** And that's only at Orange Springs.

**KATHLEEN:** Orange Springs, Citrus Springs has plenty of students.

**WILLIAMS:** We're not, again, we we're just focusing on Orange Springs.

**KATHLEEN:** Orange Springs, yeah.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. And you're going to be sharing facilities with Scholarship Prep, is that...

**KATHLEEN:** No. Scholarship Prep will be moving to their other facility, wherever that is. Jason Watson is here if you have any questions for him.

**WILLIAMS:** No, no, no, no. That's okay. I don't want to get into that. Okay. So, you're going to be moving into a space that was previously occupied by Scholarship Prep?

**KATHLEEN:** Yes. That's right.

**WILLIAMS:** And that's at 1821 North Grand.

**KATHLEEN:** Yes.

**WILLIAMS:** And you describe it as having playgrounds and...

**KATHLEEN:** No, our center, you can see in the legal updates picture, that's our old center, the Citrus Springs Center with the current Orange Springs Center, and they have the fields and all of this. So, we still, because it's only six driveways away, if we put the PE time at the beginning of the day or at the very end of the day, they can walk there, get their pickup there. It'd be easier for pickup because it's behind the church. There's a lot more parking lot. And the city was very happy with that when we got our CUP and everything a few years back. And so, we think that would be a good combination because Scholarship Prep building itself does not really have any play. It has small amount of playground facilities and no field.

**WILLIAMS:** You do have a CUP for this facility?

**KATHLEEN:** For the, yes. Both of them would. They have whatever permits are necessary. I'm not sure that Scholarship Prep needed a CUP because I think it was already zoned for a school. Our building needed a CUP and we got that from City of Santa Ana.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. What is your budget?

**KATHLEEN:** Well, for Orange Springs it's probably a million dollars or so, but Tanya's here.

**TANYA:** Hello. This current year for Orange Springs, we're looking about \$3.7 million with the 87 students. We are looking at having a positive resource at the end of this year. And then moving forward into next year, we're anticipating our enrollment, pending this approval, would be about 768. And again, we would have a positive net income with an ending fund balance around 20.6%, which is very good for a small size charter to make sure we have the ability to meet any unknown needs.

**WILLIAMS:** About 20%?

**TANYA:** Correct.

**WILLIAMS:** What is that in actual dollars?

**TANYA:** 20%. Ending fund balance would be about \$2.2 million.

**WILLIAMS:** \$2.2 million.

**TANYA:** And we do a very good job of making sure that we're allocating that ending fund balance. Some of which would be facilities, some may be for special education, some may be for future unknown litigation.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. And you have how many students at Citrus Springs now?

**TANYA:** Currently at Citrus Springs we have over 1,000 students.

**WILLIAMS:** 1,000.

**VALDES:** But we're not talking about that.

**WILLIAMS:** Right. I'm just asking general questions. And at the Orange Springs, that's where you project 87 students?

**TANYA:** This current year we're projecting 87 students. And then again, pending the approval of this material revision, we would be looking at about 768. So, it's just moving those students over that fit that model and can use those services and making sure that, again, that enrollment is balanced out accordingly.

**WILLIAMS:** That's all.

**KATHLEEN:** We already have the kids, but we will grow more. We already have them in Citrus.

**TANYA:** But there would still be growth.

**KATHLEEN:** Right. There would still be growth.

**WILLIAMS:** Some of the kids at Citrus will come over...

**KATHLEEN:** The hybrids. Yes.

**BARKE:** Mr. Shaw?

**SHAW:** No questions.

**TANYA:** Any other questions I can answer? I'm the numbers lady, if you don't know.

**VALDES:** I am actually, Kathleen. I've been to both locations. I walked your school once and I was at Jason Watt's school. What I'm hearing is Jason is leaving the school that is basically, it is a building. There's no play space, you drive around it as is your pickup.

**KATHLEEN:** But what it does have is a gorgeous on the street signage. You know what I mean? It's a gorgeous building. It definitely is like a...

**VALDES:** You're moving kids into Jason's old building and you're going to retain the facility behind the church with the playgrounds all around it.

**KATHLEEN:** Yes.

**VALDES:** Okay. Now how are you going to get the kids back and forth during the day?

**KATHLEEN:** I would say we're not going back and forth. We wouldn't use it during the middle. We would only be going one way. So, the idea would be some of the classes would drop off at the old school, at the school, at the field, and then they would be walked with the teachers and aides walked those six on that same side of the street, keep it in mind...

**VALDES:** That is really a very important issue for me particularly because of the age that you're serving. You are going to physically walk the kids, but they are going to be escorted the entire way. Escorted every single day.

**KATHLEEN:** And keep in mind, our model, just something that we didn't bring up today, but our model involves is very personalized. So, we have a full-time aide with every teacher all day. So that's one of our key signature practices. So, we have a lot of support, a lot of adult support.

**VALDES:** The kids are never going to walk by themselves?

**KATHLEEN:** Never, never, never, never, never, never. No.

**VALDES:** Okay.

**KATHLEEN:** And like I said, this is subject to us really looking at what will work. Maybe we wouldn't do this with the littles because there may be plenty of space for them to play and have their PE with a smaller location. But for the older students, for sure, they have the basketball courts and the big soccer field and stuff like that. And it's a little harder to get that PE in a small space.

**VALDES:** Right. Okay. I don't have anything else.

**SPARKS:** Well, you guys asked some really good questions. I don't think I have any additional questions. I think they really covered it, and I see what you're trying to do here.

**KATHLEEN:** We like to keep everything healthy. And the other thing to note is that I am available to you at any time. You just email me, text me, message me, my cell phone is available, and ask any questions you have. And I would love to have you over for a visit.

**SPARKS:** Love that. Thank you.

**BARKE:** Well, thank you. All sounds great. And I'll look forward to walking between the campuses. That sounds like a fun little walk on a nice day.

**KATHLEEN:** Yes, there's a little amble.

**BARKE:** Yeah. Thank you for your presentation.

**HENDRICK:** Okay, the next item we have up is, we'll call Gina Lance, who is our chief human resources officer to the podium. Trustee Valdes had asked about school site safety protocols. The risk management and safety director report under this unit. Gina's going to give us a little background and she knows it's quick. And there she goes.

**LANCE:** Thank you. Will do. Good evening, President Barke, Members of the board, Dr. Bean, thanks for inviting us to give this brief overview. Because our programs and sites are so diverse across our county. This is kind of going to be a high level just overview of our safety protocols, which is more focused on our structure, kind of how we're structured. But as I start, I want to introduce you to Randy Styner. Randy is our new director of safety. I'm going to butcher this. I always put in the wrong order, safety, emergency, and risk management. And we're thrilled to have him here. He's been here just a little over four months and has jumped right in. I'm going to start it off. Randy, I'll jump in as needed and then he'll close us out at the end. At OCDE, we have a layered safety framework. It starts with centralized procedures that are kind of common to school districts and employers plans like workplace violence prevention programs, injury and illness prevention plans, and then emergency operations plans.

And we take these very seriously. They apply across all of our programs, schools and sites. And they're based on state requirements and best practices. But they're important to us too. They're not just checking the box. As a matter of an example, when we developed our workplace violence prevention program plan, there's a minimum staff engagement requirement. And our team went beyond that. They went out to all the school sites and sought individual site-specific concerns and feedback. And then we took that back identified themes. And that's actually part of what we use to identify Randy's local priorities for local OCDE sites. It's important to us, it's not

just a requirement in a checkbox. And then we have local implementation that looks like at the school site level. Each school site has a school site safety plan, school site safety council. And that allows them to develop plans that are specific to their individual needs, their student populations, their school site layout, and their communities.

And you can imagine this is pretty important in our organization. We have such a diverse range of programs. Safety response at say, a site that might have probation staff on site may look different from safety response at one of our classrooms that's on a district partner site. It allows the individual local level to provide input and then our safety staff at the central level work in partnership to ensure that they're compliant and updated and effective. And then in regards to the question about how student behavioral incidents fit into these safety protocols, these are again, school directed but centrally supported. We really rely on the experts that are in the school programs to lead with the best practices in this area. Generally, from, again, that kind of higher level, we can say that when student behavior escalates, they're really focused on the deescalation, but recognizing that there's judgment required in that response.

And we have really competent staff who use training, their experience and their procedures, again, their local procedures to respond in the moment. We really try to support focusing on those things, the training, ensuring that their procedures are in place, again at that local school directed level, and that they have the experience and practice that they need. And those responses generally focus on ensuring all students around the behavior are safe, deescalation whenever possible, and then maintaining student dignity. In our Connections program, approximately 360 students are served by 242 really dedicated classroom support staff in addition to dedicated ancillary and behavioral support staff that work alongside them and school site leaders. And with this staff, it helps the program create the conditions that are needed for that effective preparation, that prevention and that response. And then it gives us the space to respond in training and procedures.

As a matter of example, the OCDE staff who work in these settings are typically trained in the Pro-ACT model, but then the implementation of what that looks like is designed at the site. This year we're expanding the Pro-ACT training out to all ACCESS classroom staff as well in response to some requests and feedback. We're excited about that. And actually, Randy and our risk manager, Gabe, are going to be going through their first Pro-ACT training. He's looking forward to that as well. In addition to Pro-ACT, OCDE provides ongoing training in areas such as threat and risk assessment, CPR and first aid and active intruder training. And then for ongoing support, Randy and his team do onsite safety assessments. They support the programs in their committees and their councils. They help support response as needed when there is an incident. But we do defer to the program to seek the level of help appropriate, but we always reach out.

And then Randy has done a good job already of partnering with law enforcement and local emergency responders to make sure that we can bolster that planning and bolster that support and training. So just kind of that broad overview that was requested. That's the structure that we have. Again, this kind of centralized support with local implementation, relying on our school experts to give us that feedback that works for them at the site based on their expertise, but a lot of planning and collaboration across the programs. It's work that's never done, so we're always listening and willing to evolve and want to get that feedback. And we'll continue to do so

throughout this year. So again, that's kind of a broad overview. I think we'll look forward to some more specific initiative updates from Randy later in the year. I'm going to let him close us out and then we will take any questions that we can address.

**STYNER:** President Barke, Members of the board, Dr. Bean. It's an honor and a privilege to be here as your new director of safety risk emergency management. As Gina mentioned, we can only do what we do through partnership and developing those partnerships is a top priority. Because our students programs are so diverse. Our safety framework is designed to be consistent at the system level while allowing sites to prepare and respond appropriately to the needs of their specific organization. Safety is my number one goal and will remain so. And in this role, I'll work very hard with all of Orange County Department of Education staff and partners to continually improve safety and the preparedness on all fronts and across all of our schools. Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak before you.

**BARKE:** Thank you very much for the comprehensive presentation. Do we have any questions?

**VALDES:** I do.

**BARKE:** Well, go ahead.

**VALDES:** Gina and Randy. I appreciate the 10,000-foot level, but the reason I asked for this was more of ground level. Okay. I'm concerned as a trustee on behalf of 4,500 kids, what is our response plan in an active shooter situation? When I walked to, when I went to the Harbor Center, you walked through metal detectors as I recall, and you can't get in without going through that metal detector and there is a security officer there. I don't think that person had a pistol, but clearly there's a high level of security at that school because you can't get in and out without doing that. To me, that's pretty good. Okay. If you're going to have a security officer there, I'm guessing all day long. Right. Renee?

**HENDRICK:** I don't think they have a security officer. They have staff that are seated there though, but they do have metal detectors at both Harbor Learning Center, South and North. Yes, and Argosy does too.

**VALDES:** What does our security look like at the other school sites?

**LANCE:** Well, it's dependent, and it varies by school, school site setting. For example, as we were talking about, we have some sites that are on our district partners campuses. Those may look different from our other sites that are in the community. We have received some of those same questions about could we have, for example, we've responded to implement badge readers at certain sites, and so we've evaluated that at those sites that have requested that.

**VALDES:** You mean like...

**LANCE:** It would stay locked and then the door would stay locked similar to how we have here. We've implemented those at some sites where feasible, and it's something that's constant evaluation of where we can do that as we lease some of our sites. We do work in partnership with property management and we've been able to, I think add those in some locations, just not all just yet. We're continuing to look for opportunities to make sure that we're either able to do

something like what you mentioned or in those areas where we can't. What else can we do to provide the same level of security and comfort for both the students and the staff.

**VALDES:** Is there any site where we have considered an actual resource officer that we feel the threat level is such that a resource officer would be appropriate?

**LANCE:** I don't have a level of analysis that shows that that's something that we have for one single site, but we've explored...

**BEAN:** That's also part of Randy's job is to assess that because we are willing, certainly under the initiative of school and student safety to pour resources into that type of resource, whether it's an SRO or another mechanism in place.

**VALDES:** I just feel as a trustee, where we are responsible for 4,500 kids, we need to look at this. We need to question it. Is a resource officer at any of our school sites necessary? Have we considered it? What's our safety protocols at all? I mean, we have 21 school sites.

**BEAN:** 31 sites.

**VALDES:** 31 sites.

**HENDRICK:** Jorge, that's a great question. I think it'd be helpful if we kind of gave you the sites and then showed you how many students are there. And then the other issue is how many are there on a daily basis. Because remember, a lot of our students are contract learning, so they're not necessarily onsite every day. And so that goes into part of that judgment. I think the two sites that you've been to, Harbor Learning Center South are where we have the largest day school population, and those do have a lot of additional staff there besides the metal detectors and things like that. We also have sites that are with probation officers, so obviously that has a different meaning and if they're incarcerated, they're very secure. But I think giving you that information, so that kind of helps inform it. But I think that is part of Randy's task is to look at all of these different things to see what makes the most sense. I think Randy, maybe if you could talk to, because I know even though it may not be feasible to have a resource officer at everyone, since our sites are so small, he is doing a lot of collaboration with the local police departments to try and help with some things. And so maybe if you want to talk about that.

**STYNER:** Yes, sir. When I first came to the Department, one of the first tasks that I did was work with our ACCESS partners to develop a gap analysis to look at these exact issues, the security issues at our various sites. And there are various challenges with regard to how the site is located and our ability to work with our landlords in terms of what they'll allow, their issues with changing doors or making doors secure, things like that can be hard to look at. But we are trying to get creative with immediate solutions to some of our sites. For example, our Anaheim West site, we had some issues there with some of the transient population in the area, and we were able to work with Anaheim PD. I met with the chief of Anaheim PD to borrow what they call their camera car, which was a police car, a marked police car with cameras on it that can record the area.

We had that deployed to the site for about a week, and that's on standby. And largely I live right near there and driving by there, you can see that the area has cleaned up a lot. Anaheim's been

working on that area in general for quite some time. So partnering with law enforcement on all of those options is really what I'm trying to start with here as we move forward and find out what those resources are and how we can deploy them, of course, we're working on all of our procedures, our emergency operations plan, our annexes that are going to be developed for that, which is going to include violent encounters or active shooter situations, training and developing our emergency operations center, our mutual aid request process, our situational status process for schools that may be impacted. We're driving towards all that right now and we're going to continue to assess that as we move forward. But that is a priority for me, sir.

**VALDES:** Okay. Well, I guess my request is if you determine, Randy, that a school site is lacking in appropriate security, I know Dr. Bean feels this way, please let somebody know. Let us know. Let Dr. Bean know that some type of corrective measure is necessary, whatever. I know it's always about funding, but we need to do the best job that we can to protect the 4,500 students that are coming to our school sites.

**STYNER:** Yes, sir. And respectfully, we've been working on that from day one of coming in with our gap analysis and working with our other partners, especially our ACCESS sites. So that process is ongoing and we will solve a problem, sir.

**SHAW:** Okay. Can I ask a quick question? I live up in La Habra and we had a young lady crossing the street on her way to school, get killed by a car, getting hit by a car not too long ago. Just kind of had that in my mind, and I know there's grants available, safe routes to school. I don't know if this would be outside your purview, but I was just wondering if we have maybe small districts or small cities that maybe aren't trying to avail themselves of those kind of grant funds for the safe routes to school. I don't know. I'm just thinking out loud that maybe you could assist those smaller cities, smaller school districts that are maybe not have the wherewithal to do that, but anything we could do to safer crosswalks, that kind of stuff, getting kids in and out of school, I think that'd be great.

**STYNER:** Yeah, absolutely.

**LANCE:** It's a great idea.

**SPARKS:** Thank you. Well, I know, was it a few years ago we had you guys showed us the safe, we had a safety forum. Actually, I read that it was mostly focused on more online type of safety, but we also, as part of that, we had an active shooter training or something? Independent of that, but at around the same time. And so, you guys are engaging those kinds of things all the time from what I understand.

**LANCE:** Yes. And we are re-rolling just on another round of our active intruder training. So, it goes in cycles and we're this next round out within weeks. I'm not sure what the schedule is, but that will go back out. But yes, we do keep that very constant and then look for feedback on what people thought of the training. Did they think something was missing? Did something not relate to their specific school site that we can maybe address in a different way? And the thing about Randy is he's been creative so far. To the question about say an SRO, if that's not available for every single school site, he's thinking, okay, well what can we do? And taking that feedback as well.

**SPARKS:** Yeah, so I appreciate your efforts in that regard. It's very, very important. Not only the online safety, which a lot of the stuff we can't see and can't control, but we also can't see and can't control what's coming into the school. So being as preventative as you can with these various types of training and then just adapting and raising awareness, and hopefully people are paying attention and it's not taking up too much of their day where you're hoping that they can focus more on learning outcomes and not have to worry too much about safety, that it's kind of invisible. Right.

**LANCE:** Right. That would be the hope.

**BARKE:** Dr. Williams?

**WILLIAMS:** I don't [several inaudible words].

**BARKE:** I'll just comment. I know we had a presentation last week from the OC Sheriff's Department. I know they also do a free risk assessment, so I imagine you're working with them within their jurisdiction because that's a huge advantage if they're willing to help you for cost.

**STYNER:** Yes, ma'am. We've been working with the Orange County Intelligence Assessments Agency, and we have a few of those scheduled for some of our more critical ACCESS sites.

**BARKE:** I figured you did, but I just thought I'd mentioned it. I just saw the presentation. So, great. All right, well, thanks for the presentation, all the information and for the work you're doing. It's really important. I mean, we value school choice, academic excellence, but if our kids aren't safe, then there's no point to it. You have a very important role.

**LANCE:** Thank you.

**STYNER:** Thank you.

**BARKE:** Thank you.

**HENDRICK:** The next one, the next one is Trustee Valdes has asked for more information about our childcare reimbursements and the anti-fraud protocols. Rosalee Hormuth, who is our assistant administrator in our business services leads that program. She's going to come up and talk about this important topic.

**HORMUTH:** Okay, good evening, President Barke, Trustees, Superintendent Bean. I'm Rosalee Hormuth, senior administrator with family support services here in our business services division. And we're going to walk through just a brief overview of the Orange County Child Care Subsidy program and how OCDE supports those families and providers that are in that program. So, this is an overview of the entire system. The California Department of Social Services or CDSS provides both state and federal funding for these programs via the California code of regulations and the Title V, California Welfare Institutions Code, WIC for both the CalWORKs and the alternative payment program that we offer here at OCDE.

The California Department of Social Services has a special division. They're called the Community Care Licensing Division, and they provide the oversight and license monitoring for

all childcare providers that are licensed within the county. Then we partner with Children's Home Society. They're a local nonprofit organization and they're kind of that front door for a lot of our families. They provide access to an eligibility list for families that are interested in care and then resource and referral information regarding childcare providers that are within the county. OCDE, here we're kind of a program administrator. We contract directly with the state department for this program. And then we partner with obviously Children's Home Society and then local childcare providers. Our department certifies families once they become eligible for this program. We work with our providers that are in the county, and then ultimately, we provide financial reimbursement to those childcare providers.

The families select their own childcare providers depending on their family need, and then we partner with childcare providers via contracting process and then provide them payment. So, this kind of illustrates the parent's journey as well as the provider journey. So, it really starts when the providers or the parents apply for the program. Then our team works with them to determine if they meet eligibility and needs that are set forth by the state department and the regulations and code. Parents then select a provider within the county that fits their need. And then once the parents select a provider, our office contracts with them and then that completes that first initial enrollment process. And at that point, the childcare can actually begin. Once childcare begins, then the parents and the providers work in tandem to complete that document attendance. Those attendance sheets are completed monthly and are submitted to our office for review and for processing.

So, regarding program integrity, it's kind of a three-prong approach. So obviously the family has a responsibility, the providers have responsibility and all the agencies that are involved also have a responsibility. So, it's the family's responsibility to provide complete and accurate information during enrollment and then notifying us if their need ever changes, if they need additional or less care. And then the providers are in charge of making sure that the children are signing in or the parents are signing the children in daily and completing those attendance records and then submitting them to our office for payment. Each agency has its own unique oversight role. Obviously, the largest requirement falls within the state department CDSS as well as their licensing department.

So, this is an example of an actual attendance sheet, and it's more than just a sign-in sheet. It actually becomes the provider's legal document for payment. So, the parents are required to sign in their children every day that they're approved for care, if there's any absences, they need to notate what those absence or reasons are for. And then at the very bottom, both the family and the provider sign under penalty of perjury that all of that information is correct. At that point, the provider submits these attendance sheets to our office and we have a team that works through those confirming that they've been a reflective of the care that they've been approved for. And then we process those for payment.

So, this is a snapshot of our funding over the last couple years. It shows both CalWORKs stage two and stage three, as well as our alternative payment program, which is our largest source of funding. Over the past several year, the opportunity for revenue growth has significantly increased, not just because of increased rates for providers, but mainly because of larger contracts that have been awarded by the state department. As funding capacity has increased, that's directly impacted our ability to serve more and more families. So, this is a snapshot of the

number of families and children that we've served over the courses of those years. And you can see that from looking back from 2021, we've served almost 2,800 students and this year we're projecting to serve almost 7,400 students.

So, to kind of manage this growth over the last couple of years, we developed and implemented a three-phase strategic plan. Our first stage really looked on building capacity and improving our core staff. That included adding 11 full-time positions to our team. Phase two added a specialization layer, which allowed us to create a compliance and quality assurance team within our unit. And that team really focuses on internal audits, evaluating processes and procedures locally to make sure that they mirror the state regulations. And then ongoing staff training. Phase two, included an additional 10 FTEs. Phase three, which we're currently in the middle of right now, really restructures our team a little bit more to ensure long-term efficiency and sustainability and that we'll finish that phase once we finish hiring 11 additional FTEs.

So, this is a snapshot of our staffing over the last couple years. Over this course of the kind of period we've gone from 28 staff to 60, once we finally finish our phase three, and then you'll see that we've notated, we added two specific teams. One that compliance team that really focuses on internal audit and regulation compliance, as well as an admin team. Like any other state or federal program, we have multiple layers of oversight, beginning with our own annual program self-audit, which is done via parent surveys, provider surveys, getting feedback from the partners that we work with. The second layer focuses on financial independence and a compliance audit where we bring in a CPA. And then the third level is really the state and federal audit level. Those are done every three years, and they focus on program integrity and proper payment. Our last state audit was done in March of 2024 and was currently scheduled for a federal audit this March of 2026. Obviously, fiscal integrity is very important, not only here locally, but also at the state level. California Department of Social Services just recently created a special hotline for potential subsidy fraud. They have a hot new hotline and a new email mailbox as well.

And then the final slide does highlight a few key challenges or gaps that currently exist in state policy under SB 140, contractors like OCDE, must reimburse based off of certified schedule or enrollment and not actual attendance. And at the same time, current regulations in our abandonment of care process, they allow for up to 30 consecutive days of actual non-attendance before dis-enrollment is initiated. So, this does potentially create a window where the state may be paying for care that may not actually be occurring. For AP agencies like OCDE, current monitoring tools focus on actual documentation rather than physical verification. So OCDE doesn't go out and visit actual childcare facilities. That's actually the Department of Social Services will do unannounced and announced visits. So obviously this last couple years with the creation of our quality assurance team, we're actively working to strengthen not only our internal controls, but to make sure that we remain compliant with current regulations and guidelines. And that's all I have.

**VALDES:** Thank you for the presentation. You actually answered the question I was about to ask, but you didn't answer it in a way that makes me feel very good.

**HENDRICK:** Yeah, we all had that same response.

**VALDES:** My question was going to be, does a staff member from the OCDE go out to the childcare provider and make sure that childcare services are actually being provided? And your answer was no.

**HORMUTH:** Correct.

**HENDRICK:** But what they do do, we had this conversation is if they are seeing something coming in on a attendance report, they actually will forward that to their analyst from the state to say, we think there's something going on here that needs to be checked out, and it kind of goes to the licensing group to do that work.

**VALDES:** Is there anything prohibiting us from taking that affirmative step? Here's my concern, and this is obviously coming from the headlines because that traveling roadshow from Minnesota is coming here and I can't fix California, but I have some authority over what goes on in this Department. Obviously with Dr. Bean. I don't want someone accusing us of just paying out bills and not really taking affirmative steps to make sure that services are being provided. I'd like to know, is there any reason why we can't go out and just do a periodic check just to make sure that kids are actually in a daycare center?

**HENDRICK:** Well, I think so. To answer that question, I'm not sure that's feasible. But I think what we were trying to show you too is the state actually, their regulations are allowing that to happen right now. That's our concern. So, we would violate our contract with the state to actually do that, if that makes sense.

**BARKE:** They allow for 30 days?

**HENDRICK:** They're allowing the 30 days. Well, actually they said that you had to pay for current enrollment, which we are still requiring them to have the sheet, the time sheet, which is one thing. When you look at the Minnesota case, what's interesting for them is they had whole learning centers. Were actually, so somebody can't get into our program without the parents signing up for the program, and then they pick a provider and we reimburse the provider, right? In Minnesota, they had a learning center, and so there was none of that parental piece that kind of went in there. It's a little bit different. This is stuff I know that Dean and Rosalee have talked about. How do they help ensure this? I'm not sure that we're staffed to be able to go to every single center. I mean, how many centers providers do we have across the county?

**HORMUTH:** So, we have 1,500 providers that we work with.

**SPARKS:** Are these after school or before school?

**HORMUTH:** So, they're a mix. So, you can have a licensed facility like a Garden Grove Boys and Girls Club is one of the licensed facilities we have, or KinderCare, Childtime. So, you have licensed centers, and then you have licensed family homes. So, a family home could be anybody that lives in your neighborhood. They open up based off of a certain license.

**SPARKS:** How do parents pay for that stuff?

**HORMUTH:** So, you have private pay and subsidy. So, you could have a mixture of both. And then we also have family, friend and neighbor. So, depending on your family situation, you could have grandma be childcare provider or an aunt. So, there's a number of different providers.

**SPARKS:** And they would get paid to do that?

**HORMUTH:** If the child qualifies and the parents qualify.

**BARKE:** I remember that even happening in the White House at one time where the grandmother was providing childcare for the granddaughter and getting paid.

**SPARKS:** Really?

**BARKE:** Yeah, the first lady's mother was doing that.

**SPARKS:** Wow.

**BARKE:** Yeah.

**HORMUTH:** When they enroll in the program, we require a bunch of different types of documentation. So, the child does exist and the family does meet eligibility. But yeah, like Renee mentioned there, the current legislation that exists right now for the state of California, it's payoff if enrolled, not actual attendance.

**BARKE:** That doesn't seem right.

**SPARKS:** Yeah, that's shady.

**HENDRICK:** I mean, I think it's still a question Jorge that we are trying to figure out how do we do the best that we can to make sure that...

**VALDES:** That's all I'm asking is that we've done the best that we can so that we don't get accused of malfeasance or just being negligent and just paying out bills.

**HENDRICK:** I think that is some of her compliance group and they are looking at it. If that child, you don't have those sign in and outs constantly, what is happening? What does that look like? I mean, she was even saying what they'll check to say, this is interesting because it looks like...

**HORMUTH:** Our staff will call parents and they'll call providers and double check to make sure that children are attending. If we get a sheet that's not properly filled out or signed, our staff does make those phone calls.

**SPARKS:** Which seems really counterintuitive given that we have the whole ADA system in the actual schools that we're constantly monitoring that our students there, students are there, students are there, but then in this 30 days, it doesn't make any sense.

**BARKE:** Yeah, well, they're trying to get rid of the ADA also and go with enrollment. There's been talk of that.

**HENDRICK:** Well, I think part of it was if any of you, they've had childcare issues that if your child is absent for a week, you don't want them dis-enrolled. Right. Some providers won't hold spots for them. I think that was the guide. That's why they thought they were doing it to help parents. But I think that's creating a lot of concern for our team. And then it is a vulnerability for the state definitely.

**VALDES:** How cost prohibitive, oh boy. 1,500. That's a lot.

**BARKE:** Maybe we could take, do you have them tiered by the largest? Maybe we could take the top 10 and just audit them or something silly. I don't know.

**BEAN:** Yeah, I think what we need to do is Greg and his team have to check in. Yeah, check on the legality of actually going to these and randomly check is what your point is.

**VALDES:** Yeah, that's exactly what...

**BEAN:** Randomly audit. Right? But I will say that based on this presentation is a very robust and rigorous accounting on our side.

**VALDES:** I'm not the only one who thinks this. Dr. Sparks is clearly saying...

**SPARKS:** Well, yeah, I mean, I think we just need to show that we're being proactive in some way and our legal genius here can figure that out.

**BARKE:** And it does sound like we are, but it sounds like it's overwhelming and maybe we need to, I don't know.

**VALDES:** 1,500 sites sounds overwhelming, but I mean, you start somewhere, you assign one or two people to that task. And I mean, I think it's important enough that we should have some initiative in that regard.

**BEAN:** Greg, let's find out what we are allowed to or not allowed to do, and then we can talk about random checks if we're allowed to even do that.

**BARKE:** Thank you for the presentation. Appreciate it.

**BEAN:** Thank you.

**HENDRICK:** All right, Trustee Valdes, asked for a presentation for Aracely to come up please and talk about the clarification of state school tiers, metrics and reauthorization presumptions.

**CHASTAIN:** Oh, Trustee Valdes. Stop looking tired. Here we go. All right, so I'm going to provide just a really brief overview on the renewal framework under Education Codes 47607 and 47607.2 with a focus on charter school performance categories as they've been established by the California Department of Education. This context is important because it explains how renewal decisions are structured under California law and what the board is required to consider. So let me move on here. The purpose and statutory content, the California law establishes a tiered renewal system for non-dashboard alternative schools, right? So that's based on performance on

the California School Dashboard. And each year schools are placed in one of three performance categories, high, middle, and low. These categories or tiers determine the strength of the renewal presumption, the evidentiary standard, and the permissible length of the renewal term that you can give. Charter renewal decisions must be based primarily on a charter school's academic performance as measured by the California School Dashboard. And so that's in ed code, it says that you're supposed to give greater weight to academic performance than anything else. And also the assigned performance category and other statutory factors. The performance categories, the three possible performing categories are based on two consecutive years of Dashboard data assigned.

Schools assigned schools that are Dashboard alternative are evaluated using Dashboard and local indicators, alternative metrics that are agreed upon during the first year of their charter term. And currently the board authorizes two schools that are classified as DASS. That is College and Career Preparatory Academy and Orange County Workforce Innovation High School. So those are the only two schools that are evaluated under a different format. How category are determined. They're determined based on two criterion that the state looks at, right where they're going to fall into those three tiers. And the first one looks at the overall Dashboard performance across all of the state indicators. All the state indicators are English language, arts, math, graduation rate, college and career readiness, English learner progress, chronic absenteeism, suspension rate and science. A school is considered high performing if it receives blue or green ratings on all of these indicators for two consecutive years.

A school falls into the low performing category if it receives red or orange on all of these categories for two consecutive years. If neither of those conditions are met, then the evaluation moves on to criterion two. Criterion two focuses more closely on academic indicators and compares a school's performance, both schoolwide and across their subgroups to statewide averages. This is, I think where there's a little bit of frustration with our charter schools when this changed because you're no longer comparing to the district, you're no longer comparing to their local school, you're comparing to statewide averages, and that's how you're going to fall into these performance tiers. This analysis examines whether the majority of student groups with available data perform above or below their corresponding statewide averages. Again, using the results from the two previous Dashboard years. Schools who, where a majority of the students perform above statewide averages may be classified as high performing.

Those that perform the majority perform below statewide averages may be classified as low performing. And I am of course, giving you guys kind of this very broad overview on how this works. Schools that do not clearly meet either the high or the low all go into that middle performing. So that can happen for a lot of, oh, sorry, yes. Let me move over here. So those all fall into the middle performing category. And that can happen because like I said, they don't clearly fall into the higher, the low. They may also not have data. Some of our small schools just simply don't have enough data to qualify for either the higher, the low, and so they're all going to fall into that middle performing category. But regardless of where they fall on that Dashboard status, right, education code for high performing schools, education code limits.

When you can deny a high performing school, right, it makes it very specific. But Education Code 47607(e) preserves the board's authority and independent authority to deny renewal even for a high performing school. For a high performing school, under this provision, and I'm kind of

quoting here, well, I am quoting what it is. “You can deny renewal only if the school is demonstrably unlikely to successfully implement its educational program due to substantial fiscal or governance factors, or if the school's not serving all pupils who wish to attend”. So those are the only reasons why a high performing school can be denied. And that's evidenced by enrollment pattern data that we get from the California Department of Education. We would also look at any substantiated enrollment complaints that we would receive. This requires a 30-day notice to the school, and that would be done through a notice of violation through this board and giving them a reasonable opportunity to cure.

And we would need to have written findings that their plan to cure this did not work, or the violations are so severe and pervasive that a plan is just not actionable. And so those are the reasons why you can deny a high performing school. For a middle performing school it's that, but also, you're also looking, they get a full review under, thank you, Dr. Bean, not used to working with slides, obviously. For the middle performing school, if they fail to make sufficient academic progress for either all their pupils or any of their subgroups, that could potentially be a reason. We always have to give greater weight to academic performance. They get a full review. We're looking at all of their academics, but we're also, of course, looking at their financials, their governance, and whether they're following all the laws and meeting their charter petition. We have to give written factual findings that renewal is not in the best interest of pupils. It's a pretty high bar there. You're failing to make sufficient academic progress for all your pupils. There's substantial unresolved fiscal or governance issues with the school. They are not following all applicable legal requirements or they're not serving all pupils who wish to attend. Grounds for renewal for a low, yes.

**VALDES:** What does that mean? Not serving all the pupils that wish to attend. Most of these schools have a waiting list. They're not serving all the, they're already not serving the students that wish to attend.

**CHASTAIN:** Well, no, this is related to schools that are potentially encouraging families to disenroll for a reason. Whether it for protected reasons, because of test scores, because they don't want to give them special ed services because they just want to. It's about discouraging a student. If a student is already enrolled, discouraging them from remaining in the school, or encouraging a family who wants to enroll to not enroll in their school for any of these reasons. They're looking at those enrollment patterns, kids who started the year maybe didn't finish or things like that. We're looking at any complaints that we might get that are substantiated where a family or a community member has complained that their student is being encouraged to disenroll in any way. We are looking at all of that. A low performing school, you are required to deny a low performing school unless you make written findings that, and it has to be supported by evidence that it's in the best interest of the pupils for the school to remain open. Thank you.

And the school has taken or will take imminent meaningful steps to address the causes of low performance via a school board approved plan. So when you have a low performing school, and this is the only situation in which we would do this, as opposed to giving you guys a staff report on reasons for denial or reasons for conditions, we're going to have to come up with reasons why a school should be given a renewal, right? Because the standard is that you would deny a low performing school. We're looking for a school that is showing meaningful growth in their internal academic data. So whatever that happens to be that they're going to present, and that they

have hopefully already a plan in place that they've already started implementing, showing we've identified the root causes of why we are a low performing school and we are looking to improve those, and here's the steps we're going to take to do that.

Then we're then tasked with monitoring that plan. If you determine that that's reason enough to grant them a renewal, you can only renew them for two years and then they need to do this again. And hopefully at that point they really are making meaningful progress because they could end up with a non-renewal at that point. So key takeaways. There's my thing. You consider the performance category, fiscal government's, legal compliance when making a renewal decision. Ultimately, it's the board's responsibility to ensure that the decision is consistent with statute grounded in the record and aligned with the accountability system that's established by law. The current board policy follows all of that very, very clearly. And performance categories anchor that renewal decision, high, middle, low. But there is no automatic renewal for any of the categories for any of the state performing categories. So just to ground that a little bit more in the work of the board. Currently, the 2025 performance levels came out in January. And this slide shows the results for OCBE authorized charter schools and then all of the charter schools in Orange County. You have two high performing, three low performing, and the rest fall in the middle. As you can see, that largest category is always going to be the middle category, and they're the ones that require that full review. And then in Orange County, there's seven high, three low and 30 middle performing that have data.

**VALDES:** What you just said, Aracely, is for those three low performing schools, the presumption is that that they're going to be closed.

**CHASTAIN:** They are presumed to be denied unless we can make those findings that they should be renewed for two years. Currently you have three schools that are up for renewal this fiscal year. So Samueli, which you've already voted on, TLC and what's my other one? Vista Condor, which you heard from today. And then in next fiscal year, you'll have eight schools. And then the year after that, you will have 11 schools to look at for renewal. And we will continue to monitor their performance levels as we're coming up to renewal because we want to just, you're never going to be surprised if you have a low performing school that needs, and the school's never going to be surprised by where they fall. They monitor their categories very carefully and work really hard to make sure that they remain, if they can't reach the high performing category, that they remain within that middle performing category by looking at their data very, very closely. Yes. All right.

**WILLIAMS:** Question? Yes. So, the indicators here apply to all charter schools? Is that what this is right here?

**CHASTAIN:** Except for your Dashboard alternative schools.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay.

**CHASTAIN:** Right.

**WILLIAMS:** What happens to the community brick and mortar school? They have low Dashboards. Is there any consequences from legislation that affects them?

**CHASTAIN:** Community schools?

**WILLIAMS:** No, no, just talking about your average school district school.

**BARKE:** He's talking about traditional.

**CHASTAIN:** Oh, got you. Traditional schools, right? No, traditional schools follow the entire ed code and have a lot of regulation. The thing with charter schools that makes them different is that they have a higher bar of performance that they have to meet in order to remain open.

**WILLIAMS:** Charter schools have a higher bar than...

**CHASTAIN:** Because they don't have to follow all of the ed code. Correct. Because they have less regulation. In order to have that less regulation, you have to meet performance or risk being closed. That's the trade off.

**BARKE:** Thank you for getting us through that. This hour at night. You talked very fast and I loved it. Adding these numbers up, it looks like we have 62 charters in Orange County. Is that...

**CHASTAIN:** No, I think we, I'm sorry. The second number is all the schools. All Orange County charter schools includes the board approved schools.

**BARKE:** Gotcha. I thought that number was high.

**CHASTAIN:** So yes, so that's all. And it's actually, we have more than 30 schools. I mean, we have more than this many schools. These are just the ones that have data. We could have some that have been approved but haven't opened yet or in their first year and don't have any data yet on there. There's more than this, but I don't know the exact number off the top of my head right now.

**BARKE:** I think it's in the high 47, 48.

**CHASTAIN:** Something like that probably.

**BARKE:** Okay. Thank you.

**CHASTAIN:** Yeah. I apologize for speaking so quickly. I have five minutes.

**BARKE:** No, you're fine. You did a great job.

**CHASTAIN:** All right, thank you so much.

**BARKE:** We appreciate it.

**HENDRICK:** And then I think Dr. Bean, you were going to set this one up?

**BEAN:** Yes. This, we have a proclamation recognizing that February as a career and technical education month. We're going to go ahead and bring up Jill Katevas, senior administrator of ed services to share a little bit more about that.

**KATEVAS:** Hi. Good evening, President Barke, Trustees and Dr. Bean. Yes. As Dr. Bean said, my name is Jill Katevas and I would like to go ahead Shelby.

**ROMMELFANGER:** Hi there. I'm Shelby Rommelfanger.

**KATEVAS:** And we work in the career education. Oh. We work at career education and workforce development unit. And I just want to take this moment to thank Dr. Bean for giving us an opportunity to highlight this work. But we have a video that will show you much better than tell you. So, we're going to go ahead and roll the video.

**VIDEO:** At the Orange County Department of Education, we are building the future of Orange County one purpose-driven student at a time. Through the career education and OC Pathways programs, we are connecting school districts, community colleges, and leading businesses to create real world learning opportunities for every student. Through career technical education or CTE, students can discover who they are, what they're passionate about, and how to turn that passion into a high earning career. So, what is CTE and who is it for? CTE is for all students, whether they plan on attending college or entering the workforce right after high school. CTE programs emphasize hands-on learning, real world projects and direct connections to industry. Students can explore CTE courses across 15 different career sectors from healthcare to advanced manufacturing to digital media. Through CTE courses, students can earn industry recognized certifications, receive early college credit, and engage in mentorships, internships, and apprenticeships.

The data is in. Students enrolled in CTE courses have higher graduation rates and higher college enrollment rates. Students and parents report that CTE provides real world marketable skills that prepare them for success. By connecting local employers with our robust network of schools and colleges, we're aligning classroom learning with current workforce needs and providing students with unparalleled access to the skills they need for high wage, high demand careers. Right here in Orange County. Through OC Pathways, students aren't just learning about careers, they're experiencing them firsthand. Whether you're a student, parent, educator, or employer, join us to discover how OC Pathways can connect education to opportunity and help every student build their future. OC Pathways. Your workforce is here.

**ROMMELFANGER:** The OCDE media team put that together and did a fantastic job just showing what our students get to experience in Orange County. Thank you to the board for considering making the proclamation that February is CTE month. You have some handouts with you. If you have any questions, we'd be happy to answer.

**BARKE:** We do have a beautiful proclamation here that I believe we will vote on once everyone, anyone has any questions or anything you want to ask the team. That was a wonderful production.

**ROMMELFANGER:** They did a beautiful job.

**BARKE:** Yeah, they did. Yes, you're right. Picture says a thousand words.

**ROMMELFANGER:** Yes.

**SPARKS:** Thank you all for hanging around.

**KATEVAS:** No problem. Thank you. If you have any questions, these are academic plans for students that they could use. If you have any questions, we know it's late. We'll sit down.

**BARKE:** Anyone with any questions?

**SPARKS:** Not at this hour.

**BARKE:** Well, thank you so much. We appreciate it.

**KATEVAS:** We understand. Thank you again.

**BARKE:** Thank you. Yes, I'll make a motion to approve the proclamation for CTE month February, 2026.

**SPARKS:** Second.

**BARKE:** Okay. All those in favor?

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

**BARKE:** Excellent. Passes 5-0. All right. Okay, moving on to item 21.

**HENDRICK:** In your packet, we are asking the board, the process is the board is the only one who can actually do a notice of violation. Staff can ask for notice of concern, but the board is the only one who can take action to do a notice of violation. And so that is in your, all the backup for that is in your board packet. I know you saw it. It's very lengthy. We have to hit every single legal item. We are asking for the board to take that action.

**WILLIAMS:** Do we actually have the letter that we would be sending?

**HENDRICK:** It's a draft in there. Yeah. So, it's not just a letter.

**WILLIAMS:** Where is that?

**BARKE:** We're on item...

**HENDRICK:** It is starting on page 70.

**BARKE:** It's item 21. Yeah, page 68, 70.

**HENDRICK:** It goes from page 20 to page 178 because we have to, we're required to show all the backup documentation with it also. Do you want, so it goes by step by step for all of the areas of the violation. And I will say even after this, we still have another notice of concern that is not due back until the end of this month on their educational program also. In addition to this.

**WILLIAMS:** Where is the actual letter of notice of violation? What page was that in?

**HENDRICK:** 69 is where it starts.

**WILLIAMS:** Oh, okay. This entire document. Oh wow. Okay.

**HENDRICK:** Yeah, it's a very legal process. Between Aracely and Greg's team, they've spent a lot of time going through and as a reminder, there's been three notices of concern for these same items prior to this step.

**WILLIAMS:** And all of after page 83, that's the supporting amendments and exhibits, et cetera.

**HENDRICK:** Yeah.

**SPARKS:** What were the reactions to the notices of concern?

**HENDRICK:** They're trying, but things aren't improving. And so it is just to the point that the size of the school is so small, they have 78 students currently and not a clear path of how they get. They feel they can get to 105.

**ROLEN:** They [inaudible] have an opportunity to come before you [several inaudible words].

**HENDRICK:** Right, because they have to cure this. They'll have to come before you.

**SPARKS:** Oh, I see.

**HENDRICK:** To be able to show you how they've cured it. We've given them to May to do that.

**WILLIAMS:** They did not have to come tonight?

**ROLEN:** Correct.

**HENDRICK:** No.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay. They weren't asked to come?

**ROLEN:** Correct.

**HENDRICK:** No.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay.

**SHAW:** And can I just make sure I completely understand. What are the ramifications of us approving this notice of violation? Is this the formal...

**HENDRICK:** This is the formal legal step. They have until May to cure that they'd have to come before the board to have the plan for you to approve that. If they're not able to do that to your satisfaction, then it could mean to further legal steps that are...

**SHAW:** And if we were to fail to pass this tonight, they don't have to come in May is what is...

**HENDRICK:** Well, no.

**SHAW:** They would.

**HENDRICK:** Well, you would probably be having a different conversation.

**ROLEN:** That'd be a much, yeah, that's a closed session conversation about liability and that sort of thing.

**SHAW:** I see.

**BARKE:** Is there any discussion?

**WILLIAMS:** I'll make a motion to approve the notice of violation.

**BARKE:** Okay.

**VALDES:** I second.

**BARKE:** Dr. Williams has made the motion and Trustee Valdes has second it. So now it's open for discussion.

**WILLIAMS:** It's sad that we have to do this.

**VALDES:** Yeah. I mean, I don't want to do this at all, but I mean the staff is somewhat laid out a very convincing and compelling case that this school is running in the red and it's only getting in the deeper red.

**SPARKS:** I think we need to hear from them.

**WILLIAMS:** They have till what date?

**HENDRICK:** We gave them to May because they feel by then they could show their increased enrollment, numbers that would help their budget and things like that. That's why we've given them a lengthier timeline is because they feel they can, but we say, well, we actually need substantiated information. It can't just be on a feeling. They've asked for that time. They would be through their enrollment process.

**WILLIAMS:** May 15th? Our board meeting that month is May 8th.

**HENDRICK:** Right. I think by then they should have that material.

**WILLIAMS:** They would be presenting to us at that May 8th meeting.

**HENDRICK:** That would be our goal. Yes.

**WILLIAMS:** Should it be May 8th and not May 15th?

**HENDRICK:** Well, I think maybe after the meeting they may have to still come up with some things based on your conversation with them. So that's why we kind of lengthen that out there. Right.

**ROLEN:** We're trying to be as accommodating as possible.

**WILLIAMS:** But now they say, well, okay, we will come May 15th. That means we have to have another board meeting.

**HENDRICK:** We could do it in the first meeting. You have two meetings in June, so we could do the first meeting in June. I think is what we were thinking.

**ROLEN:** Right. That is what we were thinking about.

**WILLIAMS:** Okay.

**SHAW:** My birthday is May 8th and I didn't think it was, I had a board meeting, but it turns out that's a Friday. We don't have a board meeting.

**BARKE:** No.

**SHAW:** It's May 6th.

**WILLIAMS:** May 6th.

**SHAW:** Oh, good. We're going have to move another meeting.

**BARKE:** All right. Do we want to have any discussion tonight? You guys have had...

**VALDES:** I read that very closely? I'm ready to take a vote.

**BARKE:** Okay. Should I call for the vote. All those in favor?

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

**BARKE:** Any opposed? No. Okay. So, 5-0. Thank you. Okay. And our last item is we're moving to information communication. Brandon. Is Brandon still here. Oh, there's Brandon. You were hiding behind Mr. Cole just a little bit. Sorry.

**GUEVARA:** All right. I'm not that small, Mari.

**BARKE:** I don't know. You were behind him.

**GUEVARA:** All right guys, I'll be brief. I'll be good evening. It's almost 10:00, so I'll make this fast. Good evening, Board President. Good evening, Board Vice President, Trustees and Superintendent. This is my monthly review for the board liaison position for January to February. And I'm just going to start bottom to top. I wasn't going to go fastest to longest, but I'll just go straight down the line. Jorge, last month you raised some curious questions about the ACCBE, so I just figured I'll just start briefing you guys monthly on it, what they're doing and

what you can expect from them, stuff like that just to keep everyone in the loop. Ken, I know you had expressed some interest in that as well. I'll just go right down the line. They have their in-person regional conference in April. There was some talk with our facilities team and myself and the ACCBE to do it in Orange County, but just price, it just didn't work out that way.

It's going to be in Riverside. They have reached out, I have been in contact with their leadership about the agenda for that. And they have actually deferred a large portion of that influence to you guys. They are looking for, because it's regional. They have one Nor Cal, Central California and Southern California. They have reached out and asked, maybe I'll put in a memo to deliver to them, but they asked, what is the OCBOE/DOE excel at? They said to give examples, what do you guys feel really strongly about career technical education. I know charter schools, I expressed that to them, community schools, et cetera. And so, they said your answers will guide a lot of the agenda for that. So that is a great opportunity to, I know you said Jorge, you can't change California, but with the county of education, you can definitely, we're the second largest county by school attendance I believe. Correct me if I'm wrong, but this is your chance to maybe extend some influence across the state and improve the qualities of students' lives, not just here, but up and down the state. They also said that they are planning a session on charter renewals and I expressed how you guys are somewhat of an expert on that subject, especially given the tremendous amount of renewals you're expecting to see. I will also send out memo to you guys, get your input on that so I can reach out to them.

And then just some items to put on your agenda if you guys feel the need to maybe make an appearance at or send me. That's what I'm here for. The Orange County Academy of Sciences and Arts invited, well, I guess the board, but Lisa, this is your district. They're having a 10-year celebration for a time capsule they put in 10 years ago. The date changed. They said, Kapil noted to me. The date may change, but it should be somewhere around that area. So just put that on the calendar. If you can't make it. Maybe another board member or myself.

**BARKE:** That's a Saturday, I think.

**GUEVARA:** Yeah. So, it might be...

**BARKE:** Yeah. The 22nd I think is a Friday.

**SPARKS:** No.

**GUEVARA:** The date may change, they said, but it should be somewhere around there. And then this week, I have been in contact with Senator Strickland's office. Their Orange County Department of Education is having a counselor symposium, recognizing tremendous school counselors from the county, not just in public schools, but college as well. So that's a good opportunity there if you guys want to show up to that. Per Mari's request, we are now on Facebook, so we are on the big three. I like to call it, we're on Facebook, Instagram, and X. I would like to make a public request if you guys are making a public appearance. Tim, you went to the Jewish memorial thing. Remind me of the correct term.

**SHAW:** Well, it wasn't really, that wasn't appropriate for that. I know what you're saying, but...

**GUEVARA:** Got it.

**SHAW:** It was more like an actual class at UC Irvine.

**GUEVARA:** Perfect. Well, Jorge, you went to the, you spoke over the weekend. Send it my way. I'd love to, it's part of my job has become to highlight the stuff that you guys do publicly. So that's an easy opportunity for you to get your name out there and show some good work that you're doing.

**VALDES:** I sent you the pictures that the photographer sent me and I spoke at a public school choice forum in Santa Ana at Santa Ana College. I thought that would be good for the newsletter.

**GUEVARA:** It's great. It's on, it's going to be on the next newsletter and it's now public on the social media sites. Feel free to stop by and take a like. Take a look.

**SPARKS:** You get these pictures that they take of us. They took with the resolution and everything.

**GUEVARA:** I usually do take them with my phone, but the Department has such a good media team and cameras that are...

**SPARKS:** You can use those, right?

**GUEVARA:** I've been, I usually just reach out and ask. Their \$3,000 cameras put my iPhone to shame. I usually just wait. Same like Jorge. I wait for them to disseminate the pictures.

**SHAW:** When's the next newsletter?

**GUEVARA:** March.

**SHAW:** Okay.

**GUEVARA:** And then this is the update, the big update of the month. There's not many jobs out there where one of your primary, I guess, goals is to create a description for your job. I finally have that after a couple months now of kind of defining the role. And Greg, is it appropriate for me to read that or should we...

**ROLEN:** Dr. Sparks [several inaudible words].

**GUEVARA:** Got it. All right then I will brief that. I'll brief you guys with that. Greg, I'll be in touch. We can touch all the legal language and stuff. But for me, that's it. That's it for the night. I hope that was brief enough.

**BARKE:** Thank you.

**GUEVARA:** All good.

**HENDRICK:** And then Mari, if I could just for the record, is you did have three information items that were in your packet.

**BARKE:** Yes. I'm sorry. I, for some reason, didn't have my glasses on and skipped those three, so.

**HENDRICK:** That's okay. There's no action required. But we do have the midyear update for the '25-'26 OCDE and Connections local control accountability plans. So, the LCAP. This is our update that's in your binder. And then the midyear update also for CCPA since that's...

**BARKE:** I saw they're in the red folder I think.

**HENDRICK:** They're all in your red...

**BARKE:** Yes.

**HENDRICK:** They're actually in your report.

**BARKE:** Oh, they're in here?

**HENDRICK:** Yeah.

**BARKE:** Okay. Oh, right behind that track.

**HENDRICK:** And then the last one was just the salary increases over \$10,000 accordance with the education code. I think there are four positions. All of them are for promotional. I can't even talk anymore. Promotional opportunities, that the staff members received.

**BARKE:** Okay, great. Well, thank you. Are we ready to go to announcements? Dr. Bean?

**BEAN:** I think you've heard enough from all of our staff that I don't have an update. We're good.

**BARKE:** Okay.

**HENDRICK:** The only thing I have is March 4th is our next board meeting. The submission deadline is Wednesday, February 18th. The board packets will be delivered on Friday, February 27th. And as a reminder, our office is closed on Monday, February 9th for Lincoln's birthday and Monday, February 16th for President's Day and we do have [inaudible] report. But I will hold that till [inaudible].

**BARKE:** All right. Any legislative updates?

**SHAW:** I don't think so.

**BARKE:** No, I don't think so.

**WILLIAMS:** When is legislation to be introduced? Isn't it January typically?

**BEAN:** They're in right now.

**BARKE:** It's happening right now.

**HENDRICK:** The 27th.

**BARKE:** Yep.

**WILLIAMS:** And we have our person in Sacramento?

**BARKE:** Yeah. Things are being introduced right now, and once things are moving, I think we'll get an update from...

**BEAN:** They're looking at, I think I saw a number of 2,000 potential.

**BARKE:** Yes.

**BEAN:** Is that accurate? That's a lot.

**BARKE:** Okay. Do we have any committee reports? I don't believe so. Nope. Board member comments, just keep in mind Lisa's comment if you have any comments.

**SHAW:** Oh, go ahead, Jorge. Sorry.

**VALDES:** I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the 11 or 12 teachers that are still in the room who have been here for quite literally five hours or longer. I heard your comments loud and clear, and your comments and your efforts with ACCESS and Connections are incredibly important to me.

**SHAW:** I want to do apologize for stepping out of the room and being tardy after our break. My niece at 8:00 was going to open her mission assignment from the church, so we're going to find out where she's going to go live for a year and a half. Starting July 1st, my niece will be in Madrid, Spain, being a missionary for our church. So that was, wherever you're out in the world, you just have to step out. It's sort of required to be in the Shaw family and watch the mission assignment happen.

**BARKE:** That is important. I watched a friend's mission assignment a few weeks ago. It was on the weekend. That was easier. But yes, I want to thank everybody who stayed here with us all night. It's been a long night and thank you for being here.

**WILLIAMS:** Nothing.

**BARKE:** Nope, all right. Motion to close.

**SPARKS:** Yes.

**BARKE:** Adjourned. Thank you all.

**SPARKS:** Thank you.