

BOARD MEETING 9-11-19 TRANSCRIPTION

Williams: We didn't even ask you guys to be quiet, and you did that automatically. We're quite impressed. That's a cue from the audience to begin.

Barke: Welcome, everyone. It's so nice to see so many smiling faces today. I will very informally let you just know if you are polite you get to stay for the whole meeting. We appreciate you being here. If you're not polite, the great man in the green uniform will probably walk you out. If you want to speak, make sure that Nina has a card. You're allowed three minutes.

[PRESIDENT BARKE STRIKES THE GAVEL ONCE]

Barke: Call to order?

Boyd: Yes.

Barke: Calling the meeting to order.

Boyd: Invocation.

Barke: Okay and I'd like to bring up William Owens. He is an American poet.

Williams: Stand.

Barke: You may stand if you'd like.

Owens: It is indeed an honor to do this invocation today. We also recognize it being 9/11. It holds special significance for us as Americans. As we invoke God to look upon us, look upon this meeting, I want to do so with honoring those who lost their lives on 9/11. This is a poem that I wrote as a poet, and I pray that it blesses you all as it has me. Special thanks to President Barke for inviting me to do the invocation today and God bless each of you. On This Day of 9/11. On this day of 9/11, there were those who left us, of which some appeared suddenly in heaven. They had no warning, no idea that it would be their last morning to be near those so dear to them and us.

We must, with vigilance, pray and plead with God Almighty to keep America safe, cause us to remain on our face, lest we forget again, as we so often do, when we choose to ignore you, oh God. Will it take another calamity to bring us back to our knees, to rush again to church, to forgive ourselves and our enemies? Our nation is yet divided. We refuse to acknowledge the Holy Bible. We've embraced false ideologies that feed our worst propensities. We have doomed our children to reprehensible tendencies that only please ourselves. On 9/11, some went to heaven. Are we paying attention? Have we become indifferent to the conditions of our country? Do we even care, believing everyone is our friend and we have no adversaries?

How gullible we have become? How ignorant can we be? Will it take another calamity to bring us back to our knees, to rush again, to church, to forgive ourselves and to unite our families? May we arise as Americans united? May we pray as a God-fearing people? May we speak truth to power, fearlessly declaring his word? We must cry and spare not, that our voices be heard. Today is 9/11. We will never forget. We will remember that this day, there was some who went to heaven. Father, we pray a blessing upon this meeting. We pray for our hearts to reflect unity. We ask for clarity of thought in mind. And above all, Lord, may we love each other even as we love ourselves. This we pray in Christ's name. Amen.

Audience: Amen.

Barke: Thank you, so much. Next, I'd like to call my friend Dr. Gabriela Mafi, the superintendent from Garden Grove to do our pledge.

Mafi: Please face the flag and place your right hand over your heart. Ready? Begin.

Audience and Board: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Williams: Roll call.

Barke: Roll call.

Sisavath: Trustee Sparks?

Sparks: Here.

Sisavath: Trustee Williams?

Williams: Present.

Sisavath: Trustee Barke?

Barke: Present.

Sisavath: Trustee Gomez?

Gomez: Present.

Sisavath: Trustee Bedell?

Bedell: Here.

Barke: Nina, do we have any introductions?

Boyd: We have no introductions at this meeting.

Barke: All right, I'll call for a motion to approve the agenda.

Williams: So moved.

Barke: Second?

Sparks: Second.

Boyd: Was there a second?

Barke: Yes.

Boyd: Lisa?

Sparks: Yes.

Boyd: Thank you.

Barke: Any discussion? No? Okay. Call for a vote.

Williams: All those in favor?

Barke: All those in favor?

Board: Aye.

Williams: Oppose?

Barke: Oppose? Okay. Call for a motion to approve the minutes for both meetings 8/1/19 and 8/14/19.

Williams: I so move.

Sparks: Second.

Barke: Any discussion? No? Hearing none, call for a vote. All in favor?

Board: Aye. Okay, ayes have it. Nina, do we have names for public comment?

Boyd: We do. We have five speakers for general public speaking, public comments. Then, we have some more comments that are specific to items on the agenda.

Barke: Okay.

Boyd: I'll call the first five. If you have not spoken before, we have a green, yellow, red light monitor. It's three minutes. If it gets to red, you have about 30 seconds. We ask that you finish

your sentence at that time. If you haven't the buzzer will ring, and I will ask you to please step away from the microphone. Our first speaker is Susan Meyer.

Meyer: Good morning. My name is Susan Meyer. Newport-Mesa Unified School District is the district that I live in. I'm also a homeowner in Newport Beach. I'm here to talk about charter schools, items #3 and #4. I've been before this body before talking on behalf of my school district - Newport-Mesa Unified School District who requested that you not approve a charter school in the district. Not only did their staff review the charter school and recommend no, but your very own staff recommended no to the ISAAC charter school in Newport-Mesa Unified School District. However, your personal agenda and I feel it's a religious agenda of some sort, is that you bring in these charter schools no matter what.

Even if the staff of the public schools and your very own staff say no to a charter school, you just vote it in to bring the charter school in. That's just not right folks. It's just not right. Here we are again. We have a good school district - Garden Grove Unified School District here asking you please don't bring in this charter school. Listen to them. This room is full of the good folks, parents of Garden Grove Unified School District.

Please do not force your personal agenda against the will of the people. There's an Assembly Bill 1505, it's winding its way through the legislature to prevent unscrupulous boards as yourself not counting a couple of the board members that are continuing to push their own personal agenda against the will of the people. Legislation has to be written to prevent you from succeeding in your personal agenda. It absolutely turns my stomach.

Boyd: Charlene Metoyer?

Metoyer: Good morning. My name is Charlene Metoyer, president of the Newport-Mesa Unified School District Board of Education. On behalf of our district and the board, I urge you to hold ISAAC petitioners accountable for their abuse of the charter approval process and their blatant misrepresentations to you during their charter appeal. Despite ISAAC's explicit denials and statements to the contrary, ISAAC has been openly touting Dr. Padmini Srinivasan-Hands as its founder. This information is on ISSAC's website and our district's staff observes Dr. Hands on campus daily, openly and intimately involved in all aspects of ISSAC's operations.

We appreciate that some of you said that you shared our concerns about Dr. Hand's involvement and that you were going to demand answers from ISSAC. As you know, some of the district's findings and concerns related to the fact that ISSAC is a repackaging of Dr. Hand's failed Adrian Hands Academy charter petition, which repeatedly was found to be an illegal conversion. The Orange County Department of Ed. also found that Dr. Hands made specific misrepresentations to the county board and staff at the time she was appealing the Adrian Hands charter. ISAAC's representatives vehemently denied the district's concerns regarding Dr. Hand's involvement in the conversion issue.

In fact, during your public hearing ISSAC board member, Vanessa Besack specifically asserted to this board that the district's concerns were false and claimed that Dr. Hands was not involved in ISSAC. The lead petitioner, Patricia Gould responded to a direct question from this board by

denying any connection to the Adrian Hands Academy. As ISAAC's founder, Dr. Hands started this school, which undeniably means that ISAAC's prior assertions to the board were untrue. ISAAC's assertions that Dr. Hands is volunteering her time is irrelevant. We believe there's only one explanation for ISAAC's behavior. ISAAC believed the connection to prior efforts to illegally convert Dr. Hand's private schools to a charter and her related misrepresentations to this board would hurt their chances to have the charter appeal approved.

Additionally, in July, ISAAC's principal told you they had 200 completed student applications and 24 more in progress, but ISAAC opened with only 72 students, less than one-third of what they promised you which seems to be yet another misrepresentation, and they have already apparently lost one more student.

As elected officials representing this community and charged with holding charter petitioners accountable to the law, we implore you to not allow ISAAC's representatives to get away with these or any additional misrepresentations or implementation of the illegal conversion of Dr. Hand's private school. Please hold ISSAC accountable by revoking ISAAC's charter. The district formally requests that you commence revocation proceedings or at a minimum, demand transparency and answers from ISSAC and provide a written response to our district. Thank you.

Boyd: Jill Marks?

Marks: Good Morning Madam President, members of the board, Dr. Mijares. My name is Jill Marks. I'm the executive director of Oxford Preparatory Academy located in Lake Forest. Our charter school is authorized by the board and provides an educational option for 644 students in grades TK-8. We have 530 students on our waiting list. We have established a highly collaborative relationship with your department staff, and we participate in a number of staff development programs offered by Orange County Department of Education.

Next month, we will submit a charter petition for renewal, and we will be seeking your approval and continued support. We hope to continue a partnership with you, and we see our role and responsibility is preparing your students, the students in adjacent school districts, to prepare them to excel in high school secondary education. Thank you very much. I'll see you next week.

Boyd: Lynne Riddle?

Riddle: Good morning, ladies and gentleman in the audience and those of you on the board. My name is Lynne Riddle. I reside in Newport Beach. I'm a retired federal judge. If you're in the audience, I think you should take out a pen and without wishing to be boastful, I will tell you I'm about to say one of the most impactful things that you will hear here today. During meetings of this board, many times there have been public comments that have degraded and demeaned in that person's opinion, our public schools and have announced that our public schools are failing us in the state of California. In fact, during charter hearings, even members of our board have repeated that California ranked #47, #48 I think in the United States for the quality of its schools.

I reject that. We are not failing. Our public schools are not failing, and when you say that the public schools are failing, you're saying that our superintendents are failing, that our principals

are failing, that our teachers are failing, that the children are failing, that the parents are failing. I reject that and I think the evidence will reject that. No, it is the people of the state of California who are failing our public schools, and you must acknowledge that. We all must acknowledge that. It is our duty to stand up for our teachers, and our principals, and our students, and our parents and properly fund our public schools. Please do not use that incorrect trope to favor charter schools over our public schools. Our public schools are not failing us. Thank you.

Boyd: Dr. Mike Weiss?

Weiss: Good morning, President Barke and members of the board. Thank you for this opportunity. Dr. Williams, nice to see you. It's been a long time. My name is Mike Weiss. I've been a pediatrician in Orange County for over 30 years, and I'm currently the vice president of Population Health at CHOC Children's Hospital in Orange County where I have oversight of our entire Care Management Prevention and Community Engagement Programs. I'm also proud to have served as the president of the Orange County chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and continue to be an active member of the chapter. CHOC Children's is proud to be partnering with the Orange County Department of Education to assure that the children of Orange County experience the best possible physical, emotional and educational health.

I come before you today in support of OCDE's endorsement of the California Health Education framework that includes education regarding nutrition and physical activity, injury prevention, substance abuse, mental and emotional health, personal and community health, and the importance of assuring our children and adolescents receive the most accurate, timely, age and culturally appropriate evidence-based, sexuality education possible. Recently presented data by our own Orange County Healthcare Agency indicate that the sexually transmitted infection rates in Orange County are at an alarming rate. Chlamydia infections have risen by 75% over the last 10 years. Gonorrhea rates are five times higher today than they were in 2009.

Syphilis rates are four times higher than they were in 2009. While we would all agree without a doubt, that discussion of these issues and others related to sexual health are an extremely important part of the family dynamic. The pediatric literature is very clear that evidence-based sexual and reproductive health education is a vital part of a proactive preventive strategy to reduce sexually transmitted infections and unwanted pregnancies. The American Academy of Pediatrics representing over 60,000 primary and specialty care pediatricians across the entire globe recently released a clinical report entitled Sexuality Education for Children and Adolescents.

This was produced by AAP committees on adolescence and psychosocial aspects of child and family health respectively, and I have copies for you here, which I'll be happy to leave. I'd like to share some brief excerpts from this report that has been generated by experts in their respective field, and these excerpts are based upon evidence-based research from medical care and clearly endorses the need for clear, age appropriate, culturally competent education. "School-based comprehensive sexuality education that emphasizes prevention of unintended pregnancy and STI's should be encouraged. Sexuality education should cover healthy sexual development, gender identity, interpersonal relationships, affection, intimacy and body image for all."

I'll skip the other quotes as the lights went on. These are challenging issues, and when it comes right down to it, we all want what's right for our children. Prevention of disease and unwanted adolescent pregnancies is a goal we should all strive for to allow our children and adolescents to grow and thrive as adults. Thank you.

Boyd: You can give those to me.

Weiss: Sure.

Boyd: I'll make sure that they get them. Thank you so much. The doctor was our last speaker for public comments. We have a number of speakers that have expressed to talk specific to items on the agenda. I'll let you know when those come up.

Barke: Okay, excellent. I call for a motion to approve the consent calendar items #1 and #2.

Williams: I'll so move.

Sparks: Second.

Barke: Any discussion?

Williams: I would like to say a few words, especially on Resolution #14-19. This is in regards to the Red Ribbon Week. This is something that has been very important to me in my 24 years of being on this board, because drug abuse is a real serious problem amongst our youth. As a sheriff deputy reserve, it's also important that we recognize that this is one of the biggest challenges we face as law enforcement out on the street. Most crimes and criminal activity are often related to drug use and abuse. This board for the last 24 years always supported this resolution. I know, Jack you've been here, you have great historical memory, and I appreciate your vote. This is very important. I thank you all.

Barke: Any other discussion? I'd like to call for a vote. All those in favor?

Board: Aye.

Barke: Against? All right. Hearing none. Now we will move into closed session.

Boyd: Approximately how long?

Barke: Approximately how long? Up to an hour. It could be as long as an hour. We'll try and keep it to 30 minutes.

Bedell: Madam Chair? I wonder if parliamentary wise, if you could advise me? At this point, is it possible to do something with the agenda so that we don't have that?

Barke: Actually, one of the counsel needs to leave today. Normally he is here the whole day, but we do have an issue where one of our counsel has to leave.

Bedell: Okay. As soon as we're done with all issues or just one issue? We have all these people here -

Barke: Yes.

Bedell: - and I don't want to keep them waiting for an hour. Do both counsels have to leave?

Barke: No, just one.

Bedell: Is one counsel dealing with one specific issue?

Barke: Yes.

Bedell: If we could do his issue and exit him then, can we come out of that so we can honor these people?

Barke: We could do that.

Gomez: I only see one issue, so we should be able to do that fairly quickly, I believe.

Barke: All right. That's really up to the board.

Gomez: I would strongly suggest that we go no longer than 30 minutes.

Barke: I would agree.

Gomez: Okay.

Bedell: Then I'll stay out here -

Barke: Exactly.

Bedell: - because I can't keep it down to 30 minutes.

Barke: If we are longer than 30 minutes, it is Dr. Bedell's fault just so you know.

Boyd: You're in recess.

Barke: Okay, thank you.

Boyd: Closed session.

[PRESIDENT BARKE STRIKES THE GAVEL ONCE TO SIGNAL THE BEGINNING OF RECESS AND PREPARATION FOR THE CLOSED SESSION. UPON CONCLUSION OF RECESS, PRESIDENT BARKE STRIKES THE GAVEL ONCE TO SIGNAL THE CONTINUATION OF THE MEETING]

Barke: We are back in session. Our counsel will report out.

Brenner: Thank you, members of the board, Superintendent Mijares. In closed session, the board met with council to receive an update regarding the existing litigation between the board and the superintendent. No action was taken in regard thereto with the exception of the board reviewing our invoice for professional services through July 31. The board approved that invoice for payment on a vote of 3-1-1. Members Barke, Sparks and Williams - approving, member Gomez- no and member Bedell - abstaining. That's the report out from the closed session. Thank you.

Barke: Thank you. Do we have any charters submissions?

Boyd: We have no charter submissions at this meeting.

Barke: I would like to call up Kelly to the podium to facilitate the board discussion on items #4, 5 and 6. Hi, Kelly.

Gaughran: Hello. Good afternoon, President Barke, members of the board, and Superintendent Mijares. As a carryover from the July 2019, board meeting, we have representatives from three of our charter schools in attendance to provide an update on topics specific to each school. OCDE staff are also available to answer any questions you may have for them. First, I would like to invite Renee Williams.

Boyd: I'm sorry. Kelly, prior to you inviting the representative from ISAAC, we do have a number of cards. People wanted to speak on this. The board's preference. If the speaking occurs prior to the representative?

Barke: Fine with me.

Boyd: Okay. Let's call the individuals up first, and then we'll call you back up, Kelly. Thank you. Michelle Anderson? Again, just to repeat to those who are coming to the podium, we will set the timer for your comments. They should not exceed three minutes.

Anderson: Good morning, President Barke, Superintendent Mijares, honorable board members and awesome charter staff. I'm Michelle Anderson; I'm the regional director for the California

Charter Schools Association, the advocacy team. I'm here today to address four charter school agenda items. I'll start with the oldest and work my way to the present because excellent work of our 30 plus charter schools in Orange County, which OCDE approved 16 of them. These are schools that are giving OC kids not only a choice of an educational program, because one size does not fit all. You all don't like to eat McDonald's burgers all the time. There's nothing wrong with In N Out once in a while.

They not only get an awesome school choice, they are also getting a successful educational background. Item #8, the renewal of Vista Heritage. This board approved Vista Heritage after the local district Santa Ana Unified did not. A big mistake on their part, because the students of Vista Heritage are in many cases, double-digit percentage points above the district comparison schools. Keep in mind, this is a choice. Folks aren't forced to go to this school, but those who choose are getting to go to an excellent educational program. With this, we want to see them be renewed and we wholeheartedly support the renewal of this school so they can continue to do the good work they're doing.

The next agenda item, Unity, and they have an update, and I know that update will concern a very stalwart leader who will step in. This got off to a slow start, but nonetheless, this leader persevered, and because of her perseverance and pushing back at the city who was really trying to stymie her, she was able to keep her school open. She is a credit to her high school students who through her great educational program, not only are these kids getting a great high school education when they graduate, many of them are going to end up graduating, not just with the high school diploma but with an AA degree. That's amazing with the cost of college these days. My next item is ISAAC, the brand new school.

It just opened and much to the chagrin of many of you, this board approved them just like they approved Unity, just like they approved Vista, just like they approved Samueli. This school is off to a good start and some of you, I encourage you, rather than be afraid of what you don't know, go and visit the school. I was there last Tuesday night for an amazing opening, and they did a great job. Finally, we at CCSA are in support of Achievers Global. They are coming to you because they were denied at Garden Grove. They have met CCSA's criteria for opening a charter school. Thank you.

Boyd: Shelby Tipton?

Tipton: Hi. My son and daughter both go to ISAAC, and we had a lady earlier saying that principals don't fail, the school doesn't fail. At our previous school at Ray, my daughter was failed. We went to Ray and I guess I don't know how the funding works there. We went a lot in the P-K child opportunity, because we don't speak Spanish. We were denied a lot of child opportunities, because we don't speak Spanish. The funding doesn't go for her, it doesn't go for us, so she can't enjoy those opportunities or be with her friends.

She was called blanco and spit at by parents. She's a straight all fours, all o's. She was a great friend. Everybody said she left, but it wasn't a school we could go to, even though it's down the street from our house and all of our friends go there. She wasn't safe there. She didn't feel safe there. She wasn't happy there. She's learning a lot here at ISAAC and she's got a lot of great

friends, and she feels safe and she just feels like she belongs. I think that's really important for her to be an environment that she can feel safe in. That's just what I wanted to say. Thanks.

Boyd: Nicole, and I'm sorry, I can't read your writing. Umholtz? Could you say your name for us?

Umholtz: Thank you. I'm Nicole Umholtz.

Boyd: Thank you.

Umholtz: Very close. Good morning to the honorable board and all those present. I'm here also in support of ISAAC and appreciation. My son is in the fifth grade. He came from the public school in NMUSD where he had amazing teachers. I had nothing wrong with the teachers. He had great friends there. We followed his best friend to ISAAC, and I have been absolutely pleased and ecstatic every single day with my choice. I wish that the community could take the time to come in and actually sit in some of the classes there at ISSAC. The diversity in the school was the low student-to-teacher ratio and the engaged students. It's just amazing. It's a wonderful thing to have my son want to go to school every single day. He's excited.

When I had to take him away for a dentist appointment, he wanted to come back to school that same day. That in itself is just heartwarming to a parent. The tolerance and the diversity that is present and taught and modeled, I think it's so important. I hadn't realized what was lacking. Above and beyond that, I believe the bar needs to be raised in the community. To have options, we're working parents. We can't afford a private school for our two children. My older son goes to Ensign this year, first year. Again, amazing teachers in these schools.

However, their hands seem to be tied. I volunteer there regularly, and every single class and every single year that I've had my children in these schools I see how the teachers present themselves and engage the children and what it is they're able to impart. It seems to me that without that, without that, if my children didn't switch from one school to another and I didn't see that difference, I would feel that they didn't have anything to raise up to. They need that. They need to have options. We need to have options as parents, and the community needs to have that tolerance and that diversity, especially after today's poem. I really appreciate that. Thank you so much.

Boyd: Veronica Kroll.

Kroll: Hi. My name is Veronica Kroll, and my daughter she's just starting kindergarten. I looked at all of my options, and watching my daughter interact with YouTube is really interesting because she interacts with the Mandarin and the Spanish. I said, well, in this country, we are very much a big melting pot and you can see it through the social media, how important it is for our kids to know and understand all those point of views, other cultures.

I am blessed that I had the option to bring her into ISSAC, and now she's very excited. She does not want to leave school. She even learned an Irish dance the other day. She came home and she told me all about it. That's awesome. I'm really excited for ISSAC and I would hope that other

people are also open to it. I think we need to be a little bit more open minded. I'm very excited for this program and like I said, she's learning already. I can see it. Thank you.

Boyd: Thu Nguyen, followed by Tho Thran.

Nguyen: Good morning. My daughter is in TK at ISSAC, and I just want to thank you for allowing my family and a community of parents that I'm getting to know the schooling option. She comes home every day singing. Her favorite song is, she calls it the Birthday Song, which is a commencement song, love in any language. My phone is full of recordings of her singing the song. The most fun for me was yesterday. She came home and she said, "Mama, let me hear you. I say lion, you say pride," and she just goes back and forth chanting.

Audience: [Laughter]

Nguyen: This morning on the way to school she said, "Mama, today I'm so excited because if I am a good cinnamon I get a golden ticket and our friends can get golden tickets, too." I said, what makes a good cinnamon? She said, "If you are helpful and if you're kind." She meant citizen.

Audience: [Laughter]

Nguyen: That's one of the concepts that she is learning. I sort of keep a loose journal everyday of everything that she tells me at school, and I've written a book. I have many anecdotes here that I know I can't really share them all with you. For me, when the school started I was very apprehensive. She's my only child. She's my first child. This whole schooling system is very new to me. I couldn't wrap my head around how the school was going to teach all the academic subjects including two foreign languages and global citizenship, peace building, my environment, and my responsibility. It just all seemed very ambitious to me, but here's what she tells me. "In science, Ms. Neena taught me how to draw all the parts of a flower. In social studies, Ms. Laurie has me do relaxing exercise. You do it like this. Hello, my name is Chirp."

Audience: [Laughter]

Nguyen: I said, "Okay." "In math, Mr. Howie instructs me to draw shapes and put objects onto the corners and count them." When we play, she pretends to teach me Spanish that sounds like a mix of Spanish and Mandarin. I don't speak either and I'm sure they're gibberish, because it's only been a few days. She asked me to pull out, sort and match Mahjong pieces. My husband has a set, he's played with it in the past, and she has me match the Mandarin pieces because she says that's what she does in Mandarin class. She tests me on words that begin with the letter "A" and the letter "B," because those are two of the letters that they're learning right now. We missed school one day because of a little health emergency. And I asked her, I wonder if she wonders what her friends were learning today. She said, "I know, I know what my friends are learning today. What makes good cinnamon?"

Audience: [Laughter]

Nguyen: After pick up every day, we would hang out at the park next door, and the amazing thing that I see is that I see all the kids, all different ages playing with each other from TK all the

way to fourth grade.

Boyd: Your time is up.

Nguyen: I met many of these moms through that. I thank you. Thank you for the option.

Boyd: Tho Tran, followed by Halimo Mohamed.

Tran: Good morning, everyone. Sorry I didn't know all the names to address. I'm here as parent of Yuen Tran, third grade student at ISSAC. I'm also one of the earliest, oldest applicants and supporter for the opening of ISSAC, and I will continue to be one for many years to come. First of all, I would like to thank OCBE from the bottom of my heart for your decision to support ISSAC opening. Obviously, it wasn't a popular decision with the Newport-Mesa School District, but I can tell you as parents and resident of Costa Mesa you've done the right thing and the best thing for my kids and many other parents who chose ISSAC and education as priority. Let me tell you what I have seen, and I don't support anything blindly without proper research especially when it comes to my children's education and future.

What I have seen with ISSAC, I'm seeing it's opening or approval that the staff have worked relentlessly to get it all set up with many challenges in a very short time. What can I say? The principal, Ms. Renee with her open door policy, and the teachers credentialed and commitment are phenomenal. The mission and vision of the school are aligned with what we envision for our children in our future to be as global citizen to contribute to a peaceful and multicultural society. Only two days after opening, they were able to pull off such a wonderful multicultural kickoff night with performances from teachers and students. After only one week, my son and his best friend love going to school every day.

He's excited to come home every day to tell me what he's learned from school. He only speaks a few words of Chinese and tries to teach me. They will be getting a cultural and rich learning experience with six fantastic projects like I'm a global citizen, my environment, my responsibility, our human rights, life of healthy coexistence, the exploration of...I'm missing one word, and I'm a humanitarian. I'm so excited for my son and ISSAC students, and I look forward to continue this journey with my son. I know that there's a lot of parents from ISSAC today that take time off to support the school. A few of them are not prepared to make a speech even though they want to. If you're here to support the school as a parent please stand up, so we can see all your support.

[VARIOUS AUDIENCE MEMBERS STAND]

Tran: That's all I have to say, and thank you so much.

Audience: [Clapping]

Boyd: Halimo Mohamed?

Mohamed: Hi, everyone. My name is Halimo Mohamed. I'm one of the parents. My son is in second grade. Thank you so much for giving us this opportunity to be here and to show how important is to our children's future. I think we have the opportunity and it's important to educate our kids so we can compete in the global citizen. As global citizens, our children that's educated in the United States can go anywhere and they can be competing for opportunities around the world and not limited, because we do have everything here and for us to make sure that we teach

our kids right. We can use our children to go be global citizens and they can compete everywhere they can go.

They can use what they learn here everywhere they go and not be limited. We don't have other people coming outside to do our jobs here. We have the opportunities so we educate our kids properly then our citizens here they can go around the world and they can do what we need to be done. That's what we're getting from ISSAC. I am very grateful to find the school and to transfer my son here. He learns so much. The second day he came to ISSAC, he came home he said, "I'm going to go write in my book, my children's book." He wrote pages of books and writing these beautiful stories, and he's everyday excited to go to school and learn more things, have new science every day different science experiments he's learning from his teachers.

Everything is taught in a calm manner where everything is soaked in and he can learn, really, the value of the material rather than just like scan it and just move on to the next thing. He's really soaking into each material. Science - he's soaking into learning everything, the plants, everything. What is this material? What is it going to be like? Same thing in art class, same thing in Spanish. Every day is exciting. Teaching me Spanish and teaching me Mandarin-Chinese words all kinds of stuff. The excitement this child has in his eyes is just unbelievable. It's like so eye-opening for me because I'm also international. I came here from another country. I'm so grateful to be standing here. The opportunities that we have in this country, it's just amazing.

I wish I was here when I was as young as my child. I say that every day. I say, "Son, take this opportunity. Run with it and make sure you open your eyes and ears for those wonderful teachers and wonderful staff that have been given to us to teach us. Open your eyes and ears for them and make sure you take everything they tell you, and don't mess around when it's not time to mess around. Mess around time is recess time just be goofing." I always remind him that before school. I'm always at the ready, because I didn't have this opportunity as a young woman. I'm so grateful to be given this, because this school is doing amazing things. Every teacher is so special. They're so attentive to each child saying hello to them, shaking their hands.

Boyd: Your time is up.

Mohamed: Okay. Thank you so much for everything given this school, because I'm so excited about this school and I'm so grateful, because it's what we need.

Boyd: Susanna Davoodi? Sorry, I can't read it. Please state your name so that we have it on record.

Davoodi: Hi, my name is Susanna Davoodi, and I'm a resident in Orange County.

Boyd: Thank you.

Davoodi: Hello to the board members and all the people who are here. I'm a grandma of Amelia Davoodi-Dawudjian. She's going to ISSAC school and she's so happy. Every day she blossoms. The other day I ask her, "Amelia, how much do you like your school? And she told me, "Mom, I like it a lot, Tata." She calls me Tata, and I said, "Amelia, but how much do you like it?" She says, "Tata, infinity. I like the school, infinity." We transferred her from private school to the ISSAC school and I see a tremendous difference.

The school does wonders with the kids. I'm so happy that we have this school in Orange County so that my grandchild can go there. I want to thank all the teachers there. They are doing a wonderful job, and I want to thank the board members for allowing us to have a school like this in Orange County so the kids can explore the education and be happy every day. I want to thank everybody. Thank you so much.

Boyd: Adrine Davoodi, and she'll be our last speaker for this segment.

Adrine Davoodi: Hi. Thank you for having us. My name is Adrine Davoodi. My mom spoke too, and we're residents of Costa Mesa. I was so thrilled when I found ISSAC school, because I was really doing my due diligence in trying to find the best school for my daughter. She was going to a private Armenian school in Santa Ana close to the Garden Grove area, and I see a tremendous difference in transitioning her from that school, which is also a bilingual school, to ISSAC. I see that she is growing. She's coming home and talking or singing in Spanish or Mandarin. Right now, it's gibberish as the other parents said. For me, it's really important that Amelia explores her creative potential.

I think ISSAC really gives them the platform to be able to do that. The open environment, the open door policy that the teachers have, and just the robust curriculum and enrichment opportunities that the students have to be able to explore their true creative potential, is one of the most important reasons why I enrolled her in ISSAC. I really hope that the board sees the quality of education that the children are receiving there. I think a lot of the best practices that ISSAC is able to identify can be translated to the other schools in the district as well. I intend on staying. I moved here from LA a year ago and I do intend on staying, and I'm really, really hopeful that ISSAC is around for her elementary and secondary education. I'm really hopeful that you guys see the quality in the school. Thank you.

Boyd: Greer Wylder? I'm sorry, and this will be our last speaker. There was a mix-up in the cards in terms of where she was. Please state your name for the record.

Wylder: My name is Greer Wylder. Thank you so much for having me today. I'll keep it brief. Can you hear me? I'm a Costa Mesa resident, 28 years, homeowner. I have four boys and they all attended Mariners Elementary School. It was a great experience, and I just heard about ISSAC I'd say in June, and I was like, oh, I wish this school was there when my kids were young. I love that they are learning or they have the chance to learn Chinese and Spanish. None of my boys can speak Spanish although they did take it in high school. It's just a wonderful opportunity. I was there on the first day of school. I saw one little boy crying his eyes out. Second day at the multicultural event, he was on the stage with the biggest smile you've ever seen.

It's just heartwarming. I feel like anyone that has a negative feeling about charter schools just the research that I have done, it has shown that charter schools do a better job at educating the underprivileged, the multicultural, or the underserved populations which we have a lot of in our community. It's just a great opportunity. The kids, the teachers are so passionate. The founder is so passionate. Her vision, the principal, it's just an amazing thing. I would say to anyone who feels strong feelings negatively towards ISSAC should stop by and meet the teachers, and meet the students. I think they would change their mind. It's amazing. Thank you.

Gaughran: I would like to invite Renee Williams the principal of this school and Dr. Padmini Srinivasan to the podium to speak on behalf of ISSAC charter school which opened last Tuesday, September 3rd, with 72 students.

Williams: Greetings, board members, superintendent, fellow educators, community members, and special greetings and thank you to ISSAC families who did take off work today to come and share their gratitude with the Orange County Department of Education. Thank you families. I am Renee Williams, the proud principal of the International School for Science and Culture. I'm here to provide an update today and also to read a statement prepared by our ISSAC board for you. Many of the updates that I had intended to share were shared. I will just begin by saying that we have had an excellent opening.

The students and the families have been incredible in terms of collaborating with the teachers who also culminated a 10-day pre-year preparation collaborating on all of our project-based learning units for the year that I think were shared with you by one of the families. The teachers have been co-teaching. Students have indeed been engaged in both daily lessons in Spanish and in Chinese, in addition to all of their core curriculum work. You might recall that when I was last here, there were some specific data pieces that I didn't have at the time but I do today. Should you have any questions I'd be happy to answer them. For now, I will just go to a statement prepared by the board for me to read to you, and I believe that you will all take copies home today.

“Dear honorable members of the board of trustees, Orange County Department of Education. It has come to our attention that the board of trustees continues to have concerns regarding Dr. Padmini Hand's role and involvement in the establishment of the International School of Science and Culture- ISSAC authorized by the Orange County Board of Education and located in Costa Mesa. As members of the board of directors of ISSAC, we would like to thank you for your support and guidance throughout the charter petition process. We believe we have complied with all governing laws and regulations in the creation of this charter school. The members of the ISSAC's board of directors come with background in K-12 education, higher education and business.

We're in the process of approving two more new board members with backgrounds in business and law. All of us are volunteers and receive no compensation whatsoever. As a board, we are very appreciative of Dr. Hands' involvement in helping develop the educational program that forms the basis of ISSAC's charter school petition. It is through the vision of Dr. Hands and her love of educating students through research based approaches that ISSAC is able to provide students with a program that integrates science with culture. Like all volunteer boards, many of our board members have jobs to which they need to attend and activities that they undertake. All of us have family obligations just like all of you.

Therefore, it is always the challenge to balance our volunteer commitment with our own work. Some of us have put in time to support ISSAC to the point that we must reduce our volunteer commitment to take care of own businesses. However, we make every effort to remain dedicated to serve the students and we are committed to do so. From time to time, we do lose a board member or two due to work schedule or work conflict. We don't allow that to deter us, and we

continue to recruit others who are willing to serve. Dr. Hands has been the constant in the entire process since the inception of this charter school. We are very grateful for her dedication. Dr. Hands has no other motive but to serve the students and families who are interested in a different option from the traditional public schools.

At this time, we find it difficult to understand the opposition to Dr. Hand's involvement through her volunteerism. She is a well-educated scholar, consultant and practitioner. She has kept all of us very informed of every situation and every challenge in the development of the petition process for ISSAC. We have entrusted her with our utmost support to act on our behalf to ensure we meet compliance and act according to laws. We thank you, the Orange County Board of Education for your support in our endeavor. We are grateful for the tireless support from the county and district staff to assist us in securing a physical location along with making sure that we work through the gaps and missteps along the way.

This has been a great learning experience for all of us and we thank Dr. Hands for carrying out our desires, since we cannot handle the day to day for a short time, until we were able to hire Ms. Renee Williams our principal. We would have liked to be able to attend all the board meetings at Orange County Department of Education. As we indicated earlier, we all have day jobs to attend and are trying to do as much as we can whenever we can whether it's via the use of telephones, emails, technology, or face to face. Thank you again for your attention. If you have any questions regarding this, please feel free to contact ISSAC.

We can be reached via the school office, sincerely, Vanessa Besack, Virginia Carrillo, Chiung-Sally Chou, Ph.D., Katie Kahlweiss, and Emily Maekubo, members of the board of directors International School for Science and Culture.” Did you have any questions for me before Dr. Padmini Hands reads her statement?

Bedell: Fix mix my memory here on this one.

Williams: Yes?

Bedell: My memory was there was some serious concern that this was a conversion of a private to a public. Is that right?

Williams: I can't help fix your memory on that subject, because that conversation is part of the historical conversations.

Bedell: Okay, can the person behind you help me with that?

Williams: Perhaps that will be addressed in the statement.

Bedell: Right.

Williams: Thank you.

Ruley: Good morning, Janelle Ruley with really with Young, Minney and Corr. I think the concern around a private school conversion came with a different charter appeal that was denied by Saddleback Valley. That school never existed.

Bedell: This school never had any historical private component which is then being turned into public?

Ruley: That's my understanding. That's my recollection. It could be that my recollection is flawed if you have a different one. In this case, there was no private school that became ISSAC.

Bedell: Is there somebody from our staff who can address my question?

Boyd: Kelly.

Gaughran: The school that you're talking about is Adrian Hands Academy which was denied by Saddleback Valley Unified and came to us on appeal. We had a concern, as staff, that they were converting a preschool through kindergarten. Many of the parents and the board and the people involved with that school in the petition were also a part of the preschool, and we were concerned that was going to be a conversion. The TK kids, for example, would be the kindergarteners at the charter school. Then that petition was withdrawn from you, so you never took action on that petition. I believe the district had concerns because of the relationship Dr. Hands has with this school, that there might be a similar issue.

Bedell: Okay. Is Dr. Hands going to make comments?

Gaughran: She is.

Bedell: Okay, thank you.

Hands: Good morning, and thank you for this opportunity. Greetings to all of the board, President Barke, and Superintendent Mijares. Can everybody hear me? Dear members of the board of trustees of the Orange County Department of Education, I am here today to address some of the concerns that both the county board and staff, and the administration at Newport-Mesa Unified School District have consistently expressed regarding my involvement with the charter school International School for Science and Culture. It is true that I used to run a private preschool utilizing advanced academics, whole child development and global culture exposure to provide program services to about 70 children in the Mission Viejo area.

When parents are pleased with their children's growth they become interested in knowing how to continue and expand their children's learning in other settings once they complete their early childhood education. I began discussing with a small group of founding parents a good way to provide continued education. With similar learning theories for children of elementary school age and above. We began contemplating the idea of opening a charter school so that their children and children in the community, older than kindergarten, would be able to benefit from these approaches and experience academic, personal and cultural growth as they matured in age with offerings that are similar to a traditional public school but with teaching and learning strategies that are more creative and innovative.

In 2011, my husband, Adrian Hands a creative thinker, cyclist and software engineer passed away of ALS, or Lou Gehrig's Disease. I wanted to keep his memory and his passion for life and learning alive. I started formulating the notion of a charter school. I solicited educators from higher education, K-12 education, business and the community to brainstorm and form the type of school where the children will receive education to help them become productive citizens of California and beyond, with a good grasp of the world acquired by studying, in addition to English, at least two world cultures and languages, Spanish and Chinese.

My involvement with this endeavor grew out of my and my late husband's love of public education and my desire to provide perhaps a different pathway by bringing together STEM world languages and human development to a unified program. I put my own resources, time and

energy into the development of a charter school as a contribution to society and as part of my personal mission. We proposed Adrian Hands Academy charter school to Saddleback Valley Unified School District three times, starting in January 2017. The first two times we proposed a TK through eight school, Saddleback Valley determined it was considered, “A private school conversion because of the existence of a preschool that I operated that included students in TK and K grade levels.”

We disagreed with the district on this point, and the law did not seem to support the district's interpretation. The school that I operated was ages zero to five. We did not enroll any children over kindergarten. In California, compulsory education applies to students' ages six to 18. Therefore, the allegation of private school conversion had no merit. The preschool was eventually closed into summer 2017 due to security issues related to the proposed rezoning of the property, but the third submission to Saddleback Valley, because we proposed a grade span that did not include TK or K, SVUSD did not deem it to be a private school conversion. Nevertheless, Orange County Department of Education's still considered that to be a possibility causing concern.

We withdrew the appeal. At about this time, Vanessa Besack, who had been in charter school administration, who also had the experience of establishing a new charter program. She asked to take the education program that I and others had developed and reformulated it into a new charter petition and submitted the charter with Patricia Gould, an experienced and traditional public and charter school principal as lead petitioner. From the beginning, I supported their process, helping to review presentation materials. Because of my commitment to seeing this educational vision take shape and reality, and my long-standing interest in evaluating, observing and measuring results that will be created.

Since the ISSAC team was starting fresh, they looked for a location where low-and-moderate income families will be able to access a different curricular offering and educational experience. The ISSAC petitioners chose Costa Mesa area where, according to public data, less than half the students were meeting or exceeding the standards in English, language arts and mathematics, 33% and 40% in CAASP results 2017-2018. The ISSAC team thought I could make a contribution there, and I agreed with that hypothesis. At the public hearing at Newport-Mesa Unified School District, a school board member asked Patty about my involvement, and she said correctly, that I was part of the team working on the charter school.

The team at ISSAC took pains to follow the procedures and laws of the California Charter Schools Act to create ISSAC. Nevertheless, Newport-Mesa Unified School District did not look kindly on the proposal. As a result, the ISSAC team went to the Orange County Department of Education on appeal following the dictates of the legal process. The staff at the Orange County Department of Education provided the ISSAC team with their feedback, and they faithfully incorporated the recommendations of the OC board and staff to finalize various aspects of the agencies offer and implementation plan. I was asked for some input on some items. During this period, I was spending some time on the east coast and considering a move in order to take care of some family and personal matters.

By then, the private preschool I had operated which is located 45 minutes to one hour, depending on traffic, far away from ISSAC's population in Costa Mesa had been closed for over a year. At the public hearing at OCDE in January, in response to concerns whether I would be part of the leadership at ISSAC, Vanessa Besack stated that it would be difficult for me to take a leadership role since I was on the east coast. On February 11, Vanessa Besack accepted a position that involved her traveling between or among, LA, Sacramento and Washington, D.C. Despite her best efforts, she could not carry out her board responsibilities, and recently submitted her resignation. The Board of Directors are made up of all volunteers without compensation.

Board members do change jobs and work locations that require them to limit their volunteer work. As Vanessa resigns, ISSAC has two more people who are willing to serve. At one of the meet and greet sessions for parents of Costa Mesa, I heard from Patty that she was looking at other job opportunities due to commuting distance and a change in the family situation. She had earlier called a board member to state she might not be the right person for this job. She was already becoming less involved in the activities relating to ISSAC. Two of ISSAC's board members were also at that meet and greet, and they met with Patty twice. Following this meeting, she communicated this decision to all the board members by text message and a subsequent email exchange.

While ISSAC had to find a new leader, many steps had to be completed on an immediate basis to advance the planning and implementation of the new charter school. I took several actions on behalf of and at the request of the board members who were active in the process. Renee Williams came on board in July, after recommendation and referral, actually, from a board member. An interview was conducted and ISSAC followed the process and proceeded to hire her as principal of ISSAC. Many charter schools begin with one or more people who might not have the educational background or background in charter schools.

When invited to the process, like-minded individuals with the experience to make sure that sound educational theories and practices are applied and implemented correctly including carrying out legal procedures and financial planning according to law. The vision of education I originally proposed, in which ISSAC is implementing, brings together a challenging language and academic curriculum accompanied by a school culture and social, emotional or personal development as delineated in the petition. To implement this involves a number of detailed plans and actions beginning with a culture kickoff, which the ISSAC community enjoyed on September 4.

It was meant to celebrate and inspire each student at the beginning of their journey with ISSAC. I have not broken any laws by volunteering to develop ISSAC. As a volunteer, I work behind, beside or briefly on the front line in support of the board members. Whether behind the scenes or out in front, I'm happy to contribute to the growing success of ISSAC. I'm an unpaid volunteer contributing my own resources, knowledge and skills to the success of the students at ISSAC. Since I've been involved in drafting the educational program that forms the basis of ISSAC, I will be able to contribute in the implementation process led by the principal. I will continue to do so, unless you, the board of trustees at ISSAC deem it unacceptable. Thank you.

Boyd: Does the board have questions?

Barke: Does the board have any questions? Beckie?

Gomez: Can you tell me, what was your projected enrollment for this year?

Williams: Thank you. The last time I was here, I think, I had been just accessing various forms of data and I was very hesitant about saying I think the number is around 225, because that's how many parents had admitted their beginnings of enrollment process. That number was inaccurate as I suspected it was at that time. The numbers that are currently in our system total 104.

Gomez: When you put forth your budget, your projection was what?

Williams: Again, if there's some specific information, our budget is on the website. That's our projected budget, and I would not want to comfortably speak to specifically the number of students that the budget was made on. We're working with our back office to create a more current forecast for the fiscal standing of the school.

Gomez: The reason I'm asking about that is simply, because your budget needs to be able to support your students.

Williams: Exactly, and to sustain the whole year.

Gomez: Exactly. If you had a projected budget of many more students than you actually have, that's a concern to me.

Williams: No. The number that I reported at the previous meeting was with regards to how many students I thought had enrolled. I did not, however, nor do I believe at this moment think the budget was based on that number. Currently, our back office is providing all of the forecasts based on what is the current count.

Gomez: When could we have access to that information?

Williams: I can get you access to that information. I'll work with our back office to give you a timeline, but I won't speak on their behalf right now.

Gomez: They're under your direction, though. Correct?

Williams: Correct, and I'm not wanting to present inaccurate information. We're on just day seven of our count, so I want the numbers to be accurate and that's what we're working on daily.

Gomez: When do you believe you'll have that, ballpark? 30 days?

Williams: 30 days seems reasonable, yes.

Gomez: Could we get that to our charter school unit so they could take a look at that?

Williams: Absolutely.

Gomez: I am concerned. The parents seem to be very enthusiastic about their children which most parents of K and pre-K are.

Williams: Of course, and third, and fourth, and fifth. Small but mighty families.

Gomez: I just want to be sure that we're able to sustain that if that is in fact, what you intend to do.

Williams: 100%, we agree.

Gomez: If you are giving direction to your back office folks then hopefully, they can get that to us sooner than later.

Williams: That sounds good.

Gomez: Thank you.

Bedell: Madam President?

Barke: Yes?

Bedell: Can I just follow up?

Barke: Of course.

Bedell: Thank you very much, Madam President. Perhaps I misheard. When you first came on board it was July?

Williams: Yes.

Bedell: Is that about right? You thought maybe you were going to have 220? Is that what I'm hearing? I want to be fair here.

Williams: Thank you for your fairness.

Bedell: Sure.

Williams: Yes, that is what you're hearing.

Bedell: Okay.

Williams: Literally, when I was here the last time, I reported, when we discussed numbers that I did not feel comfortable presenting a number that I felt was not appropriately managed yet. There were numbers that had to do with the beginnings of applications and not the completion of applications.

Bedell: Sure. In other words, they all got put together in one pie, but they should have been separated out of special. When you go back to school today -

Williams: Yes.

Bedell: How many kids will you have on your site?

Williams: In terms of how many are registered?

Bedell: Actually, how many are going to class?

Williams: How many are in attendance today?

Bedell: I don't mean somebody who's out today with the flu, but you have a registered head count of...?

Williams: 104.

Bedell: Okay, now -

Williams: There are six in process families that could have brought them in today. There's a 104 number that we're working with, a 110 number that we're working with, of course, report numbers to the state based on attendance. That's why the numbers in most charter schools in the first 30 days fluctuate.

Bedell: Newport-Mesa will tell us that they have on your records in this site which you're availing yourself of, you have 104 students?

Williams: Newport-Mesa will tell you that?

Bedell: That's where your school is located.

Williams: The school is located in that territory yes, as an independent charter.

Bedell: Right.

Williams: We don't share student information systems.

Bedell: Is it possible, Madam President, to speak to somebody from Newport-Mesa school district? May I have the superintendent join us, or somebody from the board? Or, somebody who knows the data? Let me just say something to the board and the community. I have been on this board 15 years. I had hair when I came here, not much.

Audience: [Laughter]

Bedell: Seriously, I have gotten more calls, emails, messages, about this school than any other school outside of my district combined. That's no hyperbole. That's no New York Jack. I want to be sure we're right. Again, it's not my trustee area, but, as a taxpayer, and I would appreciate whatever you have.

Lee-Sung: Good morning. Russel Lee-Sung, deputy superintendent with Newport-Mesa Unified School District. Regarding the number that our board president cited, that's a number that we got from the county which every school district has to call in their enrollment numbers. The enrollment number on day one that was reported to us was 72. The enrollment number on day six was 71. That's where we got that.

Bedell: What day is today?

Lee-Sung: Today is day seven, so this was as of yesterday.

Bedell: We're down one, but that's okay. That can happen.

Lee-Sung: The day six number was 71.

Bedell: 71 is what percentage of 104? Seven-tenths? I'm not math, I'm a sociologist. I'm not math.

Audience: [Laughter]

Bedell: Is that about right? Again, I'm just a little New York sociologist. There's something going on here for me. Help me.

Ahluwalia: Sukhi Ahluwalia, counsel for the district. I think the principal that ISSAC is now acknowledging that the number in attendance is 71.

Williams: As I acknowledged a moment ago, when I clarified, if you're asking enrolled versus attendance on day six? There are spot checks -

Bedell: We have 104 -

Williams: Registered.

Bedell: - registered, but we only have 71 showing up?

Williams: On the two days that were identified as head counts.

Bedell: Right, which is day six.

Williams: And, day one.

Bedell: Day six was yesterday?

Williams: Correct.

Bedell: We have 71 of 104, potential? Is that right? Am I counting that right?

Williams: Attending yesterday? Yes, at the time of the count.

Bedell: In other words, you have 30 kids absent?

Williams: That is correct, on yesterday's count.

Bedell: 30 kids absent? I'm not being funny.

Williams: No, I don't take it to be. It's not my first time taking attendance in the first. That's why I said, if we want an accurate number we're going to need to wait a few more days. There are some students that just began school yesterday who were on the count for day one.

Gomez: Were, or weren't?

Bedell: Were.

Williams: Were on day one and out of the country until yesterday.

Bedell: This is going to sound strange, maybe not strange and it's not hostile. I can see why people in the district, either the school board, or the parents, or the principals would be, "Okay, let's have this straightened out here." If it were my trustee area, I would probably be in the school, because there's a disconnect for me 72, 71, 104.

Gomez: 225.

Bedell: Yes, originally 225. I understand you're new -

Williams: 225

Bedell: - three months on the job, I understand that, but you have to admit that's a little bit, mm,

for me. It's not?

Gomez: I don't know how they're going to transcribe that part, Jack.

Ahluwalia: I also wanted to briefly address the question that was asked by Trustee Gomez with respect to the original budget. The original budget was based on well in excess of 300 students. The Proposition 39 request, pursuant to which they received a facility at which only 71 students are attending was based on an excess of 300 students.

Bedell: 25%? I'm done, Madam President.

Sparks: Now you can do the math?

Bedell: That I can do.

Barke: Any other questions? Dr. Sparks, any questions?

Sparks: No questions.

Barke: Dr. Williams?

Bedell: Madam President? I respectfully request we ask people back next month in October or November, preferably October to get this straight. This is huge.

Barke: Are you willing to come back next month?

Williams: Know that I am here at the service of the students that attend the school. For each day that I attend one of these meetings, I am leaving the school and the administrative designee's work who is highly qualified. However, I do prefer to serve the students and the families in the school. When there are documents that can be provided, I will be happy to do so such as the revised budget based on the current forecast, which, yes, does address the sustainability as it should for the year. At any time, I'm happy to provide appropriate documents for the review of the board. If asked if I am okay with continuing to come month after month, I don't think it's appropriate for our students in terms of sustainability and a brand new opening of a school. That's my reply to that.

Bedell: I understand that, but as one board member I find that almost offensive, because you are our charter. Thank you.

Williams: Not to offend just to give you my honest answer.

Bedell: I appreciate that.

Boyd: Trustee Barke, Madam President? Some of the questions that you all are asking, we are monitoring as a result of our monitoring and oversight. Staff is aware of what the original petition in terms of numbers and so forth in the budget. We have been dialoguing with Renee with regards to that. We will have information to provide to the board also related to that as they progress. The numbers do fluctuate as it's been indicated. I think the districts perspective, though, is that there are certain qualifying rationale with regards to meeting Prop 39 requirements. With the decreased number of students actually attending, there's a question of whether or not they would have really met the requirements for the district to provide the space.

That's a totally separate issue, but with regards to fiscal solvency and so forth, it is a concern that the number is so low. As they said, it's not uncommon that projections are off to this degree. It's unknown, because we have so many different charters coming forward, but we will be providing more information to the board.

Barke: Thank you.

K. Williams: I have a question.

Barke: Dr. Williams?

K. Williams: My overall observations, I went to the open house last week and Mrs. Williams, which we're not related and I have a need to disclose that, was remarkable. The community involvement, the dialogue I had with your teachers, I was quite impressed with their passion for educating those children and the diversity. I absolutely love the Mandarin song that was sang with the guitar. I love the traditional Mexican folk dance that you had and the mariachi band. That was also wonderful, and of course, the food was great. Just to observe the community and the cleanliness, the professionalism, and appearance of the school. I want to thank the Newport-Mesa Unified School District for working with this good charter to provide that.

We have to give that acknowledgment and appreciation. The good trustees and administration from Newport-Mesa Unified School District are rightly concerned. We are concerned. There are questions. The issues that my colleagues bring up here regarding the attendance are very real concerns, because that impacts budget and impacts the potential for the survival of the school. I would, if I can, Madam President ask if I can have Michelle Anderson come up to kind of give us a historical purview?

Barke: Sure.

K. Williams: If I can, Michelle, if you can help the board out and kind of how this all gets started with these new charters, and the challenges, the adversity. If you can give us a little piece and perspective, that would be appreciated?

Anderson: Charter schools as they have done here, as ISSAC has done, go through the approval process; they get approved. During their petitioning to be approved, they reach out to families to find if there's community interest. Often times, that community interest starts their potential enrollment for their school. They work off of that list and we always tell them, be conservative, because families all think everything sounds good, but when it comes time to really leave your current school, and you kid's friends, or your routine that you're used to, it becomes difficult. You might see a high community interest of 300 students. Then, as the school actually gets approved and then has a site, because without having a facility, it is very hard to get people to want to register for your school to pull their kids out.

Once that became determined, they wholeheartedly went after talking to all of their students that showed interest, the families that signed interest forms, gave them enrollment forms, which typically happens across the board with charter schools. Then, when you get a district that starts playing games by sending out letters saying this school's not authorized by the district. No, they're not, but they're authorized by the county. They happen to leave that out of the information they send out to families; that, then starts hurting a school's registration process. All new schools start out high, and they do come down. Guess what? It starts to swing and turns up and around later on. Once a school gets established, neighbors start seeing what's happening.

I will tell you what, I am not surprised that they have more kids from day one until now. The Tuesday night event had people in that park that they're adjacent to looking and absolutely

enthralled by what they were watching. They were asking questions. “What is this?” We explained it was a public charter school. It’s free. It’s open to anybody in Orange County. Those are the things that will drive more attendance, more enrollment to the school. It will take time. It will go. In regards to budgets I am pretty sure, and I have not talked to their back office, but I will tell you that charter leaders are always working with their back office and they’re adjusting their budgets based on who shows up the first day, and then the back office goes, “How many more do you think are coming? Who do you have that’s coming in for a tour?” They are constantly readjusting the budget to meet.

I can pretty much guarantee you that they are not operating today on a budget based on 225 kids, because the number of teachers they have has already been adjusted from what they were going to have. That tells you something. They don’t have classrooms with one teacher and no students. They’ve made their adjustments already. There are good financial avenues being taken to protect this school from going into debt in a way that could be counterproductive to the school’s sustainability.

K. Williams: This school was approved by this board with a projected enrollment of 200-plus kids? 300? Kelly? I hear a lot of voices.

Gaughran: The petition stated 390 for year one. We said we didn’t think they could get 390, so we asked for a revised budget during the petition review process of 150. Now that it’s in the 70’s we’ve asked for a revised budget again to be submitted to us by the end of the month.

K. Williams: Again, historically, in starting up the other charter schools, is this kind of the same thing that we’re seeing with this charter school as we saw with the other ones which are all doing very well?

Gaughran: Other charter schools typically are about 25% lower than their initial projections. This one is 75%, so that’s maybe more of a concern. Yes, most charter schools over-project in the petition process.

K. Williams: Is it fair to say it may be too early to make a judgment on the financial success?

Gaughran: We’re not going to make a judgment. We’re going to get the information and the facts, exactly from the charter school and see how they’re going to make adjustments and be able to serve the number of students that they have. Which is what we did with Unity when their numbers were much lower, and they’re still here.

K. Williams: With all of the feelings and emotions in this room, would it be reasonable to say, we should be patient -

Gaughran: Yes.

K. Williams: - in the process?

Gaughran: Yes, please.

K. Williams: Okay.

Barke: Thank you.

Gaughran: Thank you. I would like to now call Paul McGregor, executive director of EPIC charter school to the podium. He will be speaking on the state and federal investigations of EPIC charter school in Oklahoma.

McGregor: We’ve crossed over to afternoon. Good afternoon. My name is Paul McGregor. I’m the executive director of EPIC charter school in California. I’ve been asked to provide an update to the board regarding information about EPIC charter schools in Oklahoma that has been

reported in the media. I'll be happy to address any questions regarding EPIC charter school of California after I read this prepared statement. EPIC charter schools of Oklahoma has graciously sent its attorney, Mr. Bill Hickman to be at this meeting to answer any questions specific to the status and scope of the inquiry that is going on in Oklahoma. As the board is aware, EPIC California and EPIC Oklahoma are two different organizations.

They have two different, non-profit school boards that govern and hold the charters in their respective states. It is important to remember that what is occurring in Oklahoma with EPIC is not new. The probe in Oklahoma was disclosed to the board during the application and charter authorization process, and representatives appeared and answered questions for the board at that time. The inquiry in Oklahoma has reportedly been occurring for more than six years which is longer than this board has authorized our school here in Orange County. Despite the constant public attacks by groups that oppose public school choice and charter schools, there have been absolutely no findings of wrongdoing, no charges filed against the school or any individual associated with the school.

In fact, during the same time frame, EPIC Oklahoma has been fully accredited each year, and as Mr. Hickman can confirm, in the last 36 months, the Oklahoma school has undergone 43 audits, including financial, accreditation, special education, federal programs, and child nutrition just to name a few. All audits have been 100% clean with no findings. The two government agencies with oversight of EPIC Oklahoma, the state department of education, and the Oklahoma Statewide Virtual Charter School's board in addition to EPIC's higher education partner- Rose State College have done nothing but confirm that EPIC Oklahoma does follow the laws and will continue to be accredited, funded and operational.

EPIC California finds this extremely reassuring to the operations in Oklahoma being as compliant with the laws as we are here in California. In fact, the FCMAT audit requested by this board's staff included information on EPIC Oklahoma, the state probe, EPIC co-founders Ben Harris and David Chaney, EPIC California, it's CMO and everyone involved with the school fully cooperated with the FCMAT process. The results of the FCMAT audit were 100% clean with no findings. This is important to underscore, because, according to our FCMAT auditors, FCMAT audits rarely have no findings.

In conclusion, while I have no direct knowledge of the negative news and allegations in Oklahoma, other than what I have shared with you in this statement, I am confident that EPIC both here in California and in Oklahoma, we follow the law and that will once again be proven. I am also grateful to the board of education for EPIC charter schools of Oklahoma for providing its attorney to be with us today should you have any questions. At this point, I'll introduce you to Mr. Bill Hickman, and I know he's happy to answer any questions you may have regarding this information. Thank you, this is Mr. Bill Hickman.

Hickman: Hello, my name is Bill Hickman. I'm an attorney in Norman, Oklahoma. Just to give you a quick little background about myself since it's my first time appearing in front of you. I attended the United States Air Force Academy for undergraduate studies, served in the Air Force as a captain, and got out. I have an MBA from Auburn University, and I graduated from the University of Oklahoma. I've been the board of education attorney for the EPIC charter school in

Oklahoma since before its inception, before it was started, and have been with them all the way through the time that the school has been operating in the state of Oklahoma. I'm happy to be here today to answer any questions.

I did just want to say to you a bit of a brief opening statement that the board of education for EPIC charter schools that provides the governance and oversight is doing its job. We are doing our job. We have our hand on the wheel. We have been engaged with this school from the very beginning. What I mean by that is, going back to 2013 when some of these allegations came to light, we engaged our own independent investigator and auditor to review records and we found nothing either. Since that point in time, we have had routine board meetings and review financial records, review the audits, all of which have come back clean. We've had clean accreditation reports.

We review student engagement records to ensure there aren't ghost students as some of you may have read in the newspapers. We verify that we have actual teachers. We don't have ghost teachers, and we ensure that the school is compliant with all the applicable laws. We have a very active board of five members including the board chair who is also a lawyer himself. I hope that you understand that, as attorneys we see that we have an ethical and professional obligation as well, not only in doing our duties but especially serving. Mr. Doug Scott, he's the board chair on a non-profit board like he does as the chair of our board of education for EPIC.

I'm here to answer any questions that you have, and I also want to make an initial statement to try to provide you with some assurance that we, in Oklahoma, as the board's attorney, and the members of that board are doing our job. We are providing the oversight of the governance of the school and its operations. I do not represent the management company. I represent the board of education, you guys if you will. If you have any questions I can answer for you, I'm happy to do that.

Barke: I'll refer to our lady from Oklahoma.

Sparks: I have a really important question.

Hickman: Yes, ma'am?

Sparks: Are you attending the Oklahoma Sooner versus UCLA football game this Saturday?

Hickman: I jokingly said something to Paul. I said, if I had known I was actually coming here, because I only found out honestly on Friday, I might have figured out a way to extend my trip to stay through the weekend for the game. Unfortunately, I am not. I hear UCLA has a really good team this year.

Sparks: No. As a fellow Sooner, that was a very important question to me. That's all I have.

Barke: Dr. Williams, any questions?

Williams: Yes. Real quick, Paul, and then I'll get back to you Mr. Hickman. We have, as part of our board packet the Annual Oversight Report, and there's a few items here that were recommended. Overall, I'm pretty impressed. It's pretty clean. I assume you're going to be able to meet all those, and you talked to the staff about meeting their objectives.

McGregor: Absolutely. I work very closely with Aracely and the charter staff, and we work hand-in-hand as far as recommendations given. I work to implement those in the school, and we've been told we're a very cooperative charter school as far as being on time with everything, with reports and any recommendations or requests provided immediately or implemented as soon

as possible.

Williams: Okay. In regards to the FCMAT audit, could you help refresh my memory? What was the cost to your school for this audit?

McGregor: Legal costs associated in the first year in relation to the FCMAT audit and being a named party in the lawsuit between the Anaheim Union Elementary School District against the board of education was about \$125,000.

Williams: That was a direct cost to your budget and school?

McGregor: Yes. That's the other thing that gets underestimated, I think, in a charter school's budget is the legal costs. Maybe enrollment is overestimated in the beginning, but legal costs can be underestimated.

Williams: Again, just to put into the record, the FCMAT resulted in no significant findings or concerns or any dealings of malfeasance or criminal wrongdoing.

McGregor: Correct.

Williams: That's very important, because your school has done remarkable. Your first year was a little bit challenged. Maybe your scores could be a little bit higher.

McGregor: It's continually challenging, but we continually learn from the opportunities and the variables and try and improve ever year.

Williams: That would be the challenge to get those kids higher.

McGregor: Yes. I'll be happy to give more information in another report, but we did improve in our ELA scores by 7%, and our math by 13% every year. We're moving in the right direction, which I'm really thrilled about. We have a lot of new processes and supports for our teachers, students and families. This year, we expect even greater things.

Williams: Getting back to Mr. Hickman, thank you for coming. Thank you for your service in the Air Force Academy. What class did you graduate from?

Hickman: Pardon?

Williams: What class did you graduate from?

Hickman: 1991.

Williams: 1991. My son finished West Point about five years ago, so, sorry, I'm a West Point man.

Hickman: Yes, sir. We all work together.

Williams: Yes, they're all wonderful. Every one of those young men and women in the naval West Point and Air Force Academy are incredible people.

Hickman: Yes, sir.

Williams: Getting back to the current situation with the Oklahoma school for our board, we're not aware of any of the details. Our charter school is a completely different functioning board, legal entity as well as a functioning entity as a school unit. Is that correct?

Hickman: Yes, sir, that is correct.

Williams: For the record, to kind of help us put this to rest, the individual, Mr. Johnson who created this affidavit for a search warrant for a teacher's computer, is this the same person that's been working on this case?

Hickman: Yes, sir, this is the same OSBI agent in Oklahoma who's been working on it since 2013. What's concerning to us is that in 2013 and for many years, he did work, and he turned that work over to the Oklahoma Attorney General's office. We were told by the Oklahoma Attorney General's Office that there was not evidence to pursue any kind of charges. He then has begun to restart those efforts here in the last six months I'd say, at the beginning of this year it

appears and has changed his approach. As opposed to calling us and asking us for information and working cooperatively has been to file public search warrants, in which there's typically a news story written and published prior to the search warrant being available in the public records.

I'm an attorney, and when the first search warrant was served that you have in your packet on Jennifer Patton, who was a teacher and they showed up at her door, banging on her door. I was at the courthouse that afternoon trying to get a copy of the search warrant, and it was not filed of a public record, because it ultimately has to be, but the news story was already on the line. It was already posted on the internet.

It was troubling from my perspective as an attorney that represents the board, that we have investigators and others that appear to be collaborating in a politically motivated way to put information out in a search warrant. Harassing a public teacher and scaring her and her children, and feeding it to the news media before we can actually even get our hands on it. When we had all along said that, we would work cooperatively with the investigation and make whatever records or individuals that were available to them. When we do it that way, they don't get the media coverage that they have with the two search warrants that they filed and resulted in the news stories that are in your packet.

Williams: That search warrant was served when?

Hickman: If you would like, there are examples in both of these search warrants that are misstatements of fact and misstatements of law. If you look at page five of the search warrant for Jennifer Patton, a paragraph there refers to public school students are required to receive six hours of instruction. That body of law in Title 70 of the Oklahoma statutes does not apply to charter schools in Oklahoma. It's a requirement for traditional brick-and-mortar public schools, but as EPIC in Oklahoma is a virtual school, and just in general, charter schools have waivers from a vast majority of the requirements of our Title 70 code for schools one of those is to have a six-hour school day.

That statement, while it is accurate from a public school perspective, it's not accurate from a public charter school perspective, and Mr. Johnson is not an attorney. That's one of the questions that I have raised as to why that kind of a statement is in there, and that leads to some of his false conclusions in his affidavit with all due respect.

Williams: I'll reserve time later, and I'll move on to my board.

Barke: Thank you.

Gomez: I just want a clarification. News reports are news reports. Some of the news reports do reference that EPIC operates schools in California. Just to clarify, are you under the same umbrella of the same schools that are in Oklahoma that are being embroiled in this controversy here?

Hickman: No, ma'am, they're separate organizations, separate entities.

Gomez: They're separate, legal entities?

Hickman: Yes, ma'am, and yes, they're separate in every way.

Gomez: Okay. I'm going to go to the same report that Dr. Williams referenced from our staff, because one of the allegations among the many allegations in these documents and these news reports is about the learning fund, I believe? I think that's also a point of contention in our report here. I think that's what gets the public's hackles up, so to speak is that it appears as though it's an incentive to enroll a student. That's where I get a little heartburn, because that does not appear to be a good strategy, so to speak. It almost looks like you're using that as a recruitment tool as opposed to truly learning. Are we going to get an update on this report here?

Boyd: Yes.

Gomez: Okay, because that would help me, and I don't want to go through all of the different concerns in here. That learning fund does concern me a little bit as well as some of the special ed. issues that are raised in here. You also mention that you had improved some of your math scores and I think, your English scores. What were they before that, you said you were excited for one?

McGregor: Every year?

Gomez: Yes.

McGregor: I don't have the information with me, but the dashboard just came out and we have our information to compare.

Gomez: You said 13%, so I was wondering what the difference was before then and now.

McGregor: They were much lower than we wanted them to be in our second year, but we implemented lots of different processes.

Gomez: Ball park, where were they?

Bedell: Below the district weren't they, Paul?

McGregor: Yes, for the second year, yes. In our second year, they were below whatever you want to compare them to. They were lower.

Gomez: Maybe we can get an update on that, too?

McGregor: Absolutely, yes. As part of our authorizer review, we submit our test scores to the county.

Gomez: It sounds impressive 13% but if you don't know where you were before –

McGregor: It was very low. The student population was only about 200 kids that we tested as well. We tested over 400 kids last year, so we doubled our testing population. We increased our testing participation rate by 1%, which for a non-classroom based school is a major achievement. Then, we also increased our test scores with double the population. That just shows the things that we put in place last year had a positive impact, and we're only increasing those even more so this year.

Gomez: As you state, you are a separate entity from the Oklahoma situation, some of the same strategies are being used and that could kind of tag you for being similar to that situation. That's where my concern is.

McGregor: What's very unique about Oklahoma is that they're more similar in the fact of having a learning fund as the majority of California non-classroom based charter schools are. With a non-classroom based independent study charter school, most of them have a learning fund that allows the teacher and a parent to direct the funding to help personalize learning for that student. It's a unique concept in Oklahoma, whereas out here, it's a very competitive

landscape as far as independent study charter schools go. It's a very common practice in charters as well, which I believe is in our charter petition also.

Gomez: Okay, thank you.

McGregor: Thank you.

Barke: Dr. Bedell?

Bedell: Trustee Williams and Trustee Gomez took care of my concerns.

Williams: Just another question. Jumping from what good Trustee Gomez was saying about the learning fund, could you help define that a little bit more for us? What is it? Is it legal? That's very, very important.

Hickman: It is. I wanted to address the learning fund issue. In your packet, you have the second affidavit which is the one that was served on Curtis Talbot, and on page 305, there's a series of paragraphs there that speak about this learning fund and when it was kind of constructed back in 2012-2013. You'll see two names that I'll point out to you in that series of discussions. One's a lady named Laura Holmes. Laura's a private attorney that does a lot of work with traditional public school districts in Oklahoma. Back at this time, EPIC was sponsored by a traditional public school district. The other name you'll see here is Brad Clark. Brad Clark was an outside attorney at the time and actually worked at my law firm. He was the client assigned to EPIC at the time.

Laura and Brad worked together and helped to craft the structure of the learning fund and how it was designed. Mr. Johnson is inaccurate in his conclusion here, that Laura directed us to make changes, and we did not make those changes. I actually have the email, I forgot to bring it, but I can send it to you guys, where Laura sent us proposed revisions. At this point, we're negotiating the charter contract with our sponsor, just to put it in context, and we accepted her proposed changes as to how the learning fund should be structured, and she was the attorney for the school district.

That's how it is currently being operated, that learning fund. Essentially, you have a learning fund in Oklahoma that's being operated in a way that the outside school district attorney proposed, and the person at the time named Brad Clark who worked in my law firm, who is now the general counsel for the Oklahoma Department of Education. You have the general counsel at the department of education and a well-respected, long-standing outside attorney for 300 school districts in Oklahoma who crafted the design of our learning fund currently in Oklahoma. I have written a legal memo that I am happy to submit to your file that explains, in part, how the learning fund that EPIC operates in Oklahoma is legal, and it is consistent with the law, and it has been since its creation in 2012-2013.

Essentially the way that it works, it's similar I believe, to the way that it works here in California. It's a pot of money, a source of money that has changed a little bit over the years that's available to the parent to direct the spending of it on curriculum, on technology, on things of that sort for the delivery of their child's education and the curriculum that's made available to them. The money does not go directly to the parent.

That would not be allowed in Oklahoma and we do not do that. To the extent that any money is paid to a vendor for educational services that they provide, or a dance class or something that might be in lieu of traditional P.E. that you might have at the school. Those vendors all have to be approved, and then, those funds are paid directly from the learning fund to those vendors. The money never goes to the parents, because we don't allow that in Oklahoma. I don't know if that answers your question, sir?

Williams: Yes. Paul, I just want to make sure. Is that what you see, and how you are utilizing this learning fund here?

McGregor: Yes. We have approved vendors, same process. The teacher works with the parent as far as personalize the learning plan for the student and what tutors, extracurricular activities would be suitable for that student's education. They have the learning fund to use, but it's directly tied to their participation in school and their attendance as well. If they're not attending school or they're habitually truant, then their learning fund is reduced to the percentage of their attendance.

Williams: The learning fund does not go directly to the parent? No one pockets anything, and it goes to the curriculum vendor. He gets paid for the specific curriculum that the parent selects for their child and then there may be a little money there for hardware? Computer?

McGregor: As part of our approval process with the board it was, I think, it was before me, but I believe it was traditionally most non-classroom based independent study schools do deduct the cost of technology from their learning fund. I think it was requested by the board as a condition of approval for our charter that any technology for Chromebooks, iPads, or WiFi devices, so families could have internet access, is separate outside of the learning fund. That's in addition to.

Hickman: That last part is the difference between Oklahoma and California. We are allowed to use our learning fund to pay for technology devices and Wi-Fi.

McGregor: Mrs. Gomez, you mentioned it brings a lot of attention to how it's being worked, managed and used. In the media as well, it is something that I do work very closely with and the charter staff on as far as ensuring that we are following proper protocols, vetting of our vendors, approval processes and invoicing, and it's something that is audited very closely every year as well. If there is anything or indications that things need to be changed, we do it right away.

Gomez: Thank you.

Hickman: I do think Paul is right though, because in Oklahoma we are, until this year, EPIC was the only school that had a learning fund. It is confusing to a community, to a state, I believe to a traditional public school educator. I represent traditional public schools, also. I represent virtual charter schools. I represent brick-and-mortar charter schools. I represent superintendents who get crossways with their board of education from time to time. I represent principals. I represent special needs students. I've done due process cases against school districts. I represent kids that have been bullied. I take a lot of pride in the fact that a lot of people in the education field have hired me to be their attorney.

Knowing all of that and being exposed to lots of those different folks in the education community in Oklahoma, a learning fund concept is just a confusing thing that is hard for people to understand how it operates and how a school can have a learning fund. From talking with Paul, it's a little bit more understood practice out here, but sometimes some of the things that you see in some of the media reports about the learning fund are just not accurate. They're just misunderstood. I hate to make it sound that way, because I'm not trying to bag on the media, but that's really the truth of the matter in a lot of these kinds of issues.

Boyd: Also as a point of reference, I know that Dr. Williams mentioned the FCMAT study. I think it's important to note that FCMAT audit occurred during the first year when EPIC was starting out. I think both EPIC and our staff would agree that there was a benefit of the study from the standpoint that there were a number of things in their initial setup, their student system as well as some financials that, had they gone the full year, would have been challenging for the school, because there would have been findings.

Those things were found by the auditor, and he worked with the staff at EPIC and provided them opportunities to not only correct but also was a resource in terms of getting appropriate training and to ensure they didn't have some challenges as they moved forward. I think it's important that we just mention the fact that it really benefitted both EPIC and our staff in terms of some of the concerns that we were looking at initially. Would you agree?

McGregor: I think when the FCMAT audit was requested obviously, being a brand new school, learning everything that you have to learn with a brand new school with a very skeleton crew, because we experienced not hitting our initial enrollment projections as well and having a management organization that was supporting us that was excellent in the ways that they operated schools, but also, having to learn the way that California schools operate was very challenging in our first few months. When we learned that we were going to be the first, first-year school ever to go through a FCMAT audit, I was terrified. I had no idea what that meant.

We're just trying to build a school, and I knew there was no fraudulent activity or intent, or anything like that, but I didn't know what I didn't know, and we didn't know what we didn't know. Immediately, when that audit was called we let our board know. Our board wanted to 100% ensure that the attendance that we turned in for funding was completely accurate. You do get the chance to submit your P-1 attendance, and then, you can make corrections for your P-2 attendance, and then you can make corrections at the end of the year. By the end of the year, it true's up and you either got what you got, or you give back depending on how your attendance went throughout the year.

For our P-2 perhaps, before we went through that FCMAT audit, our board wanted to ensure 100% that every single piece of attendance that was claimed was accurate which for a first year school, usually for audits, they audit a sample of students. We audited every single student in our school. We hired an outside auditing firm to do so, and, through that process, the good news is we learned we were pretty accurate. The other news was, we also learned, we had a lot of other compliance work that we needed to do to make sure that not only were we FCMAT audit proof, but that we would be compliant in all of the processes going forth.

Yes, in fact, I think the blessing of going through a FCMAT audit, if you can even say that, was true and that it did really help us identify areas that we could improve upon. I don't know if it is fact that, if we had gone without a FCMAT audit if we would have ended the year in our regular audit with no findings, but we did go through the FCMAT audit with no findings and learned a lot of lessons from our first year. We continually learn lessons. We're only in year four, and we're constantly figuring out ways to get better, do things more efficiently, and always ensure we're compliant with law. Thank you. Any other questions?

Boyd: Kelly?

Hickman: I just want to mention to you about the audit that my school board had done on this learning fund and the relationship with the management company. I do have a copy of that letter I'll submit for your records as well, from an independent company named CBEW Professional Group. It's how they had reviewed the learning fund payments involving the management company and their concluding statements. We're fully aware of the operations arrangement, and our support of the arrangement, as to the structure, the types of things that are allowed for the learning fund to be paid for and how it operates. This is another source of information for you guys to have in your file. As a former independent auditor, I thought that would be helpful to you as well.

Barke: Thank you.

Boyd: He just gave me documents. We'll make sure that you have copies before you leave, and you can take them home. One on the learning fund, as well as what he just spoke to.

Gaughran: Finally, as the board is aware, Erin Craig is not able to attend this meeting. However, a board member did request to have a representative from Unity Middle College High School give an update and to answer any questions that you may have. Roy Kim, the contracted back office provider, and Rashi Seth, the principal are here to answer your questions that you may have regarding Unity.

Kim: Good afternoon, honorable board members, superintendent, OC staff. My name is Roy Kim and I've stood in front of you about three or four times now. I don't have my usual partner in crime today as Teresa mentioned. Her physician recommended that she not be present or has a reduced capacity temporarily. I'm here to give you a quick update on a couple of items that have been of interest by OCDE staff. One of them being a recent vendor that has contacted OCDE about a missed payment. There was as staff oversight in how the vendor payment was recorded in our system. We failed to recognize that as a payment that was due. However, we did get notification that the payment due was sent to the OCDE.

We rectified the situation immediately, sent the payment out within the next 24 hours, overnighted the payment and that has been taken care of recently. Perhaps a more important matter, as I mentioned, due to Erin's reduced capacity in continuing to run Unity for about three months is what we're expecting due to her medical condition. She has asked our office to help her in the operations and administration of the school. I would like to just give you a brief background about our company. Even though we don't have as much experience as some of the

other back office companies, individually, we do come with a lot of charter school experience. We have former, retired district superintendents in our company.

We have three charter school and district auditors. My partner and I don't know if she's here, Arturo Garcia, we started a small network of charter schools in the Los Angeles area, and we ended up with three charter schools which we operated very highly successful charter schools both in the academics and finance. When we started the company, obviously before our back office services, because we have experience in operating schools. We've also been asked to play in a similar role, which Unity has asked. In the last two to three years, we've served as interim administrator for a school in this area at Vista College, and maybe, perhaps another school that you're more familiar with- Palm Lane Elementary Charter School.

We served as interim CO's from January 2019, to just about two weeks ago. That's when our contract ended for the interim administrative portion. Throughout the six, seven or eight months that we were at Palm Lane, our number one priority was to stabilize the school. Also, as a new charter school, they had a lot of financial issues, so we made sure that we were able to pay back approximately \$1.5 million in loans that the school had. I'm happy to report that the school made all of those loan payments back in the last couple of months. The school is debt free now, and the school ended with \$750,000 net income, which is very unusual for a brand new charter school.

I believe we have the experience, knowledge and capacity to help Unity with the operations and administration of Unity Middle College High School. I also don't foresee it as being as invasive as our previous assignments with some of our charter schools, because Erin is going to continue to work in a lesser capacity, but more importantly, we also have Rashi who is the administrator and principal at Unity. I'm here to support Rashi in administrating the school but also making sure that the school meets all the deadlines, requirements, and makes improvements in their fiscal operations. Without further ado, let me just turn it over to Rashi.

Seth: Thank you for having me today honorable board members. My name is Rashi Seth. I am the principal of Unity Middle College. You might be wondering why I'm a little off-kilter with my attire today. It is Spirit Week at Unity, so it's 80's day. I felt it was appropriate to dress for my students and then make my way over here. I have been with Unity for the last year-and-a-half. I started last August 2017, 2018 to 2019, as assistant principal and a social studies teacher, then moved into the principal role starting with the 2019-2020 school year. Effectively, I run things day-to-day on campus and that's pretty much my role. If anybody has any questions for me, I'd be happy to answer.

Gomez: I'm the one that asked for your presence today. Again, I was greatly concerned about bills not getting paid and having a legal matter being initiated, because bills have not been paid. My understanding is that was a food service. Is that correct?

Kim: Yes.

Gomez: Okay. My understanding is that the money you get from the state that should be a pass through. There should never be any hold up on that. The fact that it was a food service vendor that didn't get paid concerned me quite a bit. You're touting your experience here, which is wonderful, but that's an oversight that should not have happened. I'm wondering how you're

auditing your books and how you're making sure that your vendors are getting paid. If you've got vendors on the books, I would assume that you'd be getting regular bills from them, and the fact that this was an oversight concerns me quite a bit.

Secondly, if Erin is going to be out for a period of time and you are stepping in, it seems to me there might be a bit of a conflict of interest. Unless there's some sort of contract that creates some walls or something that talks about what your role is and what the principal's role is, so that there isn't a conflict. I see some difficulty there. If there's an increase in your services, who determines that? If you determine that, you're basically paying yourself and that creates a conflict. If the principal sees that something needs to get done and she's operating independent of you, then that's another thing. That's where my difficulty is, understanding where that wall of separation is. Maybe you could address that for me.

Kim: Sure. On the vendor payment, we did pay them. The last payment that we paid them was in March, but it's just the Unity staff forgot to upload the invoice to our software, to our system. We didn't recognize it as an AP in our system, so that's why. When we received the notice, we paid them right away. In regards to your second question, the addendum is not in place right now. We did send a copy to the OCDE staff of our contract addendum, which outlines what my responsibilities will be, and how much the fees will increase based on that.

That is up for Unity's board discussion tomorrow. It outlines the fees, the responsibilities, and what we project- how long that period's going to last. Right now, we're projecting it to be about three months. That's not something that I will obviously, sign off on, because it is something the board has to decide, whether they want those services or not. There is a very clear distinction of how and what I will be approving. I will not be approving anything that's related to our contract and our service fees.

Gomez: That's going to go through your board, then.

Kim: Unity's board, tomorrow.

Gomez: I don't know when Ms. Craig knew she was going to be out, but it would have been helpful for us to have more of a heads up as to what was going on with that. I don't want any medical information to be disclosed, but the fact that she's going to be out. I understood it was going to be for a short period, and then it turned into three months. That concerns me a little bit that there's, again, a lack of transparency. We're responsible. This board is responsible for that school. If we are not demonstrating proper oversight, and that's why I asked you here. I know that the concern was that a bill didn't get paid. It got paid, and nobody wanted to show up. Again, we're responsible. If we don't demonstrate proper oversight, we're not doing our job. Can we get information once that board approves that contract? I think the board should see that.

Boyd: Yes. We just didn't share it yet, because we didn't know what adjustments might be made. Roy along with Erin had submitted the proposal that's going before the governing board, until it's finalized we wouldn't bring that forward.

Gomez: Okay. Hopefully we'll get that soon.

Boyd: Yes.

Gomez: All right, that's all I have.

Bedell: When I open my agenda and I see something's coming from Unity, I have to think of that great Sonny and Cher song, "And the Beat Goes On." I have been one of the longest supporters of that school along with Dr. Williams, and if you remember from the last meeting, I was upset that Erin rejected the idea of an independent audit or a department audit. I forget which one. She rejected an audit. I don't like that, because I like audits and that, frankly, had a bit of an odor to me. I was candid about that, maybe with a different noun.

My concern is the directors say, "No audit is proposed by the staff," and the next you know, we get hit with a \$20,000 bill that was a screw up that maybe would have been seen by an audit. See what I'm saying? It happened on your watch, and I'm really concerned about that because it leaves me to question what we get. I'm being very candid with you. That's inexcusable. The fact that within the context, no, you're not auditing me that way, really doesn't sit well with me. Going back to Trustee Gomez's notion that we are the oversight of that. That puts us in a terrible position with the public. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Barke: Anybody else?

Williams: Yes, I do.

Barke: Dr. Williams?

Williams: Thank you, Beckie and Jack for raising the issues. Help me clarify, Nina. Did Erin say she would not allow an audit of her books?

Boyd: One of the staff recommendations was that we ask for an outside auditor to take a look, and she said she took exception to that -

Bedell: Right.

Boyd: - because she felt that everything had been provided, so, there wasn't a need for it. That was the conversation she had with staff and she mentioned it at the board meeting.

Williams: I agree with Jack. An audit would be reasonable and prudent. Who would pay for that audit?

Gomez: They would.

Boyd: They would.

Williams: Is that in our MOU that an audit be done by an outside entity?

Boyd: No. We were in the process of discussing things that they might need to do to ensure this board that they were going to be fiscally solvent that there was nothing else outstanding, because things kept coming up.

Williams: Right.

Boyd: We weren't seeing things and then, all of the sudden, there was something. That was one of the recommendations. Could we come to a mutual agreement that maybe there's an audit done, recognizing that they took over last year, mid-year. They had another back office provider before. There's been a number of things that have occurred at Unity, some outside of Erin's control. Some things that she has recommended moved forward and so forth. Then, the question still remained, is everything known at this point in time? That was the question we had last month and the month before. Whether or not this board wants to entertain us coming to some type of agreement on having an audit or an auditor that we all mutually agree upon to go through everything is certainly up to this board to decide.

Kim: If I can just clarify one point, I believe the recommendation that the staff brought up was that as a non-profit organization all charter schools are required to go through an annual audit, so Unity does have an auditor that will audit the books at the end of the school year. I believe the issue was that OCDE would like to select the auditor as opposed to the charter school selecting the auditor. That's where Unity and Erin said that the auditor we selected, they do audits for 130 charter schools in California, so we believe that we had the appropriate auditor.

Boyd: It was never our intent to select an auditor without an agreement from the school. We wanted to provide auditors we felt that this board would be comfortable with and come up with someone that we mutually agreed upon. It was not our intent to just say this would be the auditor who would audit. Just a point of correction.

Williams: Are we talking about an extra audit, above and beyond the annual audit that's required?

Boyd: That is what was recommended from the standpoint that they do audits annually. They are certainly being audited. They are certainly doing all the things that they need to do. The concern was that, over the past nine months, this board's been piecemealed information related to where they are financially. One of the ways we thought it might help was to have a mutually agreed upon auditor go through things that we determined so we could get a better look and a grasp of where they are. If there's anything else, if there's not, whether that transition that's occurred between the back offices had anything else that slipped through the cracks or not. That was what staff was recommending.

Williams: What would be the cost of this audit?

Boyd: I don't know, because it would depend upon the parameters of the audit. We would seek proposals once we identified what the audit would consist of, and then we would be able to answer that question.

Williams: Who would seek proposals?

Boyd: Staff would do that once we dialogued with Erin or the representative from Unity. First, we have to get to a mutual agreement with regards to the audit. Then, potential auditors that we might solicit proposals from and then go from there.

Sparks: Why don't we just accelerate the auditor that the 130 charter schools are already using at the end of the year, just accelerate them ahead because of these questions?

Barke: When is the audit due to take place, this annual audit?

Kim: Typically, auditors audit the books two times a year. One they do a preliminary audit around May. That's when they do the attendance audit. Then, they do the fiscal portion around September. They'll release the audit statement around December-ish.

Williams: We should be getting an audit report?

Kim: They will be doing that.

Williams: That's 30 days, 45 days.

Boyd: That's a standard audit. Maybe Renee can explain the difference between the two audits that we're talking about. What we're describing is not the same audit that they are doing annually.

Hendrick: Right. The audit would be similar to what we have on an annual basis. You have a state format of an audit guide of specific items that you check, state income, things like that.

They only do samplings of the revenue and expenditures, whereas an audit that the staff was requesting is much more in-depth and looks at the actual revenue payments and where the process is behind those expenditures. A normal audit wouldn't go into that detail. It's more surface level. What the staff was requesting was more in-depth.

Williams: Have we ever asked this before of any charter school?

Hendrick: I'm not sure, but I can tell you we've done it specifically for our office on certain programs, so it is not uncommon.

Williams: Do you know what the cost was for that audit, in general?

Hendrick: It really depends on the size. We had a program that we had asked to have a specific audit, and it was about \$2,000 spent from about a \$1 million budget. There wasn't that much detail, so I think it would depend on the auditor and the depth of what you wanted audited.

Williams: The one thing I would be concerned about would be forcing something upon Unity where there funds, we know the trouble and the challenges they've had this year until just recently, and I'm also very surprised, as Beckie wanted this on our agenda today to talk about these invoices that came up. I would be very concerned about, again, negatively impacting their budget, which is already tight as it is with something we don't universally ask for. The reason would be because of these last invoices?

Hendrick: It's not just the last invoices. It's actually a legal claim filed against you as a board, which is different than a late invoice.

Williams: What legal claim is that?

Hendrick: That was they had not paid their food service vendor for six months, and they actually filed a legal claim against the board. That's what Beckie is referring to. They just got that last week. That's a little different than a late invoice. I think that's what the concern is. It's beyond just having late invoices. We've had numerous emails from vendors that haven't been paid, but this was an actual legal notice. They were going to file a legal claim against the Board of Supervisors inaccurately because that had not been paid. It was for six months, I believe, of the food they provided.

Williams: Do we know why it wasn't paid on a timely basis?

Gomez: He was saying it was an oversight.

Boyd: It was an oversight.

Seth: We had changed processes. It was a clerical error from one of our front office managers. She was written up and is no longer working for us. She did not do her job in forwarding it to our back office provider.

Barke: I'd like to take a minute and call up Michelle Anderson to give a little insight to us.

Anderson: You are right to ask for an audit, and there are audits that are done on a yearly basis. What I will tell you is I do not want it to come across that Erin was against an audit. She was not against an audit. She was in favor of the auditor that she's currently using. What you all need to understand is very often charter schools sign up with an auditor and they get a package deal.

We'll do you for three years and you get this. It also gives that auditor back information to work from so it doesn't take as long next time. They don't have to spend a lot of time with the charter leader, asking questions that they already know. Because of everything she's been through, she wanted to stick with what she's already been working with. That makes sense.

If you want to have an additional one, that's going to take somebody's time. This is a school that is strapped. It's also going to take money, but you have every right to ask for that. That's doing your due diligence, and she did not say that she is against that. She is using an auditor that is out there working with charter schools throughout the state. It's not like you're getting some unknown entity. I do think that is a good thing to do is to ask for an audit, but I think somebody needs to look at how much time and energy is it going to be worth. If you want some more details, Renee, I would say ask her auditor. Give them a list of things you want, potentially, and work with it that way. Or, if you feel you still need another outside source, there's ways to work around that.

Barke: That's what I was wondering. Is it, perhaps, we can interact with her auditor with our specific concerns, and try to work through that, because that makes sense if they're already familiar with the school.

Boyd: I think that Michelle probably has more information, because she's had a conversation it appears with Erin on this. What my staff indicated in our conversation is a little bit different. I've reported what we have talked about and I'm doing second hand, but Kelly's here if you wanted to dialogue with her directly. What came up is she did not understand why we would ask for that. Not understanding that, she was not agreeable to that. As we're explaining her interpretation that we would be picking that, that was not our intent, but we didn't talk about it. I think in terms of having similar dialogue about that is certainly something that we can do, and we can come back to the board with a recommendation after we've talked more with Unity if this is something that the board is asking us to pursue.

Barke: I would love for you to pursue a conversation with their auditor and report back on that if you're comfortable with that. Does that sound reasonable?

Gomez: Yes. I would like to make a motion that we have the staff go back and take a look at some of our concerns about the timely bill pays and things like that. This isn't the first legal claim that we've had that's come up with Unity. Again, we need to do our due diligence here. I would move that we ask the staff to go back and take a look at the audit, and perhaps have a conversation with her to make sure, because that was the impression that I got too, that she did not want the audit.

Mijares: I want to speak in reference to this concept of an auditor, because I'm sensing there's a feeling that we may be overbearing upon this school. Understand that we meet with the CBO's of 27 districts, and we go through audits. We find exceptions in an audit and we pursue it more. We sometimes have get things corroborated by an external auditor who is not the normal auditor, because they do, as Renee said, spot checks. They come in, they have a template, they do spot checks. When you sense there may be a problem, then you go deeper. I'll give you an example. We heard from EPIC earlier, and you heard Paul, the principal say there were no findings.

Do you know in that FCMAT review, they spotted that they were recording their attendance inappropriately, and we had FCMAT go in to not necessarily catch EPIC but to help them. By them finding that, it averted them from finding themselves in June having to pay back money to the state. Understand that, and I hope our staff comes across this way and really try to do this, and that's to be professional, to be circumspect in what we do, to be there to support the school. That's the premise of what we do, and we're trying to help them be stronger. I got a call recently from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. That's WASC and they do the accreditation, because there was an issue with Unity, but we're going to handle that.

We're handling it now. I would've never brought that up here, because it's between me and the school, our unit and the school, but there are things that are falling through the cracks and we want to help them. Please don't think that by calling for this special audit we're on a witch-hunt. That's not what we want to do. We want to help them get stronger and we do it all the time. Dean West has been within a big audit that had to do with fraud. It's all public now, but there's now a person being charged by the Orange County DA for fraud. We want to make sure that we don't get into the paper for those types of reasons.

Bedell: Madam President? I wonder if I could follow up on where you think this is going? I heard you say you would like to have conversations with that auditor.

Barke: That's where I would like to start.

Bedell: That's the key word for me: start.

Barke: To me, when I get to pick my own auditor, that's very different than an independent auditor coming in on me. One of the other things, and we do it here, we do not keep going with the same audit firm. We rotate, because new eyes, stuff gets missed. I'm comfortable with what you're saying that this is a start, and it may go nowhere.

Barke: Right.

Bedell: If it goes somewhere, we're going to somewhere. Am I hearing you right?

Barke: Yes.

Bedell: Then, I'm fine.

Williams: To be clear, we're not doing a FCMAT audit. We're not talking about that level of audit?

Barke: No.

Williams: I do agree with Jack's sentiments that an independent auditor should be doing this if we do it, who has no ties or conflict of interest. I think that's very important. I assume you folks wouldn't be totally adverse to this, either?

Kim: No. Just to clarify what Michelle said. Unity did choose a new auditor this year. It's BTD. They do about 120 charter school audits in California. It is a new company that she's going with compared to previous years. I wouldn't be opposed to another audit that the superintendent or the staff would be requesting in addition to the independent audit.

Williams: I would just be concerned about the negative fiscal impact upon the budget, that it's not too burdensome.

Boyd: We do appreciate that, Ken. I think it's important that we don't want it to appear that we're trying to force a situation that's going to cost the school money that they don't have. At the same time, we want to safeguard the school and this board from any exposure that might be there. I think Roy can also speak to the fact that it was through numerous conversations with

Erin, and challenges that we saw with things that weren't provided. Erin has publically said that, in terms of how she moved from the previous back office provider to who she has currently today and part of that was through some of the due diligence that we mutually did in our conversations and explaining and so forth.

When you say, is this typical, part of our staff's job is to make her aware as we do with all of our charters of things that are not the norm, things that we see that they're not getting. Explaining those and providing potential resources. The options are always up to them in terms of how they move forward, but we do try to provide resource in terms of those things. We are working with so many we have so many compliance issues that some they know about, and some they don't, and then they have to circle back with their own council to make sure.

Williams: Just for the record, because good Trustee Gomez asked about getting information on Erin. Erin was communicating to Mari and myself about her illness, and obviously, we can't tell everybody what's going on with her. She did have a medical illness that she was unable to make it here today, and she would have liked to have been here today. She's not running away from anything it's just that we can't tell you.

Gomez: I wasn't perceiving it that way. We didn't know about it, and I know that, perhaps there was some communication, but again, it couldn't be shared. I don't really want to know the details, but just the fact that she was going to be away.

Williams: Sure.

Boyd: Are you okay with Unity? Let's circle back.

Seth: Yes.

Boyd: We'll get in touch with you and staff will dialogue. We'll setup a meeting, and then after the board meeting tomorrow, we'll be monitoring that as well. If we have questions, we'll circle back to you as well. Thank you.

Kim: Thank you.

Seth: Thank you.

Barke: Thank you. I think everybody here is looking for about a 10-15 minute break to do what they need to do. Maybe we could take a break until -

Boyd: 1:20 PM?

Gomez: 1:20 PM.

Barke: Okay, 1:20 PM.

[THE MEETING BREAKS UNTIL 1:20 PM. UPON COMPLETION OF THE BREAK, PRESIDENT BARKE STRIKES THE GAVEL FOUR TIMES TO SIGNAL THE CONTINUATION OF THE MEETING]

Barke: Please take your seats, we're about to get started.

Williams: Madam President, if I can have the floor for a moment here?

Barke: Is everybody here? Okay.

Williams: Everybody here? I'd like to, for the sake of time and language changes, I'd like to lay on the table for today's agenda items #9 and #10. I'll bring that back and lay it on the table for the October meeting.

Barke: Okay, that's fine with me. We're going to move items #9 and #10 to October.

Bedell: Madam Chair? With regards to that, what does that do to the budget? Does it do anything to the budget? I understood there was an urgency to #10, because we had to do something by September 15. Did I pick up on that right? If it goes to the October meeting, what happens?

Williams: Just so I can help clarify, the resolution was not going to the budget stalemate. It was going to specifically talk about that. This is a direction and recommendations by the board to the superintendent. It has nothing to do with the budget stalemate and the discussions that are going to occur, maybe even today, tomorrow or the next day.

Bedell: I apologize for this. I'm confused. We don't have an approved budget, do we? That the state has said we have, right? I thought we were going to deal with today's #10 perhaps in a way to resolve that.

Barke: No, no and it's not an agenda item, so we really can't talk about the budget as a general item. I think Dr. Williams was simply putting forth the resolution, but we have a timing issue. I think he's going to push out -

Gomez: We're tabling them until October. Is that what you're saying?

Barke: Exactly.

Bedell: Again, I apologize for my ignorance. "Approve board Resolution #15-19 on adopted budget." It says 2019-2020 OCDE adopted budget. That budget is the one that had the three amendments, right? The three changes to it, the one hundred and whatever thousand it was? We don't have a budget now, right?

Barke: Dr. Mijares and I had been emailing regarding that, so that's really, I think, a separate issue.

Bedell: How is it a separate? I'm sorry, Madam President. Ayude me, all right? I need help on this because if we don't have a budget by September 15, doesn't something happen? Possibly?

Barke: Possibly, possibly something does happen.

Williams: There is a conversation that's taken place with the executive committee and our good superintendent on this exact issue. There has been a timing issue with who can be there at this meeting and when we would have the meeting. Maybe even today, we'll have a meeting after this formal meeting of our board to discuss the stalemate.

Bedell: Mr. Superintendent, help me. I'm confused here.

Mijares: Madam, if I may speak? We did get a letter from the State Superintendent of Public Instruction asking us to reconvene, to try to work this budget problem out. We haven't been able to do that largely, because we couldn't get all the parties together. I had expected that I would meet with the board president and vice president, and Renee Hendrick and Nina Boyd, because that constitutes the executive committee of the board. Then, we would talk about these problems. We didn't have our attorney present, and the board members insisted that their attorney, Mr. Rolan, be present. I was hoping we could have gotten together without attorneys, but that wasn't going to work.

I didn't believe it was professional to go into a meeting without representation if the other side had representation. We haven't been able to meet, and I was thinking that since that item was on the agenda that we'd be talking about this whole thing today where you have the full board to engage on this topic. If the item is removed from the agenda, which it has been, I assume, then this other discussion has not been agenda item to talk about. That becomes the issue.

Bedell: If it's not agendized, it can't be talked about?

Barke: Right.

Gomez: Correct.

Mijares: Right.

Bedell: I guess my bottom line is, I don't want employees not to get their pay warrants. There are 24,000 I think, that we're responsible for. I don't want instruction to be interrupted. I don't want anything negatively to affect the delivery of the curriculum to the kids. That's not being vainglorious. That's just the reality. My understanding is the County of Orange, for the first time, does not have a budget recognized by the State Department of Education. Is that correct?

Mijares: Correct.

Bedell: Again, Madam President, I apologize for this. My thoughts are not connected.

Mijares: May I just comment one more time? That is that the process that we're following at the direction of the state keeps things moving along. We don't anticipate having an issue-making payroll, meeting our obligations with vendors, supporting districts. Now in time, if we don't get this resolved then that could be an issue. I don't think the state superintendent is going to allow that to happen. I think if we cannot agree, the state superintendent, then, the process calls for the state superintendent to become more involved in getting this thing fixed. We can talk more about that if you'd like, but that's where we're at right now. We do have a window of opportunity to try to get this to work out. If we can't, parties can't agree, happens all the time in life, the state superintendent then becomes responsible for telling us what's the next thing to do.

Bedell: The bottom line is the operations of the department are not going to be delayed or negatively affected if this rolls forward to October?

Barke: The whole thing isn't rolling forward. The item's not agendized. Hopefully, we'll meet after this meeting, because I know we were missing an attorney. I've seen him in the room, so I think we can meet later today, and that's what will happen.

Mijares: In fairness to my attorney, he was on an extended family vacation, because he didn't realize all of this was going to come up, they were out of the country, and he couldn't be here. He's back from that vacation now.

Barke: Moving on, I think we are ready to hear from our charter school, from Aracely.

Chastain: Good afternoon, President Barke, trustees and Superintendent Mijares. Today, the board will hold a hearing to consider public input regarding the Achievers Global Academy Charter petition, which was submitted on appeal at the August 16 board meeting following the denial by Garden Grove Unified School District. After the public comment portion, representatives from Achievers Global Academy in Garden Grove Unified School District are each allotted 15 minutes to address the board.

The hearing is now open for 30 minutes of public comments. For those individuals who have submitted a comment card to address the board, each individual will have three minutes to speak for a total of 30 minutes allotted for comments. For those speaking today, the board clerk will time each speaker, a red light will flash, and a buzzer will sound when the time is up. President Barke, please call for your first speaker.

Barke: First speaker, please?

Boyd: Esther Morales? If anyone needs translation, please let me know by signaling, and we will have an interpreter come up.

Morales: My name is Esther Morales. I am a parent in the Garden Grove Unified School District. During the public district's hearing in July, Achievers Global Academy gave incorrect information about school scores. The charter's presentation sent the message that Achievers would provide a choice for families, but as a parent and listener of that public hearing, I am deeply disturbed by Achiever's misleading message. The Achiever's petition cannot even reassure the district that they will have staff to supervise students before and after school. How does Achievers expect parent volunteers or contractors to deliver English learner instruction? At the same public hearing, the school district staff explained all the ways that the district continuously supports all students at all schools.

For example, Heritage Elementary has a literacy coach to work individually with students in a computer dual-immersion program. At Russell Elementary, they have a Spanish dual-immersion program. Can Achievers offer the same? How will the needs of special education students be met? As a mother of two students with special needs. I am deeply concerned about the petitioner's lack of consideration for students with special needs. It is irresponsible for Achievers to try to mislead parents. In July, parents said no to this petitioner. Today, we are here to say, again, no to this petition. Thank you.

Audience: [Applause]

Boyd: Please, if you would hold your applause, please. I need to announce the next speaker, and we can't hear and move forward. Tan Wong, followed by Sarah Manji?

Wong: Hello. Thank you so much for your time. I'm here with my fellow GGUSD parents. My name is Tan Wong. I'm a proud parent of Garden Grove Unified School District. Garden Grove Unified supports its parents and engages with them on a regular basis. I do not understand how Achievers Global Academy can promise parent involvement or expect parent volunteers in its first year, when it does not even have a temporary office. Achievers has been seeking approval from our district since last December. I do not see any preparation for a new school. I was surprised to learn that Achiever's petitioner was advertising free tutoring to our students at Heritage Elementary. What happens if students sign up for Achievers Global Academy and there's not enough qualified staff or facilities in place for this school? I'm concerned that if Achievers is approved, students will lose instructional time while the petitioners try to assemble their program. We already have many time-tested choices right here in GGUSD schools. Achievers charter school is not a meaningful alternative for our parents and students. Thank you for your time.

Audience: [Applause]

Boyd: Sara Monge?

Monge: Hello. Good afternoon. My name is Sara Monge. I'm here with other proud parents of Garden Grove Unified School District. I do not support the approval of Achievers Global

Academy. At the district public hearing, supporters of Achievers did not claim to know Virginia Carrillo or anything about the Achievers charter petition. These people spoke in favor of charter schools but not this one. Not this charter school. I'm not against all charter schools, but I am against misleading choices for parents.

I do not understand how Achievers can reasonably promise additional afterschool education for our students when there is no guarantee that credentialed teachers will be providing this extra support. Our district, on the other hand, received an award from Orange County, just this past May for its commitment to English learners. The district supports our parent community, and I doubt this charter school is offering anything our district does not already provide. Thank you and I'm so proud to be part of GGUSD.

Audience: [Applause]

Boyd: Andrea Perez?

Perez: Good afternoon. My name is Andrea Perez and I, too, am here representing proud GGUSD parents. I am also the proud parent of a 2019 GGUSD high school, college-ready graduate, and I refuse to support Achievers Global Academy in our district. I attended the Garden Grove School board meeting when Ms. Carrillo from Achievers Global Academy shared her presentation about her school. According to the presentation, the school doesn't offer anything that our award-winning, honor roll district already offers our students. The presentation fell short and if they cannot submit a decent charter petition, how can we expect Achievers to professionally operate a school within our great district?

Our district has a high graduation rate, and its students meet college entrance criteria. My daughter was accepted early, and with distinction to every college she applied to, all thanks to the academics, programs, wonderful teachers and the support staff at Garden Grove Unified School District. Garden Grove School District works with students of all needs. In fact, at the public hearing, the district gave us specifics on how it supports students with the greatest needs, and how those students progressed over the years. Did you know our district also provides English immersion dual-language programs? They know how to serve English language learners as well.

I've spoken with parents who have chosen to enroll their students in GGUSD language immersion programs and not only do the students love the program, but the parents are happy with their school choice, because it is a choice in our district. I have not heard any info from the Achiever's lead petitioner about how she has been successful at serving her English learner students or any students at our current place of employment. I have not heard any community support for this school despite its several startup attempts. As a taxpayer and supporter of public schools, I would be sadly surprised and disappointed if all of you, our county representatives, considered Achievers to be a good idea for public education and worthy of using public funding. Thank you.

Audience: [Applause]

Boyd: Miguel Gudino? Miguel?

Gudino: [MR. GUDINO UTILIZES A SPANISH TRANSLATOR]

Translator: Good afternoon. My name is Miguel Gudino, and we want to request that you approve this charter school. It is our right to choose the school for our kids. We, as parents, we know which school is the best for them and more convenient for them. Everyone qualifies for these schools, and in all areas, and everyone is welcome. They have their own teachers with their own credentials. I don't see why they cannot be approved. If we are on the way, or on the road for better education, and it is a better suited for our students; and if you are working hard for the education for our kids, why not support this school? It has the required, advanced standards of the education that is innovative. Our kids are the future of this country.

They are concerned for the education, and it is better to work together from both sides. It is a good education. There's a lot of families that are afraid to speak. They are afraid that the district is going to think something against them. There's many families that they don't complain, because they will think that they don't trust in the teachers or they think that something is going to happen. My grandparents, they migrated to this country when they were working in the fields. My dad came when it was the time for industry. Now, our kids are growing in the time of technology, and why stop that? Thank you very much for your attention.

Boyd: Samantha Carrillo? Samantha Carrillo? She's gone? Okay. Sanchez, Magdalena?

Sanchez: [MS. SANCHEZ UTILIZES A SPANISH TRANSLATOR]

Translator: Good afternoon to all. My name is Magdalena Sanchez. We will like that you approve the Achievers Global Academy. We as parents are working for the education and support for our kids even more now, because we know that we have the option to choose the education of our children. We know that if they feel safe in the school and the education, why not have them continue studying? Why not support more schools? That way, we will have more options to adapt to our necessities. Please, let us work together to have a good education so our kids can continue in the same schools, because they are the future of this country that supports the education. Thank you very much.

Boyd: Silva Gudino?

Gudino: [MS. GUDINO UTILIZES A SPANISH TRANSLATOR]

Translator: Good morning to all members of the board meeting. I am in support that you approve the new school charter, Achievers Global Academy. I want more options for my kids and the kids of the community. I like that the school will be offering more personalized study, and it will be focusing on math, science, and technology. They're going to have a full day for kinder, and they will be using projects, nutrition classes, foreign language classes, individualized teaching, using computers, academic acceleration, small classes, small school that will focus on community service, and they will be focused on the culture.

Constantly, they are paying attention, individually, for each kid that they feel safe in the school. They are encouraging all the students that wish to study. Above all, to those that decide to continue with being in school, because there are so many that leave school. It is sad to see all those teenagers that leave school that are outside in parks under drugs. Let's work together so those teenagers make the decision to go back and study. They are the future of our country.

To all and each of you, I invite you to go to the parks and see the reality of the community. As parents, we work hard for our children. We have the right to choose a good education for them because this depends on the future and the future of our country. I have knowledge of this school, Palm Lane. It became a charter school and in more than 10 years, they were not able to go up at one point, but in the last year, they went up to 18 points. Thank you very much for your attention.

Boyd: Kelly Nolan? Kelly here? Okay, so that was our last speaker then. Aracely?

Chastain: Next, we will hear from Ms. Virginia Carrillo, lead petitioner for Achievers Global Academy.

Carrillo: I ask the board if we could please dismiss the parents. I know that many of them have to pick up children or they have appointments. Would it be okay if the parents were dismissed at this time?

Barke: Sure, yes.

Carrillo: Okay, well, I thought I'd ask.

Boyd: We'll start it again, because you haven't started.

Carrillo: Thank you. Good morning, but its afternoon right now. Good afternoon, board President Barke, board members, Superintendent Mijares, parents and community members. My name is Virginia Carrillo, and I'm happy to be here this afternoon to share why Orange County needs Achievers Global Academy. Senator Ed Markey once said, "Although children are only 24% of the population, they're 100% of our future and we could not afford to provide any child with a substandard education." I think we can all agree with that. What better way to support education than by providing educational choices for our families?

Our goal is to provide more school choices for the children in our community, and I'm so disappointed to hear as much information there is going out about charter schools and about how they don't do this, or they don't do that. It's very much misinformation. Imagine if you will the type of school, you would create for your own child. What would that look like? Would you want a school that is anything but the best? This is what inspired us to create Achievers Global Academy. The type of school where our own children could thrive, love to learn and be prepared for the global society in which we now live. We are not saying that all public schools are bad or that they're not a good option, but sometimes students need something different.

One of the greatest inequities in education in Orange County is the way students are assigned to the school they attend. Zip codes should not determine learning outcomes, but that's exactly what is happening. This injustice has a long-term repercussion for the entire Orange County community. I am a teacher in a public school, and during my 24 years working in education, I saw that not all district schools are the same. If you are fortunate, you live within the boundaries of a great school. If you did not, you didn't have a choice for your child unless you enrolled them in a private school. An affluent parent has many choices for their children: the high-achieving public school close to their home, a private school, extra tutoring or paid for test prep courses and more.

On the other hand, children who live in low-income areas typically don't have many choices if any. They must attend the public school that has been designated based on their address, whether it's high performing or not. Typically, less affluent areas have low-performing schools where many students are struggling. This is a form of residential segregation. Research shows that schools in disadvantaged areas tend to have lower-performing students, because the children in these areas typically have more needs. Their parents may not have the money to pay for extra tutoring and/or for private schools. Research by the American Psychological Association indicates that students living in poverty are considered at higher risk for behavioral and emotional problems, because they typically live more stressful lives.

This stress directly impacts the development of a child's brain in its most formative years. Children who have experienced chronic stress in their early years oftentimes exhibit behaviors that are typical for a child who has ADD or ADHD. They may have a hard time regulating their brain functions and have impulse control difficulties, and many have social, emotional and cognitive impairment. These students find it hard to sit still and listen during class, which are important skills for students to have in order to learn in a typical classroom. These students, many times referred to as children who have been through adverse childhood experiences, have more academic, social and emotional needs.

They need more than most district schools are able to provide for them. Now more than ever, district schools may not be the best fit for many students, especially for children who have greater needs and struggle academically. To make matters even more challenging, students who struggle academically typically begin exhibiting behavior problems because the curriculum doesn't match their academic needs. It becomes a vicious cycle resulting in students falling further and further behind in every grade. Achievers Global Academy offers an educational program that is designed to support the learners of today, and the social-emotional needs of at-risk students.

Our instructional methods are heavily influenced by current brain and educational research. These methods target the different areas of the brain to strengthen synaptic connections and completely transform the learning process. Many of these methods were developed specifically for students who have brain injuries, special needs, and are now being used for all children. They utilize the potential of the synaptic plasticity of the brain and are neuroscientifically-validated teaching methods. Knowing the short and long-term impact of chronic stress on at-risk students, Achievers Global Academy will also incorporate lessons to teach students about their brain function and how they can control their actions using specific strategies that are taught. These are strategies they will be able to use well into adulthood.

Our curriculum was also specifically selected to align it with the way the brain learns. The old school model of passively learning facts and reciting them out of context is no longer sufficient to prepare students to be critical thinkers in today's world. It is quite common for students to learn to do well for a test but quickly forget what they have learned. This type of learning is not enough for students to be able to solve highly complex problems. Deeper learning requires students to have both fundamental skills, reading, writing and math and 21st century skills, teamwork, problem solving, time management, utilizing high tech tools among others. Achiever's Global Academy will incorporate student choice to inspire a passion for learning.

In addition to project-based learning, which starts with a student's curiosity and is a very hands-on way of applying what students have learned. BBL creates deeper and more meaningful learning, which is much more engaging than sitting in a typical classroom, listening to a teacher lecture. Helping at-risk students attain academic success is not easy. The ample supports we will provide our students will be made possible by providing teachers with ongoing and considerable amounts of professional development. Teachers will have time before and after the school year to learn and collaborate with each other. Teachers will also have time to refine their craft during early-release Fridays, in addition to student-free days scheduled throughout the year.

The overall curriculum at AGA will focus on STEAM, which is science, technology, engineering, arts and math, and we'll incorporate world languages such as Spanish, Chinese-Mandarin, and American Sign Language. We will also include a strong social-emotional component that will explicitly teach self-regulation skills to build executive function in students. In addition, students will receive Ailey Character Development Instruction, which consists of soft skills such as perseverance and collaboration. However, all of this was not satisfactory when we went to the board meeting for Garden Grove Unified School District. They submitted several findings regarding our petition that were half-truths and a lot of misinformation.

They tried to confuse their board members into thinking there were problems with the petition when in fact, all of the findings did not support that we would be unlikely to implement the educational program. There has been a history of harassment and bad faith on the part of Garden Grove Unified School District. They have included items in their findings that should not have been included as detailed in our response provided to the Orange County Department of Education. The most ludicrous states that I tried to mislead district parents by circulating a free summer tutoring flyer that included the address of the New Hope Library as the location.

Prior to handing out the flyers, I had visited New Hope Library about the procedures and protocols to follow in order to provide tutoring at their site. I was told that it was very common and there were no special procedures in place. No protocols needed to be followed. How does offering free tutoring even demonstrate misleading parents about anything? Why would Garden Grove Unified School District be concerned about anyone trying to help students in the community? The thought process of the leadership within Garden Grove Unified School District is absolutely baffling. As far as the other findings, our financials are in order. We will have adequate supervision for our students and their safety will always be our priority while they're at our school.

We have a realistic school schedule, staffing plan, and professional development for our teachers to assure that they are more than adequately prepared to meet the needs of our students. Their other claims do not establish an authorized reason for denial. Ironically, they state there are errors and typos in our petition when, in fact, there are multiple errors and typos in their findings. Furthermore, even though Garden Grove Unified School District has been giving the distinction of being an exemplary district, not all schools within the district are exemplary. If I may ask the parents here, how many of your children attend Heritage or Russell? Okay, two. Are your students above or below the norm of the standards?

All right. Some parents may say that we haven't reached out to the community, we have. We've reached out to many parents. At a public event a few months ago, we actually met with parents with children in Garden Grove Unified School District. Within 20 minutes, we were able to talk to over 10 parents who told us their son or daughter was struggling in school. All of these parents were English learners. They were frustrated and concerned but didn't know what to do. We visited communities within Garden Grove Unified School District boundaries, and over 150 families expressed interest in having another school option, but they were also very hesitant to share their concerns.

They expressed that there are parents who report back to the district like spies. This is what I was told. They said that they were afraid of retaliation against their children. They have heard from other parents that charter schools are bad, and that they shouldn't talk to anybody who's talking to them about charter schools. It was very clear that these parents were uncomfortable about really speaking about what was going on in their schools out of fear. Also, I'd like to go ahead and share some data from the 2018 SBAC. This really supports their concerns about their children not being successful in the district schools. This is 2018 SBAC ELA data from Heritage Elementary School.

This is the area achievement level descriptors, which provide a detailed look at students' performance on the overall assessment. On the average in reading, writing and listening, over 85% of the students were not at grade level on the SBAC. The data's not much better in math. For concepts and procedures, problem solving, and communicating reasoning, special education student results were dismal with no students scoring at grade level. This is ELA Heritage data as well. It shows 90% are below standard in reading and writing. That was in ELA, and this is math data. If you can take a look at that, 0% of the students who are in special education at Heritage are at or above grade level.

This slide here compares Heritage Elementary with Russell Elementary, and you can see that we have about 72% of students at Heritage Elementary who, at Level 1, Level 2, have not met standards. At Russell, 68% have not met standards. That was ELA. This is math. The numbers are: 25% of the students are at or above grade level. Here are the English learners SBAC performance levels for reading and writing. As you can see, we have .65% of the students who are above standard in reading, and 1.3% of students; English learners are above standard writing.

I heard parents say that this information was not correct. I pulled this from the California Department of Education website. I'm not sure what was incorrect about it. One of the parents spoke to that. I'd like to compare it with Patton. This is their special education students. In 2018, they have more students who scored at or above their special education students than the ELA students did.

Boyd: Your time is up.

Carrillo: Okay. Well, thank you very much, but you can see there are large discrepancies between the school sites and even though the parents here were not in favor of this school, I think it's only fair to offer choices to the other parents who are not able to make it here. Thank you very much.

Chastain: Next, we will hear from representatives from Garden Grove Unified School District.

Mafi: I have to make sure I don't have to say good evening. Good afternoon, I'm Gabriela Mafi. I'm the superintendent of Garden Grove Unified School District. I'm here with Mrs. Teri Rocco, our board vice president as well as a number of wonderful parents and staff who are slowly trickling out to make sure they pick up their kids.

Audience: [Applause]

Mafi: President Barke, members of the board, Superintendent Mijares, staff and community, we're here before you not to oppose charters but to support our analysis of the Achievers Global Academy as being an unsound proposal that doesn't meet our legal or district criteria. Ms. Rocco is going to start us out.

Rocco: Achievers Global Academy, or AGA, is a charter that has been unsuccessfully seeking approval since 2012. The governing board of the Garden Grove Unified School District has taken action twice to deny the AGA petition. The first time was due to lack of minimum signatures of teacher interest, and to date, the petition indisputably fails to meet necessary legal criteria. Most recently, Garden Grove staff identified a number of repeated flaws in the AGA petition indicating that lead petitioner, Virginia Carrillo has not demonstrated interest in having a compliant charter.

On July 16, 2019, the district's board denied the AGA petition finding that number one, lead petitioner is unlikely to successfully implement her program. Two, AGA's proposed educational program is unsound, and three, the petition lacks reasonably comprehensive descriptions of its educational program, governance structure and admissions policies. This presentation is not an exhaustive summary of the findings in support of denial. The district's resolutions from December 2018 and from July 2019, can be referred to for more detail. This afternoon, we will be sharing the details of these repeated flaws and new flaws in the petition.

Garden Grove Unified would like to highlight for the county board, the AGA's lead petitioner has lacked an unsuccessful history of involvement in the petition process, and has at times, lacked transparency with our district and its parents. The background of the lead petitioner is relevant to one of the key statutory bases for denial. The petitioner is unlikely to successfully implement the program in the petition.

Mafi: The petitioner, Virginia Carrillo is a teacher in the Santa Ana Unified School District and has submitted seven unsuccessful charter applications since 2012. Three times in Santa Ana Unified, where I believe she spent most of her career and twice in Garden Grove. After receiving clear feedback on five separate occasions over the past seven years, the current application still doesn't accurately describe a sound or viable operational program. In the two public hearings that we conducted in Garden Grove, Ms. Carrillo was unable to provide clear or accurate answers to fundamental questions regarding her program, student supervision and budget including the number of classified staff, certificated student coverage and budgetary aspects.

Based on the deficiencies in both applications, and her inability to explain or correct these errors over time, we've concluded that she'll be unable to operate a school with approximately 138 students beginning in 2020 in grades TK through two. Last December when we denied the petition for the first time, we discovered upon conducting standard reference checks that the application included a teacher signature without authorization. The teacher in question indicated

she did sign a different form from Ms. Carrillo approximately eight years previous for a different charter submission to Santa Ana, and that Ms. Carrillo had not obtained a signature from her since that time.

Upon being informed of this finding, Ms. Carrillo refused our offer to withdraw the petition and save public resources until she could submit a revised application, given that she only had two of the three teacher's signatures that were required. At the time of the first submission and subsequent rejection, the district provided her with very detailed findings in anticipation that she would remediate the legal defects as well as programmatic issues we flagged for her, and answered questions posed to her in the public hearing. However, she didn't respond to those questions, and instead chose to hastily resubmit her AGA petition with minimal changes, contacting us just six days after the initial denial for it to be placed on a subsequent agenda. That fundamentally unchanged petition is before the county board today.

If the lead petitioner is not transparent in the charter review process, we do have concerns as to how we can expect her to be transparent during the charter term. Despite those issues, many of our students did feel misled when advertising tutoring services from the local library as was mentioned. The library did indicate that they didn't give permission. They typically don't allow their name or their library to be on flyers that are sent out for tutoring, and they don't formally sponsor or support tutoring. Ms. Carrillo as mentioned earlier is on the board with ISSAC Charter School in Orange County, which has had issues with representation in public proceedings in the past. These practices in our own petition process, and her affiliations, do give us concern regarding ethics and ability to implement a successful charter.

Rocco: Major repeated flaws in the AGA petition include that it continues to propose an extended school day with English language development and core subject learning support before and after school but with no qualified staff to implement this. The petition states that the core instruction will take place until 3:45 PM. Additional support will occur before school starting at 7:00 AM, and after school from 3:45 PM to 5:00 PM. Students will get support in the areas of ELA, math and ELD from 4:30 PM to 5:00 PM. Petitioners were previously notified that the petition is unclear whether afterschool parent professional aides or unidentified contractors will be experienced, much less certified to provide extended day support.

AGA plans to predominantly serve English learners, for which ELD instruction must be provided by a holder of an authorized credential. The only clarification from Ms. Carrillo on this issue has been that first-year teachers will have an understanding to work after school. This is an unrealistic expectation that a teacher working at a non-competitive rate of pay would volunteer their time. As a former teacher, I know that a teacher's day isn't over when the kids go home. There are papers to correct, there are lesson plans, parents to contact, prep work, and adjunct duties. To the extent consultant services are relied upon, AGA is required to adequately describe criteria for the selection of a contractor with necessary expertise.

However, the petition fails to do so and proposes no qualified contractor that would both supervise students and provide core instructional support. AGA relies on parent volunteers to fulfill its extended day promises and operational gaps further suggests that its 10-hour parent volunteer quota is not truly voluntary. AGA students will either be inadequately supervised or

will not be provided with instruction promised in the petition or both. Even as marginally revised, the AGA petition is unlikely to be financially viable. The petition continues to lack a minimum yearly cash reserve balance or even a temporary facility at this point for holding its governing board meetings and ensuring parent involvement.

AGA's year two reserve is less than 2% of its anticipated expenditure, falling below the minimum limit. Years three, four and five are similarly inadequate. The petition still has conflicting estimates for the cost of facilities in year one. AGA's projected costs for a lease is \$20,000 more than what is planned for in its budget. AGA lacks even a temporary location for board meetings and parent participation. The AGA bylaws continue to state that meetings will be held outside the district's boundaries at 3843 South Bristol Street, Space 286 in Santa Ana, which is a UPS store mailbox address. These concerns are aggravated by the fact that Ms. Carrillo has not revised the AGA petition despite the district's findings from last December and in spite of her attempts to troubleshoot this petition since 2012.

I just want to add that, as a board member, I want you to know and I think I can speak for the board, that we don't oppose charter schools. We're not looking to put charter schools down. We are pro quality education. We're looking through the lens of, what would we do in our district? Those are the things we expect in our own district. I have children, grandchildren, attending schools in our district, and quite truthfully, I would never consider this school as one that I would send my grandchildren to. Thank you.

Mafi: In addition to Ms. Rocco's concerns that she raised about supervision of students, inadequate compensation and so forth. The spring 2019 submission also includes some additional flaws. Special education is a particular concern. AGA expects to receive state special ed. revenue, but there's no verifiable written assurances that it will participate as its own LEA in a SELPA. The Ed. Code and California Department of Education are very clear that if a charter school wishes to be deemed an LEA while it's pursuing SELPA membership, it's still to be considered a public school with the district, which granted the charter, and is ineligible to receive state and federal funding directly. Neither has the AGA petition proposed a reasonable comprehensive governance structure.

There's no reference to the uniform complaint process, which is very important, as well as grievance procedures for parents to explain and come forward when they have issues. AGA currently lacks a proposed conflict of interest code and its bylaws still refer to an outdated entity, Future Global Scholars Foundation. Finally, lack of community support, and I believe the president of the charter organization had mentioned about the commitment in the community. While I have no doubt that Ms. Carrillo is very immersed and knows the Santa Ana Unified community, she's shown a lack of understanding for the Garden Grove Unified School District community.

As she indicated recently, she's gone to different events, but there have been repeated concerns. One of the concerns is that folks, who have come forward to represent an interest in the charter to our public hearings and today, have all been people who reside outside of our district. They're all Santa Ana Unified, or people from South County, or different areas that would not be sending their children to our schools. At the June 18, as well as the October 16, 2018, public hearings,

our parents spoke in appreciation and satisfaction of the many opportunities for school choice in GGUSD. Her representatives were very nice people but lived outside of our boundaries.

As a former child of poverty and a first generation American, many of our parents and I personally took affront to the depiction of our communities as gang infested, people are doing drugs in the park and every corner, and neglect. My poverty did not cause me to have adverse childhood experiences that allowed me not to be successful. I think many of our parents felt spoken down to and they're very proud, and we're very proud of our communities. This was an affront to them, and I think it's just a result of Ms. Carrillo not being familiar with our larger school community since she hasn't worked in our district or spent a lot of time there.

That's also reflected in the idea of the lack of choices, because we have a large number of students that are in transfer. The local schools that she mentions, one is the Spanish dual-immersion, the other is a computer immersion. We have students coming in from across the district to go to those schools. We don't expect the test scores at a Spanish dual-immersion school to be high in those first few years, nor do we see the kind of growth for English learners in the first few years of schooling until they get into the intermediate and the high school grades. We have excellent results for students when they leave us to pursue lifelong success. Given the continuous legal defects in the AGA petition, the lack of transparency, and the practices that I shared with you, we believe the approval of this petition would not be in the best interest of students.

The district findings are reasonable indicators that AGA program will not benefit our students, and the district on the other hand, as I mentioned earlier, provides exceptional choices with a record of outstanding student learning outcomes. Seventy two percent of our students are classified as socio-economically disadvantaged, with the majority of those students coming from a home in which English isn't the primary language. Yet our students beat the state and county averages on state testing, A-G rate, and that's at every single high school college preparatory, measures such as AP and high school graduation rates. In closing, the district is supportive of a sound, high-quality educational choice for our students and parent constituents.

We are more than happy to work collaboratively with reputable and well-designed charters such as Samueli who I met with this summer to talk about shared professional development that we could engage in. As well as our private and parochial schools in the area of which we have many. We wish to ensure that all programs offered within our district provide exceptional educational outcomes. Based on the concerns we've shared with you we urge you to deny the petition on appeal. Thank you.

Audience: [Applause]

Chastain: This concludes the public hearing for Achievers Global Academy. The board will receive a staff report and render a decision at the October 16 board meeting. President Barke, I now turn the meeting back over to you to facilitate any questions the board may have.

Barke: Thank you. I want to thank everybody for their time and their comments, and we'll start with you, Dr. Bedell.

Bedell: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'd like to speak to the proposer. Is she still here?

Mijares: Ms. Carrillo.

Barke: Ms. Carrillo?

Bedell: Yes, the proposer. Is she here?

Boyd: She is. I wonder if you could help me? This is your PowerPoint, right?

Carrillo: Yes, that is.

Bedell: Okay, I have little to no understanding what your curriculum is based on your presentation. Could you please give me a pithy paragraph on what the curriculum is, because what we have here are 15 pages of pictures and no substance?

Carrillo: Right. That's more of a background, and we submitted all of the curriculum to your board.

Bedell: Right, but I need to hear it from you -

Carrillo: Certainly.

Bedell: - for the members of our public.

Carrillo: We have core knowledge that will be used for language arts. We have Eureka math, that will be used for math. A lot of it is based on project-based learning, which is very engaging to the students, because they start with a problem and they have to figure out how they're going to solve that problem using all of their background knowledge. It's very engaging for the students, and they actually master the learning as opposed to just memorizing for a test. Research shows it's actually very beneficial for students, like language learners in particular, because it also helps them with their vocabulary development and collaborating with others. It's a very inclusive way of teaching.

Bedell: Okay. Science?

Carrillo: Yes. For science, we're also using ed. curriculum that addresses new generation science standards.

Bedell: You're in line with the new standards?

Carrillo: Yes. Everything is Common Core aligned. Yes.

Bedell: Thank you. That's enough for me, Madam. Thank you.

Barke: Beckie?

Gomez: I was also concerned about no curriculum being discussed in your presentation. I didn't see any projection of what you expected from students, what your numbers were. I'm going to go through your petition again -

Carrillo: Please.

Gomez: - but I have some real concerns about, you have a presentation here and no curriculum.

Carrillo: Right, and I ran out of time obviously, so I was going to go more into depth with some of the items that you probably have questions about, but unfortunately, 15 minutes is a really short time to discuss over 200 pages worth of information.

Gomez: Right, but when you're showing us lots of pictures and talking to us about how students learn, that's pretty basic for most of us here. Really, we wanted to know what was going to be great about your school, but I didn't hear that. I will look at your petition again.

Carrillo: Thank you.

Gomez: That's all I have.

Carrillo: Okay, thanks.

Barke: Dr. Sparks?

Sparks: They asked the questions that I had.

Boyd: We can't hear you, Lisa.

Sparks: They asked the questions that I had.

Boyd: Thank you.

Barke: Dr. Williams?

Williams: Yes. Regarding budgetary related issues, are you going to have an administrative entity to help you with the back office, the accounting, the budget?

Carrillo: Absolutely.

Williams: Could you tell us more about that?

Carrillo: Yes. We contracted with CSMC, and they're going to be doing all of the budget to make sure that we're financially secure. Where everything is, we're being very, very cautious. We know that schools are usually underfunded, so we are going to be very, very conservative with everything. They're going to be helping us with all of the budget.

Williams: Okay. Part of the criticism that I heard was the assumptions for the first-year lease. Do you know what your first-year lease will cost? Do you have a hard number?

Carrillo: No. Unfortunately, that's a challenge as a new charter school to really be estimating the cost of a location, a facility. It's kind of putting the cart before the horse. You don't know where you're going to be located. Therefore, you don't know how much your budget should be allocated. That's a really rough estimate for facilities.

Williams: On some of the charters that we have, the teaming up with the sponsoring district or the district or the school is physically located in. Have you discussed anything with Garden Grove about Prop 39 funds? Are you using unoccupied schools or other type of space?

Carrillo: We have that as an option in our petition. However, we have not reached out and had any discussions yet to that effect.

Williams: I see. To the wonderful people from Garden Grove, thank you. Come on up, I've got to ask you a few questions. You did very well. Thank you very much for your kindness and grace that you demonstrated. Come up, both of you can come up.

Rocco: I never want to be without my board.

Williams: No problem. The biggest issue is always budgetary. It's having the money to be there, having the kids to be present, and having the actual physical school site. That's not new. We've heard about it for the past several years. Are there any sites that are available in Garden Grove that are not being occupied or used that this particular charter can use?

Rocco: No, there are not any sites. In fact, in the petition, it did indicate that the petitioner did not anticipate using Proposition 39, but there are no sites. Maybe Sukhi might want to speak.

Ahluwalia: Dr. Williams with respect to Proposition 39, we haven't obviously received a request for Prop 39. I think in terms of any assessment that we would make as to available facilities, we would have to take a look at their request first. I would be hesitant to answer any questions about what is and is not available.

Williams: Okay. Do you anticipate not moving into any site at this time, or do you have a proposed site that we should know about?

Carrillo: There are a couple of sites that we're looking into. We're still waiting to hear back from some of the sites.

Williams: You don't have a physical site that you've identified or gone into any sort of constructive dialogue and setting up more of a contractual relationship? Is that true?

Carrillo: Not yet.

Williams: What I'm hearing from the district is the district is utilizing all of their physical spaces and schools at this time, and you have no sites available for them to use.

Ahluwalia: That's not the response that was provided by Dr. Mafi. The response that was provided by Dr. Mafi was, as I said, we want to caution, because we have to take a look at what the Proposition 39 request would be. We have to obviously look at it, make sure that there's a sufficient number of students from the district. You just heard about ISSAC earlier this morning. They only had 71 students, despite the fact that they're represented to you that they were going to have 390. The district does not have an obligation to provide a facility unless there are 80 in-district students. If and when a Proposition 39 request is submitted, we will of course review it in a legally compliant manner, and if there are a sufficient number of students, we will as provided by the provisions of Proposition 39 assess where to offer space.

Mafi: I'll just clarify my response to make sure, so you can still call me gracious and kind. After that, we don't have, as some districts do, unoccupied school facilities or district facilities. There's not like an empty school sitting around as might occur in other places. That's what I thought that you were asking.

Williams: I was, but then I got confused when your good counsel answered the question in a legal type of manner.

Audience: [Laughter]

Mafi: She's the attorney.

Williams: Attorneys do that. We can't live without them, we can't live with them. My son's an attorney, so please don't take any offense. It sounds like from your response, counsel, that there is potential space for this charter school.

Ahluwalia: No, what I said was that under the Proposition 39 if there are a sufficient number of signatures that are submitted, and we get a legally compliant petition we will of course abide by the legal obligations to provide space to that charter school. We obviously want to be very cognizant of providing space to students that are actually going to show up. We don't want to be in a position of vacating classrooms, changing boundaries, et cetera, to only have 71 students show up. Ms. Carrillo, as we had talked about earlier, she's on the ISSAC board, so she is well versed with the Proposition 39 facilities process. Ms. Carrillo is one of the authors of the letter that was submitted to you earlier about Ms. Padmini Hands and her involvement with the charter school. She's very well versed with this process.

Williams: Okay. How many students have been submitted as far as signatures on this petition?

Ahluwalia: She submitted the petition with teacher's signatures again.

Williams: Just with teacher's signatures?

Ahluwalia: Yes. Based on the public hearings that were held at the district, we had, I believe, next to no actual students. We had the individuals that spoke generally in terms of support for charters, but not this specific charter.

Williams: Is this petition legally compliant?

Ahluwalia: Clearly, we do not believe that it is. We've identified a number of findings in our resolution as were also discussed by Dr. Mafi and our trustee.

Williams: Ms. Carrillo, the SELPA, do you anticipate having a relationship with a SELPA?

Carrillo: Absolutely. As a matter of fact, I just had a meeting yesterday with a representative who is going to be helping us join a SELPA, either LACO or El Dorado. That's already in process.

Williams: The other issue was the allegation by the district about afterschool programs utilizing parent volunteers and helping with English language development. Could you address some of

their criticism?

Carrillo: Yes, I think there was a confusion. Any core content area will be taught by credentialed teachers. Any supervision can be provided by parent volunteers. Somehow, that got mixed into the response. In the response that we provided to you, it has everything in detail as far as responding to what was submitted from Garden Grove.

Williams: Right, to have extended day programs, are you going to depend upon parent volunteers or day staff?

Carrillo: We're going to actually have providers to help with afterschool. We also are going to have teachers help with the afterschool, so it's going to be a combination. These are paid people -

Carrillo: Yes.

Williams: - not volunteers?

Carrillo: Correct.

Mafi: May I add something -

Williams: Sure.

Mafi: - on the two questions, because it was discussed in a public hearing? That was one of our first questions in our public hearing, because there were only four half-time people listed. Well, it was two-and-a-half, but Ms. Carrillo clarified it was four half-time people. My concern was if students come from 7:00 AM to 8:30 AM, prior to the teachers' start day, 138 of them, I don't think you can depend on one administrator and parent volunteers and aides that are going to be half-time that are also expected to be there in the afternoon.

I know it was discussed that there wasn't a funding source to pay teachers additional afterschool hourly. The response was that they would volunteer their time, which we don't feel is fair to teachers or representative of the types of practices to just volunteer time and spend two-and-a-half hours after school, and then go home, grade papers, call parents, and do lesson plans.

Carrillo: As far as responding to that, before school, we're actually in contact with someone who is a provider and they would be offering before school activities for the students. That is a grant-sponsored activity. Then, for after school there are other teachers who start off in charter schools who are devoted to teaching and are passionate about making sure their students are successful. They do stay for longer, and it's a common occurrence that teachers stay after school to provide additional support to students.

Williams: Gabriel and Teri, I was concerned about your allegations and questioning of Ms. Carrillo's ethics by her previous association with ISSAC. Why is that?

Ahluwalia: If I may respond on behalf of Dr. Mafi?

Williams: Because she made it, may I ask her? Both her and Teri.

Mafi: Actually, for me, the ethical issue was about the initial submission where one of the teachers who directly stated, I didn't sign that on that date. It was eight years ago, and it was a different application, and that was a concern. Ms. Carrillo did tell us that she inadvertently included it, but I don't know how you can inadvertently put a teacher's name and a signature with a new date, and the teacher says this was for a Santa Ana submission that happened some years ago. That was my ethical concern and then just bringing up, there is controversy in the county

and people have been talking as they talked this evening about what's happening with other organizations.

Williams: Okay.

Ahluwalia: Dr. Williams, just to be clear. When the charter petition was initially submitted to the Garden Grove School District, it was submitted with teacher's signatures. When we verified those teacher's signatures, one of the individuals specifically stated to Dr. Mafi or maybe to a district representative, I think, to the assistant superintendent, that she did not sign that form. Of course, that raised concerns. How did this form that was dated for the submission in 2018, come to be part of that packet? When that teacher indicated that, she had signed a form many years earlier for a Santa Ana submission that, of course, raises the ethical concerns. Ms. Carrillo did respond to that by stating that it was mistake on her part, but as Dr. Mafi is stating, how can you have a mistake with a new date, a new district, that's on that signature form?

Carrillo: Let me explain, to respond to that.

Williams: Sure.

Carrillo: What happened is that my signature needed to be included with the packet, which would have made the third signature. What happened was I had the fourth signature was going to be this teacher and I was going to reach out to her. There was a form with her digital signature. I didn't have the opportunity to reach out to her to confirm that she wanted to participate. Instead of putting my signature in there, it was the other teacher's signature that was included. That's why we ended up not being able to appeal that one, because we only had two signatures, mine was not included. That was where the mistake happened.

Williams: I appreciate the chatter from the crowd to be kind and grateful. Overall, there's concerns with what's been brought up here. You have to give a reassurance to this board why you're going to be successful. You have a back office administrative team that's going to be helping you. We'd like to talk with them and ask them questions.

Carrillo: Yes.

Williams: Do you have an attorney working with you?

Carrillo: Yes. We're working with Young, Minney and Corr. Everyone will be present at that capacity meeting. Everyone will be there to answer any questions or address any concerns that may be present still.

Williams: Okay. That's it for my questions here.

Barke: Anybody else? I think all the juicy stuff has been asked. They didn't really leave much for me. I'll just go with a technical question. Talking about the cash reserves, 5%, is that accumulative or is that a straight 5%? One spot I read that there wasn't 5%, but then another spot I read cumulatively there was over 5%. Is that cumulative, straight up, or how does that work?

Mafi: By cumulative, you mean in that second year she would have that amount?

Barke: Yes. I read that cumulatively in the second year there was actually 124 versus the 113 that was needed, versus the 328 that was there. I'm trying to figure out what number is the appropriate number.

Mafi: I don't have each of those numbers in front of me, because I was focusing more on the key piece, but I'd be happy to provide that follow up with the board with the help of my CBO.

Although I was a math teacher, sometimes I need a little help with that.

Barke: Perfect. That was just my question- how that is structured and figured out? All right. Any other questions? Thank you, I appreciate it everybody's time.

Carrillo: Thank you.

Mafi: Thank you for your consideration. We'd just like to ask if it's all right if we dismiss as Ms. Carrillo asked, the parents at this time? I know typically that we don't take a break.

Barke: Sure.

Mafi: Thank you.

Bedell: I'd just like to note it's nice to have a school board member make a presentation on behalf of the students of his or her district. I'd like to compliment you on that.

Audience: [Applause]

Barke: We're going to take a five-minute recess.

[PRESIDENT BARKE STRIKES THE GAVEL ONCE TO SIGNAL THE BEGINNING OF THE 5-MINUTE RECESS. UPON CONCLUSION OF THE RECESS, PRESIDENT BARKE STRIKES THE GAVEL ONCE TO SIGNAL THE CONTINUATION OF THE MEETING]

Boyd: Go ahead, Aracely.

Chastain: The board will now hold the hearing to consider public input regarding the renewal of Vista Heritage Global Academy, which was approved for a five-year term from July 15 through June 2020. After public comments, representatives from Vista Heritage Global Academy are allotted 15 minutes to address the board. Santa Ana Unified School District requested and has been provided with all of the documents related to the renewal submission. The hearing is now open for public comments from individuals who have submitted a comment card to address the board. About two-thirds of their comment cards are not here anymore. They're parents who had to go and pick up their kids, but there are a few that are still here. President Barke, please call for the first speaker.

Barke: First speaker?

Boyd: Susan Moss, followed by Mirta Catalan?

Moss: Good afternoon, President Barke, board members and Superintendent Mijares when he returns. I am Susan Moss. I'm the executive director of Charters OC. We support high-quality charter schools who are educating our most vulnerable students. I'm here to support Vista Heritage's renewal. Charters OC provided them a \$100,000 grant for a startup, and we just supported them in getting a major grant from the Walton Family Foundation. They have complied with everything we've asked, all the obligations that were involved with our grants. They provided excellent work for us. We are partnering with them on all of our work here for our most vulnerable students, and thank you for considering their renewal.

Boyd: Mirta Catalan?

Catalan: [MS. CATALAN UTILIZES A SPANISH TRANSLATOR]

Translator: Good afternoon. My name is Mirta Catalan. I'm coming here to represent Vista Global Academy. I have two children. Last year, my son graduated from eighth grade, and now

my daughter just started eighth grade. When I transferred from the other school, my son had very low grades. He had a lot of F's. Last semester, I transferred my son to Vista, and he had amazing support from everyone. All those F's became B's and C's. I am very, very happy and excited with the support that Vista has given me, because I love the passion all the teachers and the way they work in collaboration with the principal is making students successful. I'm here to advocate for Vista, because I would like to support them.

This is not only an opportunity for me, but it's also an opportunity for our children. This is also a good opportunity not only for my children but also for other kids that are coming and struggling from other school districts for different reasons. That's why I'm here to provide support, because I will like all of you to support Vista. This way we can take our students away from gangs and doing things that are not appropriate for their kids. That's why I'm advocating to support Vista Heritage Academy. I'm very thankful to God, and for life, because this school was open in Santa Ana and it is really helping us, really functioning. Also, we will love, like in the future, if you can have like an upper grade, like high school for example.

Audience: [Laughter]

Translator: That's what I would love for you to help us where we can send our children to schools where they feel good and comfortable, and they have all these channels open for their learning. They can become very good citizens like all of you, and like all other people. That's all what I can say. Thank you.

Boyd: Rosario Ruiz?

Ruiz: [MS. RUIZ UTILIZES A SPANISH TRANSLATOR]

Translator: Good afternoon. My name is Rosario Ruiz. I have two kids at -

Boyd: She can move closer to this microphone, and you can use the other one.

Translator: I have two students in Vista school. One is in seventh grade. My daughter, she's in fifth grade. My son has autism and he's receiving now the help and the support that he needs. This school has helped him a lot. Before, they used to attend Santa Ana High School District schools, but I did not have a good experience in the past year. This has not been easy, because in the past year, my son had a teacher and he was calling me constantly. When he called me, I went to talk to the teacher and when I realized the way the teacher was approaching my son, I really didn't like the way he was treating him. My niece was with me and she was accompanying me, and she didn't speak English, and my niece and I, we walked away from that meeting crying because of the way the teacher treated us.

When we told him that my son was autistic, he just didn't care. I started searching for different options in different schools and in that school district; they didn't have a space for my son. I started looking for schools and then I found Vista. I applied and they told me that they had space available. When I decided I was going to enroll my kids in Vista, they called me from the district saying that they did have space for me. I told the district no, thank you. I already found a school. I'm very pleased, because I can see the improvement of my child. He's very happy and my daughter's very happy as well. My son, he has improved a lot. All his grades are up. Now he has a lot of A's and B's, and he's also staying in the afterschool program.

I did receive a phone call from another school from that district. It was a school that you have to apply for a lottery for you to get in. When I realized that my son could go to this school with a lottery, they did not offer the programs my son really needed. Those are the programs that Vista is providing him. They told me that was my option, to leave him in Vista or to take him to the other lottery school. I'm here to support Vista Heritage, and I would like you all to still support them, and thank you so much.

Boyd: Araceli Catalan?

Catalan: [MS. CATALAN UTILIZES A SPANISH TRANSLATOR]

Translator: Good afternoon. My name is Araceli Catalan. I have been with Vista for three years. The experience that I have there has been very rewarding. I have two children. When they went to school, they went to a district school. If I would have the opportunity and have to do things again, if I had an opportunity to send them to a charter school, I would definitely send them to Vista. Something that I've experienced with my own daughter is that she's more open and her grades are increasing. She has more A+'s. My experience has been a very, very beautiful experience with her, but now that she's going to be exiting the eighth grade I'm wondering, where I'm going to send her.

I even want to cry, because I don't want to take her out from Vista. In these three years, I feel like it's a family. They receive a lot of support. That is my fear, that she's going to go to a different school, but she's not prepared for that. That is why I'm coming here to show my support to Vista, and I wish they could do a 9th – 12th grade even though I'm not going to be benefiting from that, because my daughter's not going to be able to go there. Thank you, and I am very happy. It's a family what we have with Vista. Thank you.

Boyd: That's the last speaker that we have.

Barke: Now, Aracely.

Chastain: Now, this Aracely. Now we're going to hear from the superintendent of Vista Charter Public Schools, Dr. Donald Wilson, and principal of Vista Heritage Global Academy, Dr. Collin Felch.

Wilson: I timed it under 15 minutes, I promise. Good afternoon, honorable board and President Barke and Dr. Mijares. Middle school has always been a special area of need in education and child development. Five years ago, we started with a vision and a mission to make a difference for the middle school students in Santa Ana. We soon realized that to address middle-school needs that we were going to have to think beyond those three years. As you know, our vision has grown to include a very successful elementary school. After only one year, it has actually proven to be one of our strongest interventions for our middle school students and has helped to create an educational oasis for our most at-risk students.

We're very, very grateful for the opportunity that you've given us to have served the students of Santa Ana, but we're very excited for the next five years. As you know, education is at the heart of the human and the family experience. It's a dynamic endeavor that requires constant vigilance, flexibility, and a will to take action if we hope to transform students' lives. As our expertise and understanding has grown over the years, so our program too, has blossomed actually into a

vision beyond what we might have imagined five years ago. Today our presentation has three objectives. First, to give an understanding of how we have fulfilled our promises through our current petition and actually what you hope to expect for the next five years.

Second, we'd like to present the data and the evidence that actually shows that we've made a difference in the lives of the families of Santa Ana and their children. Third, our last objective is to provide evidence that we are a solid organization with the capacity to fulfill our charter obligations. I'm going to start with that information. Where do I press? There we go. Thank you. I need a young guy to do that.

Audience: [Laughter]

Wilson: Let's start with our enrollment. As you can see, we started with approximately 150 students. Each year, we have had an increase in students to what our current is, 275. We are at capacity, which is due to the size of our building, and we are hoping that we will be approved for our new construction plan in the near future, which we can go to 450. The second thing that you want to know about is our fiscal stability and growth. Over the last five years, we have really improved our fiscal policies and our internal controls to ensure and to minimize any audit risk. Yearly improvements in our fiscal health have resulted in a positive net income in the 18-19 year.

We were able to meet the targeted enrollment projections resulting in accurate budget projections each year. After this year, we'll end this year with a balance of more than \$212,000. Importantly, now, over the course of the next five years, our budgets are very solid and we know that we'll end with a fund balance of over \$2 million, healthy and stable enrollment, very healthy and stable fiscal policies and controls. Perhaps the most important thing is that you need to have a stable and an amazing site leader. I attribute so much of our success to our current site leader, Dr. Felch. With that, I'd like to present you, Dr. Felch. Thank you.

Felch: Thank you, Dr. Wilson. Good afternoon, President Barke, members of the board, Superintendent Mijares. My name is Dr. Collin Felch, proud principal of Vista Heritage Global Academy. I'm going to dive right into our general education program and start with global education, because that's one of our signature practices. We are proud partners with the International Studies Schools Network. We are the only school in Orange County within that network, and we were the first global STEAM school within that International Studies Schools Network. Global education is not just about flags and festivals. However, we do have our annual Vista Olympics and we actually don't have any room numbers.

Every single room in our school is a country. True education is teaching students how to investigate the world, recognize different perspectives, communicating ideas and taking action. Many of our projects follow the United Nations sustainable development goals. A few of the examples of projects that our students have done are: learning about ways to conserve water, taking action to reduce food waste, even at our school, and redesigning plastic packaging to be more efficient. We also have a readers and writers workshop for our ELA curriculum, and it follows the Lucy Calkins model through Teachers College in Columbia University. Many

schools claim to have a readers or writer's workshop program, but implementation and adherence is key to success.

Our teachers are highly trained and receive ongoing coaching, because a program is only as good as its implementation. At Vista Condor, our feeder elementary school, students have been growing multiple grade levels in reading in a matter of just months. We will show some of the results and how that has affected Vista Heritage later on in the presentation. As for Kagan structures, in a traditional classroom when a teacher asks a question, students will raise their hand and one student will answer while the other 24 or so students will get to sit back and listen passively. In a Kagan classroom like at Vista, 100% of students are held accountable for the learning at all times.

Kids are actively participating and completely engaged in the classroom activities and discussions. Not to be redundant, but a program is only as good as its implementation. At Heritage, our teachers have received all five days of Kagan cooperative learning training and continue to receive ongoing coaching. As I mentioned before a few times, a program is only as good as its implementation. At Vista, technology has been thoroughly integrated as part of our STEAM program. We don't just put devices in front of each student. We make sure that our teachers, for example, become Google certified educators. At Vista, technology is not a novelty. It is a tool for learning. We are the first middle school in Santa Ana to offer e-Sports.

Our cyber Patriot team placed in the top core tile of teams around the nation last year. In one of our elective classes, we actually have students building computers from scratch in our computer hardware class. Speaking of electives, we have been able to double our elective offerings to our students over the past two years, because we place a high value on the arts and really want to promote a well-rounded education. Our music class has exceeded expectations. In addition to our successful bi-annual concerts that we hold, our Vista musicians have already performed at local events and festivals including one of our students who sang the national anthem at the city of Santa Ana 4th of July festival in 2018.

Our Mandarin class is new this year, and we're very excited to have received a grant from the US State Department to bring a Mandarin teacher from China over to teach at Vista. We were the only school in the state of California to have received that grant last year. I love it when I'm walking through the hallways, and students greet me with a handshake and they say, "Ni hao." It always makes my day. We've also increased our STEAM presence through the prestigious Project Lead the Way curriculum and are currently offering both design and app creators classes. As you can see, our general education program is full and robust, but the question remains: Are we making an impact in the lives of the kids in Santa Ana?

This is our smarter balance data over the past few years, and you can see that we had a growth in our scores and we are far outscoring the other middle schools in our community in Santa Ana. Now, the 2018-2019 data is not there, because it is still embargoed. Even though we haven't published the scores yet, we have previewed them and I can assure you that there is continued growth. The growth in our data is great and we want to celebrate that, but we also want to recognize that we aren't where we want to be yet. Well, you have to start somewhere. We are

continuing to work diligently every single day to get to a point where all students are accessing the curriculum at or above grade level. Let's talk about where our students start.

Two years ago before coming into Heritage, only 17% of our incoming Heritage students were meeting or exceeding standards in ELA when they were in fifth grade. This was before Vista Condor came into existence as a feeder school. Those same students grew to achieve a 34% meets or exceeds rate, doubling the incoming scores in just one year once they got to Vista Heritage. These are the exact same students in one year. Let me also talk about the Condor effect. This is one of the main reasons why we opened Vista Condor last year as our main elementary feeder school into Heritage, which I'm also the principal of. According to our reading data from Vista Condor last year, we started with only 5% of our fifth graders reading at grade level. By the end of the year, that figure was up to 44%.

As we look at the reading levels of our current sixth graders at Vista Heritage, based on our diagnostic data, after just one year at Condor again, 44% of those students are coming in reading at grade level compared to just 10.8% of students that are coming from other elementary schools other than Vista Condor. In addition, the average Condor alum is reading at a grade level equivalent of a 5.1, which is a beginning fifth grade level. Meanwhile, the students coming from other schools are reading at the equivalent of a 3.7, which is second half of third grade. Forty-four percent is not good enough. We still have to have strong interventions for all students to move from where they are to where they can be. One of the ways we do that is through mastery learning.

Mastery learning aligns the teaching, learning, and grading directly to the grade level standards each student needs to meet. In a mastery learning classroom instruction is differentiated, so students can learn at their pace and be challenged appropriately. Therefore, students who are high achieving can be pushed further to accelerate their growth, and students who may be struggling can receive the proper support and intervention they need, so they can master the same exact standards. As part of our mastery learning, we have an innovative intervention program called Eagle Hour. Eagle Hour is a flexible intervention and enrichment period built into the schedule every single day.

In Eagle Hour, teachers may not receive the same students every day, because it is purely based on student need. The teachers will request students who will benefit from the targeted intervention that they are receiving each day, and students who are excelling will also get the chance to participate in a variety of enrichment options that they may not have the ability to participate in otherwise. No matter how great your instructional program is if you don't have a culture of love and respect, it is going to be difficult to build and sustain a successful school. The way we do that is through programs such as Way of Council and restorative practices. Way of Council is a form of circle talks that build a strong sense of respect and empathy by allowing all students to speak and listen from the heart.

We hold that at least every single week at Heritage. Way of Council is a form of restorative practices. At Vista, we use restorative practices and restorative justice to focus on repairing and maintaining strong relationships with all of our students. Not to beat a dead horse, but a program is only as good as its implementation. Here's the data that shows why these are successful

programs at Vista. We fundamentally and foundationally believe that you cannot transform a child's life if they are not in school. We are proud that we are able to keep our suspension rates to a minimum and in the case of last year to zero. Also, I want you to know that the students do experience trauma and come from low socio-economic backgrounds.

We have a 100% free and reduced lunch rate at Vista. We're proud of the lack of suspensions. School culture is not just about suspensions or behavior-based data. It's also about students having an engaged, positive educational experience. For example, in our student experience survey last year at Heritage, 95% of students reported that they agree or strongly agree that teachers genuinely care about their learning, and 89 of those students agreed or strongly agreed that teachers show a personal concern for them as an individual. As we talk about English learners working in Santa Ana, one of our critical concerns is ensuring the success of our English learners.

When you have 40% of your entire student population as English learners, you have to be ready to meet their needs. One way we have worked closely with the OCDE staff is through supporting our English learners. We have done this through adopting specific literacy intervention programs for English learners such as Lexia, Listen Wise, and Fountas and Pinellas leveled literacy intervention to address each of the literacy strands, reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of those have also been based on recommendations through our collaboration with OCDE staff. We are also excited to participate in the upcoming EL shadowing training through OCDE as we believe this will further benefit our English learners.

Our support for our English learners has reflected in a significant increase in our English learner reclassification rates over the last three years. In addition, through our internal Lexia data, last year we were able to move an additional combined 8% of our kids into intermediate or advanced categories and comprehension in the red there, and an additional 14% of our students into intermediate or advanced categories in word study that were not previously scoring in those categories. Another area that is extremely important and one that we have worked very closely with OCDE staff on, is special education and MTSS. At Heritage, we have a fully inclusive educational environment, which greatly benefits all of our students.

We're always proud of the fact that when people visit our school. They don't know where our special education students are because of our effective integrated approach. We are proud participants of the first MTSS cohort, and have received extensive training from OCDE staff and proudly have adopted the all means all MTSS motto. This past year, we've also started a gifted program identifying about 10% of our population, and we're fortunate that Dr. Wilson is an expert on gifted education. I'm almost done. I'm very, very close.

Audience and Board: [Laughter]

Felch: One last time, a program is only as good as its implementation, and here's the proof. Our fully inclusive special education and MTSS model has worked. Over the past two years, we've participated in the swift fit, a fidelity of implementation visits. We have grown into, what one of the visitors called us, a model school using the MTSS approach. Last slide. Oh, there we go. As I close, I want to express my sincere gratitude to the board and to the OCDE staff.

We're truly grateful for these last five years, and we are looking forward to five more years of growth and enduring success. Each year, we have had successful oversight visits and the trajectory that we have set students on at Vista Heritage is something special and proof that we will continue to follow through on our commitment to transform the school experience in Santa Ana. Thank you very much.

Audience: [Applause]

Chastain: This concludes the public hearing for Vista Heritage Global Academy. You'll receive a staff report and render a decision at the October 16 board meeting. President Barke, I now turn the meeting back over to you for any questions that you may have.

Barke: Thank you. Dr. Bedell?

Bedell: I'd just like to say that I would like to hear from the school. One of the things that the teachers and parents in my constituency, if they talk about it, are laudatory about MTSS. Can you give me a pithy paragraph on how that is for you? It makes a lot of sense for me as an academic. It's huge as an academic. Tell me about how it works in your site, because I liked your data here. It was interesting.

Felch: I could go on for a long time. I'm going to keep it short. I'll give you a quick snippet to make sense of how we use MTSS at our school. I talked about Eagle Hour. Eagle Hour is a way where we differentiate the support based on every student's need. Whether they are a student with an IEP, so they're receiving accommodations based on their IEP or they're receiving specified support in a mainstream class. We want to make sure that no matter if it's an integrated approach into our general education setting or during a specific time where kids are receiving special academic support in something like Eagle Hour, we're making sure that every student's needs, regardless of if they're a general education student or a student with special needs, they are still receiving that support even in a special setting.

Bedell: Based on your experiences, one aspect of MTSS that jumps out that, if you can only do one piece of it, what would that be?

Felch: It's hard to say.

Bedell: You must be a politician.

Audience: [Laughter]

Felch: MTSS is many times mentioned and referred to for special education, but it's not just that.

Bedell: No.

Felch: That's why in Eagle Hour, we're not just focusing on our students with special needs. Every student has needs, and during that time, we are making sure that we meet every student's academic needs in that intervention period. That's also, why we do mastery learning. It doesn't have to be that intervention period. We're teaching our teachers how to give every single student the support they need all the time.

Bedell: Thank you.

Barke: Beckie?

Gomez: I don't really have any questions. Thank you for talking about curriculum.

Audience: [Laughter]

Gomez: That wasn't meant to be funny. Mr. Wilson, I asked you a question when you came before us before, and I want to know where we are now.

Wilson: I already know what you're going to ask me.

Gomez: Okay. Tell me about your board.

Boyd: It's on the record.

Wilson: The question that I can tell you what she was going to ask is about having parents on our board. Since we talked, we were able to get one person who is on our board that is a parent that had children at our school. The other thing, when you want to build a board, you're trying to build a board across multiple...you need a lot of different kinds of supports. We've had a very stable board. We've actually added one new person. She was a highly successful principal in LAUSD for about 45 years. She's now added to our board as well. Currently, we are expecting in the next month to add at least one and hopefully two board members here in Orange County.

We just set up our system in a way that we have simultaneous meetings that can go on in both sites so that we don't have to ask somebody from Orange County to drive to LA for a board meeting. This way, we've actually been able to provide a format that is attractive to now get people from Orange County to join our board. We have a couple of candidates that we're looking at. I suspect that we should have a name hopefully by the time you approve us next month.

Gomez: Okay, all right. Thank you.

Wilson: You're welcome. I won't go too far.

Gomez: That's it.

Barke: Ken?

Williams: You make me proud. You've been here before us many times.

Boyd: Ken, we can't hear. The microphone's not picking you up.

Williams: You make me proud. You've been before us many times and each time it gets even better. Great job, and thank you so much.

Barke: I haven't been around as long as Ken to be as proud as he is, but I'm incredibly proud and I have visited and I would say a visit is worth a thousand words. I'm very impressed.

Congratulations. You guys are doing a great job.

Boyd: Do you have any other comments?

Barke: I don't think so. Anybody else?

Sparks: No.

Boyd: Would you recess and clear the room for closed hearing?

Barke: Yes. We will recess. Thank you very much for your time.

Boyd: We can take a five-minute recess? It's round table time.

Gomez: No, it's facilities.

Boyd: Oh, that's right. You can do that. I'm sorry. You don't need me for that. Do you have a redline?

Barke: Yes, I do have a redline. Darou, are you going to do roll call?

Williams: No. I make the motion to recess.

Boyd: You have to recess this meeting.

Barke: Oh, I'm sorry.

Boyd: Use your gavel.

Barke: Recess.

[PRESIDENT BARKE STRIKES THE GAVEL ONCE TO SIGNAL THE BEGINNING OF RECESS. ONCE RECESS HAS CONCLUDED, PRESIDENT BARKE STRIKES THE GAVEL ONCE TO CONTINUE THE MEETING]

Barke: We're back in session now. Our regular meeting of the Facilities Corporation and we'll go into recess so the facilities can hold their meeting. We're recessing the regular meeting and now can take roll? Yes?

Williams: Yes.

Gomez: We're all here?

Bedell: Yes.

Barke: No, we're not. Lisa's not.

Gomez: Is she the exception?

Boyd: You need a roll call for this.

Sisavath: Okay. Trustee Sparks?

Sparks: [TRUSTEE SPARKS IS NOT IN ATTENDANCE]

Sisavath: Trustee Williams?

Williams: Here.

Sisavath: Trustee Barke?

Barke: Present.

Sisavath: Trustee Gomez?

Gomez: Present.

Sisavath: Trustee Bedell?

Bedell: Here.

Barke: I'm going to call for a motion to approve the agenda.

Bedell: So moved.

Williams: Second.

Barke: Okay. Any discussion?

Bedell: None.

Barke: Okay, let's vote. All those in favor?

Board: Aye.

Williams: Oppose? Abstain?

Barke: Okay. 4-0. Yes.

Bedell: Like my grade point average at all times.

Williams: You have to do the meetings and minutes.

Barke: Okay. We've already approved the minutes.

Williams: That was the agenda.

Gomez: That was the agenda. We need to approve the minutes.

Barke: Okay.

Sisavath: The minutes have already been approved. There's notes on there for you.

Barke: That's what I thought.

Hendrick: You guys didn't like them to be a year from now. We'll approve them at the next meeting also.

Williams: They've already been approved.

Barke: Public comment? I see none. I call for a motion to appoint the officer nominated, and call for a vote to approve. I'm going to call for a motion to appoint officers.

Bedell: So moved.

Barke: Second?

Gomez: Second.

Barke: Nominate?

Bedell: Who are the officers?

Hendrick: You need to appoint a treasurer. Normally, we've had the board president becomes president, the vice president becomes vice president, but you need to have a treasurer.

Barke: Do one of you want to be the treasurer?

Bedell: Beckie's great with money.

Barke: I hereby nominate Beckie to be treasurer.

Bedell: Second.

Barke: All those in favor?

Board: Aye.

Barke: Okay, so Beckie is now the treasurer. Let's see.

Bedell: Something for your resume, Beckie.

Gomez: It's a resume builder.

Barke: There you go. Okay.

Hendrick: I have a recap for 18-19, and then you have to approve the 19-20 budget.

Barke: Okay. Beckie's in rush, so be quick.

Hendrick: I know. I'm going to go very quickly. At 18-19, this program did have a successful year. Our revenues exceeded our expenditures. We ended up with a fund balance at 3.5. We did have to take some funds from this project and transfer it to our capital facilities fund for our state project, because we had gone over our threshold. Our goal in future years is not to allow that to happen again and to do some prepayments. I will be bringing to you probably next month, October or November at the latest, probably Dr. Williams and Dr. Bedell remembers that we actually have to refinance our certificates of participation. That is due by December 2019.

We've been meeting with the financial team, and we have some proposals for you to look at. What it looks like right now, because the rates are so good, we're looking at a way to maybe fix the rate for 10 years, which will be the first time we've been able to do that. That would pay it off in 10 years compared to 13 years. You'll see that at the next meeting. We'll show you the proposal. For the budget, you're just going to receive the operational budget, I believe, or the operational results. You just received that report. For the budget, you actually have to receive it to approve it. For 19-20, we are anticipating that we would have one million dollars in expenditures. That's because building three is vacated, and we're doing major tenant improvements in that.

Building four has the large majority of our staff currently. We're going to be remodeling some of that and using that to reorganize staff. We'll move some of those tenants from four to three. All of that is within this plan. We are still within budget. Right now, it looks like if we do the 10 year fixed rate, we're actually going to end up lower than the rate we've been using. We're actually going to be under 3%. That is our goal. Occupancy is going to be a little bit lower in the first few months, because we do have that building vacant while we renovate it. The last tenants had been there since prior to us buying the building, so they've been there for 27 years. It needed a lot of work.

Williams: Do you need a motion to approve the budget then?

Hendrick: Yes.

Williams: Okay. We received it now.

Hendrick: Right. This one you received, and you have to approve this budget. Yes.

Barke: Okay. I'm looking for a motion.

Williams: I'll make the motion.

Bedell: Second.

Gomez: As the treasurer, I want to move it.

Board: [Laughter]

Williams: Want me to take it back?

Bedell: I'm not going to vote for yours.

Barke: All right, it's so moved by Beckie, and seconded by Jack. Any discussion?

Gomez: Renee's leaving.

Board: [Laughter]

Williams: I want to thank Trustee Gomez for her excellent work on this project.

Board: [Laughter]

Barke: I'll call for a vote. All those in favor?

Board: Aye.

Barke: 4-0.

Bedell: Doesn't it have to be a roll call? Renee, does that need to be roll call?

Williams: It doesn't have to be a roll call.

Boyd: You're not on the microphone. I didn't mean it like that. I'm sorry.

Board: [Laughter]

Bedell: Yes, you did.

Barke: I now adjourn the facilities meeting.

[PRESIDENT BARKE STRIKES THE GAVEL ONCE TO SIGNAL THE CONCLUSION OF THE FACILITIES MEETING. SHE THEN STRIKES THE GAVEL ONCE MORE TO SIGNAL THE CONTINUATION OF THE REGULAR MEETING]

Barke: We'll resume the other meeting. I think we're to the point where we ask our superintendent for announcements?

Mijares: Yes. Thank you, Madam President.

Barke: Actually, we have board discussion.

Boyd: They have board discussion.

Mijares: Okay.

Barke: Sorry.

Boyd: Dr. Bedell?

Barke: Dr. Bedell?

Bedell: I'll postpone my two items until the next meeting.

Barke: All right. If there were still people waiting for it, I would oppose that. I got yelled at last meeting for delaying it when people waited for it. Since there's nobody left, I'm in favor of that. I think that maybe we need to move it to an earlier portion.

Boyd: We'll move it to the October meeting?

Bedell: Yes.

Body: Or November?

Bedell: October, earlier in the agenda. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Barke: Yes. Both of your discussions that are being moved?

Bedell: Right.

Barke: Okay, back to you Superintendent for announcements.

Mijares: Okay. Thank you, Madam President. Just a couple of very quick announcements. I want to let you know that I had a meeting very recently with Dawn Thompson and Susan Moss on TLC, which is a charter school in Orange for autistic kids. It's amazing, and we're talking about ways for that to be expanded here in our county. Also, I had a chance to speak to parents who are graduating from the Padres Unidos parent training. There were about 40 parents, all of them Hispanic parents and all their kids are locked up. I was at a locked up facility where you have to go through. It's as if you're going into a military compound. Many of the kids were present in the room while their parents were talking about the new skills that they've learned, but these are all parents who've had that 3:00 AM call that your son's just been arrested.

It's just very chilling to listen to the stories that they told, but this program is very compelling. It's very successful. The parents are very thankful that we, along with the probation department, sponsored this program. I wanted to let you know that. Last night I spoke at the cube, the big cube over there on Main Street. It was an event. It's the Latino Educational Attainment Initiative sponsored by the OCBC- Orange County Business Council. The cube and many, many organizations are behind this. Nina Boyd was there. I was talking to parents and obviously the role of parents. There's the 10 commandments. Have you seen the 10 commandments?

If you haven't seen the 10 commandments for parents, you ought to see that. It's a strategy that's out and it's been developed for many, many years. In fact, they're in their 15th year now. I wanted to also commend, I see Christine Olmstead over there, Dr. Hittenberger. We did a very successful professional learning institute, PLI, at Long Beach Convention Center that some of you are aware of. We had over 3,000 people that attended this very successful convention, all about what's happening in the world of multi-tiered systems of support. How do we help in our classrooms? We want a name, face and story. It was very successful. Two more things and I'll be done.

E-sports, we're doing, if you haven't been on the inside track of what we're doing with these E-sports, we're working with the University of California, Irvine. They're the brand center and their school of Communication, Computer Science with the School of Engineering, the Samueli Foundation, there's four or five large sponsors. We're a big sponsor in the Orange County Department of Education because of what we're doing to build curriculum, and we now have curriculum at the high school that's A through G aligned that uses E-sports to teach mathematics, science, language arts. It's all approved by UCI and this is a multimillion-dollar industry.

It's fanning out now to Canada, Mexico, and Japan is now interested in this. E-sports- using the computer to teach core subjects. It's a great thing we're doing. Lastly, I just wanted to end on a budget note and say that I know that we're in negotiations over that, and we haven't had a chance to meet. I am in receipt of correspondence that was given to me by attorney Rolan who sent it to my attorney and myself on this budget issue that we have here. I want you to know, I will be responding to that in writing. Then, Madam President, with all due respect, I would request that this be discussed at a regularly scheduled board meeting as opposed to just with the executive committee.

That way the full board, because the state superintendent actually said that this needed to go back to your board- the full board. I think that was his perspective on this. Now, I defer to your

judgment, but I will be responding probably either tonight or tomorrow on the correspondence that I received from attorney Rolan. That's all I have under my reports.

Barke: Okay.

Williams: For the record, I disagree with that statement- what the CDE said.

Barke: Why don't we check in with Gregory Rolan and see? Nina?

Boyd: The associate superintendent's report, a reminder on the next board meeting is Wednesday, October 16. Submission deadline is October 2, and please whatever you can do to meet that deadline would be much appreciated it by Darou. The 2019 CSBA Annual Conference is December 5 through December 7 in San Diego. We have Jack and Mari confirmed so far. The deadline to RSVP is this week, September 13. If you're interested in going because that window will close, in terms of registration as well as potentially getting rooms. NSBA's Annual Conference has been announced for Chicago, April 4 through April 6, 2020. Registration and housing opens next month.

We will be sending you information with regards to that if there's interest. The California Charter Schools Association conference is March 16 through March 19, and we will be sending you information on that. At last month's meeting, Trustee Sparks mentioned that the November meeting was a conflict for her, and she wanted us to poll the board on options for changing the date. We've just received recently her schedule, because we were trying to make sure that we polled the board for her availability. That whole week she's not available. We were looking for dates surrounding that. We were going to ask you all. We move into the next week, it's a short week due to Veterans Day and then Thanksgiving is later in the month. We have three dates that we are going to send out to you for consideration to see if all of the board can make those dates. If not, then it'll be up to the board.

Barke: Do you want us to just do it right now? Can we do that?

Boyd: If you all have your calendars.

Barke: We do, because I think this can be done.

Boyd: November 12. We're looking at Tuesday, the twelfth.

Williams: I'll be gone.

Barke: What about Wednesday the 20?

Williams: I can make it.

Bedell: Hold on. That's Wednesday, the 20?

Barke: I think Lisa is gone for a whole week, then you're gone for a whole week. I think we had actually pushed it to the following week.

Boyd: The 12th you're not available? The following week.

Bedell: I can do Wednesday, November 20.

Williams: I can do that, too.

Barke: I can do that, and Lisa said she could do that.

Bedell: Can Lisa do that?

Barke: Yes. She stated at lunchtime or whenever we were back there.

Gomez: I'm looking. I probably can move something. We'll tentatively do that.

Barke: Okay. I just think if we start being polled, then we'll go in a circle. We can just decide and avoid another poll.

Bedell: I like that.

Gomez: Speaking of that, could we also consider doing closed session before the board meeting so that we don't have this problem with a lot of the public coming and then us breaking? If we did closed session at nine o'clock then we could be a little bit more efficient and have that block of time before the 10 o'clock start. I think that sometimes we try to do things too fast, because the public is waiting.

Barke: Either that, or put them at the end of the day. I was thinking to put them at the end of the day.

Gomez: The end of the day is really tough because people are trying to get out of out of here because of other appointments. I've already had to cancel two appointments for today, because we're running so late. That's why I say, a closed session. I If you do it at nine o'clock then we have a full hour to do whatever it is that we need to do.

Bedell: We would open the meeting, we'll do our roll call and everything and then we would go into closed session?

Gomez: Yes.

Bedell: Can we do that as it relates to public comments?

Williams: Yes, we can do that.

Boyd: You can do that. Many boards do their closed session an hour or two before. They start the meeting and then they go right into closed session. It's on the agenda, so people know public comments would be after that.

Gomez: You can always do public comment in case anybody has a comment about your closed session, but rarely do people do that. That's the way we used to always do it on council. We had our closed session before we did our business, then came back and held the meeting. We don't disrupt the public.

Williams: We do a roll call; we adopt the agenda and the minutes, and then go right to closed session?

Gomez: Correct.

Williams: When we come back, we do the pledge of allegiance and invocation to kind of unofficially start the meeting and do public comments.

Gomez: Exactly.

Williams: I'm fine with that. That might be better.

Gomez: I think it's a better use of our time.

Barke: It is. I don't like traffic at that hour, but I guess if I'm the only one that doesn't like 8 AM traffic, I can live with that one day a month.

Gomez: Yes? Okay. I think that would make us a little bit more efficient.

Barke: We'll still have a 10 o'clock start time, but when we have a closed session, we'll start at 9:00 AM?

Gomez: Yes.

Boyd: It would be a part of the agenda. It just shows that the closed session is -

Gomez: Is that 9 AM?

Boyd: - at 9 AM. It would show time certain 9 o'clock closed session and then everything else.

Barke: 10 o'clock would be the start time?

Boyd: 9 o'clock would be the board meeting start time.

Barke: We won't do the invocation and the pledge until 10 AM?

Boyd: Right. It's just how we notice things on the agenda. That part is not a problem. In terms of, you can't go into closed session if you haven't started your meeting officially. We need to

make sure that the public knows the meeting starts at 9 AM. 9:15 or 9:10, you go into closed session and then everything else would be after that.

Barke: We still have the members doing the invocation come at 10 AM.

Gomez: Basically, the open session starts at 10 AM just like it normally does.

Boyd: We could show a time certain of the invocation at 10 AM, so then everything else sequentially would fall after that.

Gomez: Right.

Barke: Okay. Works for me.

Gomez: Thank you so much for considering that.

Barke: The other thing is the inter-district transfers. That's the other time we kick people out. Maybe we need to push those as late as possible. Give them a time certain.

Boyd: We try to give them a time certain. We don't give them a time certain on the agenda just so that you have flexibility. We asked them not to come until 1:30 PM today, thinking that 1:30 PM was an adequate time to get to. Most times it works. The other thing is, you can take them earlier. You can do closed sessions, you could do inter-districts first and then you could move on to your agenda and not have those. It's really up to the board in terms of how you want to do it.

Barke: Okay. When the public is here, I just feel bad when I know they want to stay for later items, and we kick them out.

Gomez: Exactly.

Barke: That's what I'd like to avoid. Anybody else have anything?

Boyd: We'll still get people at nine o'clock. They'll just want to pull their cards for public comments, because they know that that there's a small window at times.

Gomez: The sooner, the better.

Boyd: Right, but that's okay.

Barke: If they want to do public comment, will they have to come at nine to get a card or can they still come at 10 AM if they want to do public comment?

Gomez: We should be available at 9 AM.

Boyd: Your policy says you're doing a 30 minute. If you all adhere to your policy, that's where their concern comes in. If you all do what you've been doing recently and just let everybody speak, then it's not an issue.

Barke: They just want to be the first 10 is why they're coming early.

Boyd: They want to make sure that you're not going to cut off and say, 30 minutes and we're done.

Barke: That's rare. We usually try to hear everybody.

Boyd: Anything else? That's all for me.

Barke: I don't have anything. I don't have anything else. I was going to say, I went to McGowan this morning. They always do a 9-11 ceremony, because we're right near the base, and it's really great. They get lot of police officers, and firemen, and military people. The kids come up and read poems, so it's pretty cool. It's kind of sad now that none of those kids were alive during 9-11, but it's just touching to hear that. I always try to do that on 9-11. I think this is my third year. Almost as touching as going to Sunburst's graduation. That's right there at the top as well. That's all I have.

Boyd: Adjourning?

Barke: Yes, we are adjourning.

Williams: Motion to adjourn.

Barke: Second? Do I need a second to adjourn?

Williams: No.

Barke: Okay.

**[PRESIDENT BARKE STRIKES THE GAVEL ONCE TO SIGNAL THE
ADJOURNMENT OF THE BOARD MEETING]**