

Highline Public Schools | 2021.06.23.Board.Meeting

Board meeting. And with that, I'll ask for people to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance, please.

I pledge allegiance to the flag [AUDIO OUT] United States [AUDIO OUT] and to the Republic [AUDIO OUT] one [AUDIO OUT] . Again, welcome everyone. And Kyle, roll call, please.

Director Van?

Here. Director Garcia?

Here.

Director Bradford?

Here.

Director Alvarez?

Here.

And for the last time, Director Dorsey.

Here.

Let's not get us going so soon. With that, I'm calling for any changes or additions to our agenda for this evening. Seeing and hearing none, we have no scheduled communications this evening, so we're going to move directly into our superintendent's update.

Yes. So I am not going to bury the lede, we have a number of things as part of my update today. But first, I welcome everybody here and say not burying the lede means we're going to start by honoring our very own Bernie Dorsey who, after 14 years, is stepping down from his service as a board member.

And I want to acknowledge that his wife Jill is seated here in the seat of honor up front. And Jill has sacrificed probably as much if not more than Bernie in terms of his years, so Jill, we thank you, too. My cabinet members have comments to make and we have some presentations to make, but I wondered if Angelica and Joe would like to begin. It's up to you.

So I'd would like to get us going. I don't have a whole lot to say because I just want to make this a joyous occasion. So I would like to again just acknowledge and honor. For me, it took a little while for Bernie and I to warm up. Our first couple of years on the board, we butted heads a few times, but I think it taught me a lot about how to really listen to others, regardless of their background or regardless of whether we agreed on something or not. And I've carried that with me.

I've carried the fact that when we entered meetings, there was times when I walked in also with my mind made up knowing that what I know from my own community and from my own upbringing, and there was times that you made me change my mind just because I had to look at a whole as a district, not just what my beliefs were or what I was standing for, but really looking as we're serving all our children. So I appreciate that. And I will carry that with me, and I will pass that along to Director Van.

Thank you, Angelica. How do I start? Where do I start? Bernie, you lied to me.

When I was first appointed onto the board, Bernie was like, yeah, don't worry, Joe. It's just like the PTA. You get in, get out. Just a few hours a week.

Don't worry about it. You got this. You got this. You lied. But I'm glad you did.

I had the opportunity to work with you, had the opportunity to work with Director Angelica Alvarez and Aaron, Michael, and now Fa'izah, and just everybody. And it gave me an opportunity to meet the cabinet and staff. You've shown me, like Director Alvarez said, that we butted heads as well.

But it was being able to understand each other and where we came from and different lenses is what it was all about. Seek to understand, right? So I appreciate all that you've done for the last 14 years. And I'm going to miss you, but this is not a goodbye. This is, I'll see you in Hawaii.

[LAUGHTER]

But Jill, I appreciate you also, lending Bernie out to the community and to our kids. Every year, we do get paid by seeing our graduates walk across the stage. And to see Bernie up there this last year in front of his alma mater, that was awesome.

And I just wanted to say one more thing. I thought I wasn't going to say this, but I think it's important for people to know there's very few things-- we all go through a lot of firsts, and we all have some really individual creative skills. And Bernie has one amazing creative skill. Jill can attest to this.

I bet you no one has a bird door in their house. And Bernie and Jill had one. I get to know people. You learn more and more about them. And through Bernie, I mean, I had the opportunity to meet Jill.

And I would say that now I understand Jill and not attending all these meetings because poor Jill in many ways. But I think that bird door, that I'm going to take with me too. If I ever get a house in Normandy Park, I'm going to maybe get a bird door in that. So it's a long story, but it's been fun.

It has had some tears, but also some really joyous moments where you get to meet their families, and you understand that they have to give up a lot. And so I'm thankful to you as well, Jill, for sharing Bernie with us. And with that, I'll pass it to Director Garcia.

Thank you. How did you do it? I've said this before with all the other board members that I've gotten to work with. We stand on the shoulders of giants of public servants like you, sacrificed so much.

I've got to see firsthand the sacrifice that you have to do, and you've done this for so long. How? But I hope someday I can make it like you did. And thank you for showing the way, and thank you for being patient with me and guiding me and giving me insight. So, thank you.

Thank you, Director Garcia. Director Bradford? Any words?

Yeah. Just wanted to first echo the-- I guess when you told Joe that lie, he told the lie to me that it was only going to [INAUDIBLE]. So that line spirit is like jumping around. But I certainly just want to say thank you, Bernie.

I certainly don't have the tenure that Joe and Angelica and Susan have with you, but I certainly can recall our first meeting with you helping to onboard me after my appointment. And so I just want to say thank you. Thank you for your sacrifice.

And truly, I hope that in the sacrifice that it was also a reward as well for you. And so I thank you for all that you've done for the Highline community. And I wish you well.

Thank you, Director Bradford.

So before we do the presentations, Bernie, I will kick off the cabinet remarks, and Kyle will end them. But I just want to say that Bernie was the Vice President, Angelica was the President of the school board that hired me back in 2012. So I want to thank Bernie for taking a chance on me. I know that he got an earful from some of my non-fans in Seattle.

And he took a chance on me, and, in doing so, has given me what will forever be the highlight of my professional career, which is the time that I've served this community in Highline. So Bernie, I just want to say thank you. And you've taught me many lessons. Yes, we've laughed, and we've cried.

And you have held me accountable to do my job to the best of my ability, to admit when I'm wrong, when I need to slow down, and to always remember, do with, not to. How are we partnering with people? How are we bringing people in? And that's a lesson that I think we always need to remind ourselves of.

So Bernie, that's going to be part of your personal legacy and my learning as a leader, and I want to thank you for that. You've been a wonderful role model and friend and leader in this district and a proud Highline alum. And so we look forward to welcoming you back for a visit some time that you can see your brand new alma mater in person because it's going to be great.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you and aloha. You certainly deserve it. You both do.

And with that, I'd like to invite my cabinet colleagues to come up one at a time to make their remarks. And then Kyle will bring it out, and then we'll do our presentations. Or actually, Bernie gets to say something, if he wants. And then we'll do our presentations and a photo.

Hi, Bernie. One of the standout moments for me is when I was first hired on here at Highline as a family engagement specialist, you said to me how important family engagement work was to you and you were like, how are we going to engage our fathers? Because typically we engage our mothers. And that really has stuck with me.

I don't have the magic answer yet, but I've never forgotten that statement. And one of the things I really genuinely appreciate about you is the time that you've been in Highline, at least the time that overlapped with my time, our district has grown and changed in many ways. And I've always observed you to be a learner and had that desire to better understand our community and how the times are a changing. And so I really have much respect for you, and thank you so much for your service and dedication to our community. I'm smiling. You can't see.

Likewise, smiling, happy for you, Bernie, and exciting times ahead. I want to thank you for your public service and your leadership and the expression of values that leadership is. There are a lot of things I have great memories of. The photo, you shared with me recently when we were on stage together or passing out the diplomas, fond memories there. Fond memories around STEM and around your work with robotics, which was a personal connection of mine as well as a father.

But the legacy that you leave with me is you have a single question that you ask from that seat in a variety of ways, but it comes down to, how have you engaged others who are impacted by the decision? And you ask it a lot of different ways, and probably a meeting hasn't gone by when you haven't passed some version of it. And it's always increasingly embedded itself into my mind and into the departments that I observe, and it's going to continue as a legacy in the school district. How have we involved others? And that's a lasting and impactful legacy that I'm thankful to you for.

We're not supposed to comment, but I'm going to take a personal point of privilege and thank every one of you individually. So thank you, Keisa, thank you, Steve.

Oh, Bernie Dorsey. When I think of the name Bernie, I think somebody who believes in our families always and believes in our kids. I have a very fond memory of working with you closely in Panasonic days and traveling and really trying to do some good things for the district and being in a line and having a conversation with you when we saw a five or six-year-old kid in front of us. And you turned to me and said, what do you see? And I probably said something lame.

But you said, I see a future graduate. And that simple comment just conveyed so much about your belief and your heart. Sincerely, thank you for always celebrating our accomplishments, always believing in our kids and our families and the staff, and always holding us accountable. Appreciate you.

Thank you, Susanne.

I would echo what my cabinet colleagues are saying about your heart for the community, for our students. And I just love how you connect with me on the numbers, that you see the fun and joy in our budget conversations, that you just get excitement about our bond measures. And also the way that you recognize us in the community, that it's not just situational, that you know that I'm Kate Davis here, but when you see me at Home Depot with no makeup on in sweatpants, that you still realize it's Kate Davis, and we can talk about numbers there too. So thank you for your support here in the community and for your love of our students.

Thanks, Kate.

All right. I ran into Bernie yesterday and promised I wouldn't make him cry today, so I tamed this way down for you. I was thinking about the different opportunities I've had to work with board members. And I've worked for nine different superintendents and I think it's 37 different board members as I've worked in education.

And separate from it, sounding like I can't hold down a job. You're the only board member that I've ever had the opportunity to create a relationship that let me know I could call any time, day or night. And you'd at least listen. So I appreciate that.

I'll share just a couple of little stories. We had the opportunity to present at Wasa quite a few years ago now. All you ever wanted to know about CFACT and were afraid to ask. And I think they came to see you more than me, but that was a learning experience that day where I saw the public presenter Bernie standing beside me as opposed to me looking up and listening to you. And the way you brought that brought me into that process and made me feel like part of it when really the focus was on the President of the school board, I appreciated that and appreciated what I learned about you that day.

And the second thing I wanted to talk about was our early morning conversations as we do our walks in the marina, the get skinny, get fit walks, and they really work well. And we're both really doing good on that. If I turn this way, you probably can't even see me.

But between the two of us, we have three Baileys, and so there was always a good story to tell or questions to ask on how we're going to move forward. So it was always fantastic to have that ear, to know somebody would listen. And just know that you're a game changer for our kids and a world changer for our kids, and you've done the same for me. Aloha.

Thank you.

Bernie, I don't expect you to remember this, but I remember the first time. I met you. And it was at a planning meeting for a family engagement session at Chinook Middle School. And I asked the woman who was organizing it who is the family liaison there, who's this guy? And she said, oh, he's a Marvista dad.

And I said, OK. What's he doing leading a family engagement discussion at Chinook Middle School? And she said, well, he just passionate about family engagement. And I said, OK, well, like, what does he do when he's not volunteering? And she said, oh, he's the founder of a nonprofit on conscious fathering.

And I went, oh, wow. This guy could be the real deal. And since that time, I've have seen you serving this community in so many ways, always putting families at the center as a volunteer, as a fellow Rotarian, and of course, culminating in 14 years on the school board. And I just want to thank you for all you've done for and with this community and the contribution you've made to our students. Thank you, Bernie.

Thank you.

Hello. I have not known a Highline without Bernie Dorsey, so tomorrow is going to be starting a new era for me. It's going to be weird. I, like Catherine, was thinking about when I first met you, and it was actually before I started working here. Susan invited me down to go to a school board retreat, which says something about me and so please leave that out of your comments.

I hadn't started working here, and I was going to a school board retreat. Anyway, I had a little bit of PTSD from my former employer about how it was to work with school boards. And I walked into your room, and you greeted me. And you were so friendly and welcoming and engaging and I thought, oh, this is going to be different.

But this is what it's like to work with a functioning school board. So I thank you for that welcome. I thank you for getting rid of my PTSD. I'm much healthier now, which is important.

And thank you for your service. You've done so much for this community and for this district. You will be missed.

Thank you, Holly.

OK, so you came less than a year after I started here. And I remember the day that you were sworn in, and I remember everything about that. And this current board and some of the predecessor boards have made technology possible, but it's really under this current board and you as the leader, as President, many, many time.

Think of all the technology that's been in place. We would not have been ready for what we did if it wouldn't have been the groundwork that you'd laid and the questions that you asked. And I appreciate that you're not afraid to ask the tough questions of us.

Many of our retreats, you're digging. You're trying to figure out what's under the covers, and I like that. So thank you for that. And thank you for your leadership. I will not miss your text messages or your phone calls, but you still have my number.

Thanks, Mark.

So Kyle, do you want to make your comments? And then we will give Bernie-- present him with his gift.

Unlike Mark, I will miss your text messages and calls. I did a little digging today into my folders and files, and I came across some stuff that I wanted to relinquish back to you, which would be your official certificate from 2007 and your oath of office from when you first signed back in December under John Welston with the judge. There is also an article that was written about you in 2012, and as well as your first headshot and your current headshot.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

So I want you to have all that. And then also I have just started doing a little crafting and projects, and so I created this little stained glass logo for you to take with you.

Thank you, Kyle.

You'll be able to take that on the plane right?

Oh, yeah.

Bernie, on behalf of cabinet, we took up a collection. And we wanted to give you and Jill a night out on us. So you can use this at a favorite local place before you go or add a new place in your new home in Hawaii. But that's just for you to share with your wife. OK?

That's for the both of you. It says Bernie, but it's for Jill, too. And I know that Angelica has something for you. And then we'll let you make your remarks, and we'll do photos.

Do you want to speak before we do the photo? Or do you want to do the photo now?

I might need a minute.

OK. Let's do the photo. Let's go out and do the photo. Bring your plaque. OK.

Well, since we're all wearing masks, it won't be hard to tell what year this is, probably. First of all, let me clarify the bird door situation because I know everybody's extremely curious about the bird door. But I think it's an important story because I hope it represents what I've always tried to bring to my work on the school board, and that is that I always am trying to learn.

So I got a little arrogant about my home improvement skills at one point. I realized I could hang a door and get the hinges to line up and the doorknob to line up, which for me is very unusual. As Jill will tell you, home improvement projects have brought me to tears more than one time in my life.

But I thought, oh, I really got this. I got this. So I took the door off of the hinges, and I took it out in the backyard. I put it on put it on the sawhorses, and I cut the cat door. And then I took it off the sawhorses and put it back on the hinges, and I realized that the cat door was at the top.

So I quickly plugged it all back up and corrected it. And Angelica and Ernesto, her husband, were over at our house. And she said, what is that? And I told her the story. And so I'm sure I'll never live that one down.

But it truly, as you were saying that, it truly represents what I've always tried to bring to this chair, and that is a learner's mindset. And the reason is because at the end of the day, we can never forget that we are models for our students. How we conduct, how we learn, how we interact with each other, how we compromise, that they're constantly watching. And I think it's so important that not just those of us that have the privilege and honor to sit up here, but same with the educators that are in the classroom, same with the administrators in every building, with every bus driver and throughout the system, at every level and every capacity, kids are watching.

And I've always tried to keep that in mind. And as I used to tell our son as I was leaving for another school board meeting was that I have one child in my home, but I have 19,000 kids out that front door. And I know that all of the colleagues that I currently share the dais with and all of those that have proceeded have that same attitude. And it's so heartwarming to hear people's memories of me because I in turn have memories of each of you, and I will take those with me because this is just a part of our journey as a community.

I was at a conference years ago, and I heard a speaker. And she talked about the 100 year view. And at the time, I was extremely frustrated with the work that I was doing and the pace of the change. I felt as though at the current pace, we would never get to where we wanted to be. And when I heard her speak, that really stuck with me because we are all just stewards of this time, of this moment in time, and our role is to not solve every problem.

Our role is to work continually toward the solution that is beyond where we're going to be. And I think if we keep that 100 year view mentality towards our work, we should always be urgent. We should always be at the fastest pace we can sustain change. It doesn't do us any good to accelerate and then have to step back because it wasn't the right decision or it wasn't the right program.

With a little more patience, which is hard for me, maybe that decision will be a little bit better. But let's just all try to remember that we have our role in the 100 year view. The analogy that she used was the women's suffrage movement, and that had women stopped fighting for the right to vote, which took them 100 years to achieve-- which is another tragedy unto itself-- but if any one of those women in that battle would have stopped or became impatient and quit, how much longer might it have taken?

And so as we look at being an educational system super committed to being anti-racist and providing that education in an equitable environment, we also have to remember that we are in the 100 year view. We are placing our moment in time. And as long as we're moving forward, as long as we're progressing, then we'll continue to get there.

We won't be able to see the finish line. But we will all have known that we played our part. My greatest privilege is to know that I played my little part. So thank you all. I'm deeply grateful.

OK, moving on. Thank you, Bernie. And I think we'll all agree it's more than a little part you've played. It's a significant one.

I want to just begin. We have a number of staff introductions tonight, but almost none of them are here, except for our friend, Dr. Peterson, so I'm going to introduce you. So I think I'm going to wait on the rest till probably the August meeting when they're back. They're going to be on vacation in July, but we have a number of leadership appointments.

I've updated them to you in email, but we always like to introduce them when they're hired. But Kyle, I think we'll add that for August, OK? But I am pleased that we do have someone here in the flesh and that is newly minted Dr. Catherine Peterson. Just received her doctoral degree from the University of Washington two weeks ago.

Yes, we can clap for that. Dr. Peterson is our Director of COVID recovery. She began her teaching career as a kindergarten and first grade teacher in bilingual classrooms with a focus on Spanish and English dual language acquisition. Prior to this assignment, she worked with youth care in their education, employment, and workforce development programming as the Director of Strategic Program Partnerships.

Catherine has a bachelor's from Bushnell, a master's in educational leadership and policy from Boston University, and just graduated with her EDD in educational leadership and policy from the University of Washington. I should note that Catherine was also instrumental in pulling together the mammoth presentation that we had tonight on budget. She's already earning her keep. Catherine, we are thrilled to have you here, so welcome to Highline.

And before I bring Sandy up for her comments, I just want to take a moment because this is our last board meeting of this school year, and just want to publicly again thank all of our staff and congratulate all of our staff for making it to the end of the year and for all of the things that we have to be proud of. Yes, we made lots of mistakes. Yes, we learned some things the hard way. Yes, much of what we did was wildly imperfect.

But I believe that this team and this community in Highline did as good as anybody in this country in stepping up and meeting the needs of our children and families during these unprecedented circumstances. And so from the deepest part of my heart, I want to say thank you to everyone across Highline. Regardless of what role you are in, you played a part in us making it through this school year.

And I just want to say too, a special thank you to the staff who helped make sure that our students had their in-person graduation ceremonies. I know that the board members were able to experience them and watch them. And they were just joyful. It didn't matter that it rained. It didn't matter that they could only have two or three family members.

They were just so happy to have their moment. And I'm so grateful that our staff stepped up. We have people who are great professionals and talented and experts in their field and highly skilled at what they do, whatever that may be. But it's the true love for our children and the sense of service that every person in this district brings to what they do that I think sets them apart.

And this example will always stay with me. We had three graduations in a row that last Sunday a couple of weeks ago. First one, sunny, beautiful. Second one, they started getting the downpour, and it was pretty soggy by the end.

Well, a couple hours later, we came back for Highline. We thought it might lighten up. The opposite happened. It was a torrential downpour, and it did not stop.

But what I noticed when I returned for the Highline ceremony, which was the last one, our facilities and maintenance and other staff who were there to help coordinate this had wiped down every single chair and put garbage bags over each of them so that our graduates would be able to sit their butt on a dry seat, which I know that seems like a small thing, but it really isn't, right? It's not just that they had a dry chair. It's that the adults said, we need to do this so our kids know how much we care and how special this day is and that we're going to make it as perfect as we can amidst all the imperfections.

So to everyone who played a part in helping our graduates have their moment, thank you, thank you, thank you. I wish you all a restorative summer I hope with hugs with people that you love in person. And I can tell you that we will be taking a little rest, but also working hard throughout the summer so that we can prepare to welcome all of our students and staff and families back in person five days a week come fall. And what a glorious day that will be. And so with that, Sandy, I will turn it to you.

I don't know how I can follow all of this, but I will do my best. And thank you for this time and for a strong closure to the end of the year. And of course, thank you, Bernie, for your service.

You have some very wise words for us here that I will take to my heart and I hope others will too, because yes, we do each play our part and I know that you've made it very meaningful for so many kids through the service and through the model that you have shown. Maybe we'll get your address in Hawaii and come by and visit. But thank you, and you will be missed.

Thank you, Sandy.

As far as kind of getting a little bit to business, we were actually in negotiations today talking about some of the things you heard around the budget. And so we might have a few more details as those hopefully start to wrap up around starting the next school year. So it's exciting times to actually have money in the budget, and even if it is for just a few years, I know we all are dedicated to using that money wisely.

Some of the work that went on last summer with the planning teams I think was really effective for this year was definitely very effective. We had four planning teams, and it's really clear the whole child work that Keisa has led and has continued to lead has had a huge impact. And that is the area that our members have really asked for, and we've heard a response with the addition of counselors to the next year, and that's really appreciated.

We held some listening sessions last week. And we appreciate the reaching out to outside agencies. I guess an area of concern my members have had is some of the effectiveness of some of those agencies and how are we really holding them accountable.

I mean, it's not necessarily that those agencies, particularly some of the mental health supports and things, are doing anything wrong or there's something bad about them. But they themselves have had a challenging time in maintaining staff. And so even my own personal experience, just seeing a counselor come in and work with kids for a couple weeks and then they're gone for a long time-- and this is before the pandemic-- and then another one comes in.

And so I think there's a real interest in looking at what could we do even with more social workers. I mean, they do provide a lot of those supports. I think looking at what the ratio of social workers we have in this district is underfunded by the state, but it is an area that if we're going to be spending money and sending it to outside agencies, I guess before we start doing that I would love to see some sort of analysis of what role the social workers could play with some of that money and reducing some of their caseload sizes.

So I would request that you might want to look into that as you're moving forward with the budget. I know the budget is a general outline, and we want to guide our expenditures. But my understanding is there is also some opportunities to make some adjustments as we go.

I think another area that's really important to us under the health and safety, all the work that Scott has done, and again, he started that committee last summer. And if you think back to how little we understood about COVID even back then, and there was a lot of effort put into high touch surfaces and all the cleaning and all of the plastics, the screens, and a lot of stuff we were realizing. It comes down to much more to ventilation.

And it's my understanding we've put money into ventilation, and reports that have been done to really analyze the rooms and the buildings. So we have some really strong data on this. I'm a little concerned when I hear, well, we're really interested in the buildings that we might not be rebuilding for 10 years out. Well, I mean, we need to have good ventilation next school year.

I mean, the next school year is the year that we need it. And I know we have temporary fixes with some of the ventilation machines and stuff, but this is where funds are a real opportunity because we live in one of the more polluted areas of the region being right around the airport. And so if we can actually improve indoor air quality, that's tied to a lot of research just coming out around test scores.

I mean, I'm involved on a committee with Scott that UW is doing around our indoor air quality. So I really would love to see more emphasis put on making sure that all students have high quality indoor air, and I'm sure will reap the benefit from that. So if you can ask for some real specific reports on what the plan is for which buildings and where and why that would be awesome.

And I think those are two of the main areas, I think. I appreciate when it talks about support for K-3. It said generally more support and it'll be interesting to kind of look at what are best practices around some of those. But children having one on one or smaller class sizes is great or extra support in those buildings to really work on the skills that they need extra support in is going to be really important to buildings at our elementary level as well.

So I appreciate having an opportunity to see the general overview and challenge you to look and dig into some of those areas that we think are going to have the biggest impact from the perception of the educators. Cabinet has spent hours and hours. I've had a hard time reaching them because they're always bringing forward their ideas and trying to work this budget and really make all the numbers work, and I really appreciate the fact that of all the hours that the cabinet members have put into that.

I would say from the teachers union's perspective, our educators have been involved in some of those conversations. And I don't know. For myself personally, I would like to see make sure that teachers are involved or the union's involved in some of those conversations as we're moving forward. So I guess that said, thank you, Bernie, again, wish you the best, and appreciate all your service to our community.

Thank you.

Thank you, Sandy. And my apologies, we do have one more part of the update. We have a quick update from business services and from student family engagement supports. So Kate, and then [AUDIO OUT].

I want to shout out to my team. We have some of our budget team and Andrew from accounting here tonight. The budget team put together the budget presentation that you saw tonight. There's also a 77 page budget book online that is a fantastic reading material that really has lots of tables getting into the details of every single activity, program, object, all the fun sources of our budget. It's riveting.

There's 604 different programs that they've put together for the budget. They've reconciled over 2,372.5 FTE to make sure every staff position is accounted for in that budget. Our accounting team has made sure that \$314,693,876 are accounted for. That is \$50,246,960 are non compensation expenditures.

Our payroll team processed \$264,446,916 worth of non compensation costs last year. Our procurement team processed 1,080 purchasing orders. And of course, there were 118,484 miles that our accounts payable team processed. So they've been working super hard during this pandemic, and I just want to give them a shout out for all of those dollars and miles processed.

Thank you, Kate. Yeah, that's worth a round of applause. Our people work hard, and they look forward to that paycheck. And that doesn't just come in on wings of birds. It happens because our people work hard to make it happen, so thanks to everyone in business services who's here tonight and elsewhere. And now Keisa.

Hello, again. So I just want to share a little bit about what's been happening this past year in the Student Support and Family Engagement Department. Of course, I could say something about every single individual and how hard they've worked to support our families and students during this difficult time, but I just want to highlight a few pretty big significant things, at least in my book.

First, starting with our translations and interpretations team reporting to Lita, our infamous ZZ Newman and Angelica Ponce. They processed close to 2,700 interpretation requests. That does not even include our language lines. And they, on average, processed 70 written translations a month. They were so busy this year, and so we're so eternally grateful for them.

Our social workers, when we went to remote, they did not go to remote. They and our family engagement specialists, they were front line staff in terms of really trying to seek out our families of students that were not engaging online. They made home visits. They made deliveries of basic necessities.

They worked so hard, never stopped working, supported both staff and students during some crises and tragic times we had this year, and did it with a smile on their face. And I know they're so tired. I hope they get some rest.

Something I'm really, really proud of with our re-engagement counselor Anne Marie Littleton under the leadership of Michaela White, identified a very distinct group of students that had disengaged from school this year as a result of the pandemic. It's our high school age students, newcomers to the country who are receiving AAL services. There is approximately, I want to say, maybe 30 to 40 that had to disengage from school because they were working to support their families.

And she partnered with Highland College and advocated for an evening program so that these students could continue to work during the day, and that these students could earn high school credits and get the language support at night. And they were successful in that endeavor. Two big bureaucratic agencies, and got that done for our students. Quite amazing.

In our native ed programs, with all the things that have been going on forever, but particularly in the last year and a half around racial injustice in this country, Sarah Marie Ortiz, our native education manager, stayed the course and provided a speaker series this year, a Black and native speaker series, and hosted a series of events with local community leaders to talk about their experiences from being mixed Black and Native. Quite powerful. They were very well attended, and I'm so grateful that she stayed the course in that important topic, even though it would have been easy to veer from that with all the other things going on.

And last but not least, she's on vacation and she is out of pocket, but Elaine Irons-Hunt, our Director of Health Services, really did the work of two people for the majority of this year. She was our district COVID coordinator and liaison with Public Health. She supported our schools and district with contact tracing, with developing trainings, and ensuring people had fit test for N95 masks.

She was available day and night to schools who called to do contact tracing. She hired a whole COVID test team, all the while doing her regular job of supporting our health services. We would not have survived without her, and I'm going to miss her dearly.

But she's going to be off living her best life. And so that is just a handful of the things that have happened in our department, but I'm so grateful for all those on my team, Lita's here, and all the hard work they've done this year. So that was probably more than my allotted time.

Thank you, Keisa, and thank you to your extraordinary team. And thank you, Lita, since you're here. We'll acknowledge you too. And that concludes my Superintendent update for this evening.

Thank you, Superintendent. And with that, we're going to move to school board reports. Any last legislative reports? Director Garcia?

No.

None? Are you sure? Well, with that we'll move on to Director reports.

President Alvarez, I would like to have a point of privilege, please.

Absolutely.

OK. I think we got a little ahead of ourselves here. Per policy 11 14, you know we need to discuss and accept your resignation first, Bernie, before we say you can go.

So we can not let him go?

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

Per policy.

You can go.

Don't tempt her.

So I would like us to open the mics up for as board directors to vote either yea or nay to allow a resignation. Not so much of a vote, but just one final rule either, we want you to stay or we want you to go. But for me, Bernie, I accept your resignation. I appreciate all you've done for our community and our staff. Thank you.

So I will go next I don't think we have a choice. I think we have to accept the resignation. So I accept not by choice. Director Garcia?

I'll ditto to that. With reservations, I accept.

Thank you, Director Garcia. Director Bradford?

I think I heard that Bernie is going to Hawaii, and I would never stand in a man's way--

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

--in Hawaii. I accept, and will miss you.

So I guess that's final. I would like to also let the community know what our timeline is, OK? District Four term began in December of 2019. It is up for election in 2023.

The board will be appointing someone to fill the seat for the remainder of the current term. The application will be online tomorrow. So just some really high level bullet points and dates will be posted. The seat will be vacant as of tomorrow.

We will start soliciting applicants tomorrow through July 16th. We'll have a community meet and greet. Dates too will be determined. We can do it virtually or in person. We'll make that determination when the time comes.

And then the board will hold an executive session to evaluate the applicant, and we will appoint finalists at the regular board meeting on the 4th. And the candidate will take office on August [AUDIO OUT]. So that will all be posted online tomorrow via social media, as well as the district website.

Thank you, Director Van. Director Dorsey? I thought you were going to say something.

Oh, no. Was it reports time?

Yes. So it is actually Director reports. Thank you, Director Van, for just giving us, like you said, just the highlight of what's happening now with the appointment. So Director Dorsey, seems like you're anxious to give your report tonight.

Just because things come in and out of my head so quickly, right now it's there. Just real quick, the graduations. One of the most profound things to me in that experience and being there for Tyee's sprinkle and then Highline's downpour was-- it wasn't the weather. It was the emotion of those students as they came up to get that diploma.

And whether it was 2007 or '17 or '21, it's such an experience to just witness that, whether you're standing up on the stage or whether you're in the stands. But that's the thing that I think also I kind of take with me is even through a pandemic and through the previous years drive by graduations and all of the things that our students go through in their lives, the thing that they all have in common is that unique and very emotional experience of getting that diploma. And so that's one of the things I'm going to really miss, but it never gets old. That's the end of my report.

That's your forever report. Thank you, Director Dorsey. Director Garcia, any reports?

Nothing to report. Just again, for staff, an immense amount of gratitude for pulling it off. This was a wild year, and we did it. And you have most definitely earned the break that you guys have coming down the road. So relax, recharge, and I'm so so, so thankful for all of you. And that's it.

Thank you, Director Garcia. Director Bradford?

Yes. Sorry, I'm talking to Shani as well. Yes, Shani. I also want to just express great gratitude for the staff, for our families, for every single person involved in this school year. It just continues not to be lost on me that everyone has pulled off what we have pulled off, even in the midst of experiencing the pandemics our own selves and managing our homes and remote learning and some becoming teachers as well as employees and all sorts of things during this year and the year prior.

So I just want to really say thank you. When I think about it, it continues to exhaust me. Since, Dr. Enfield said something earlier. It wasn't perfectly imperfect, but it was something along those lines. And I think that that is what we have to look at is that we have given it our best shot, and I thank you.

Thank you all for that. And it's been emotional. It's been hard. And it's also been rewarding to see all of us come across the finish line for this year.

Well, one of the things that I heard during graduation, and it just moved me such is to hear so many of our students just give thanks to the adults, to their parents, to the adults in the school and at the district that helped them get through. And to hear them say that if it were not for and naming people explicitly that they would not have made it through. And so again, I just don't have enough words to express all of the thanks that I have.

I do hope that Bernie gets that 77 page riveting document that Kate mentioned as a parting gift. I think it would only be fair and right. And so I hope that he gets that. But to all, I hope that you have a great break or get a little bit of a break and we'll see you soon.

Thank you, Director Bradford. Director Van?

We'll make sure Bernie gets that as a carry on the flight, OK? Some light reading. I just want to echo what everybody else says. Thanks to our staff, our students, our community.

A hectic year, but we did it. You guys did it, and thank you very much. And to our staff that took care of graduation, that was fantastic. I had the honor to stand up there every one of you guys and hand those diplomas out.

It was wonderful. So thank you. That's all I have.

I also want to say thank you first to our students. I had an opportunity to talk to a couple of them in this last couple of days, and something that resonates with me is that again, just like Director Bradford and others have mentioned, they felt like they made it because they had their teachers that supported them, their families that supported them. And that means that without you guys many of them wouldn't have crossed that stage. And even though some of you don't work directly with them, they still see the support that their teachers get so they're able to support them.

And also some of them mentioned above communications. They said, everything was on the website. So thank you to our communications, to technology, to everyone. Everyone puts in their little grain into this big sack that really supports all our community, our families, our students. And thank you to all of you as well.

And I can't say enough about how blessed I feel to be in this district. I have a grandson currently in the system, but I've had four who've graduated from this district. And I feel so proud to not just live, but to be part of Highline.

And to Bernie again, thank you. Thank you for making a difference in many of us. And with that, we conclude our school board reports, and I'll ask for a motion to approve our agenda for this evening.

I'll make a motion that we approve our consent agenda.

I second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Any opposed? Our consent agenda is approved. And with that, we have two introduction action items.

The first is a motion to approve resolution 11-21 in support of King County's Best Starts for Kids. Approving of this motion would approve the resolution in support of the Best Starts for Kids Levy. Any questions or comments, clarifications?

None.

With that, I make a motion. I moved that the Highline school board approve resolution 11-21 in support of the Best Starts for Kids Levy.

I'll second.

Role call please, Kyle.

Director Dorsey?

yea.

Director Bradford?

yea.

Director Yen?

yea.

Director Garcia?

yea.

Director Alvarez.

yea.

This motion passes five to none.

Our next introduction action item is motion to approve the Des Moines Elementary School declaration of covenant for inspection and maintenance of stormwater facilities and BMPs. Any questions or comments?

I just have one.

Thank you, Scott. We see this coming up. Des Moines, it feels like it's been going on forever. Like what are we doing? Like things can be coming up. Where are we in the process with Des Moines? Like this is one of the final ones?

So you'll be very happy to hear this is the final one. We will be able to close this project out once this covenant investment and best management practices are approved by the school board.

Thank you Scott. Thank you so much. So with that being said, I move that the Highline School Board approve Des Moines Elementary School declaration and covenant for inspection and maintenance of stormwater facilities and the BMPs. I need a second.

I'll second that.

Roll call, Kyle, please.

Director Garcia?

yea.

Director Bradford?

yea.

Director Van?

yea.

Director Alvarez?

yea.

And for your last action item, Director Dorsey.

yea.

This motion passes five to none.

Thank you. We have several interdiction items. I'm not going to read through all of them. Just to clarify, most of them are just renewing of contracts that we've had in the past. Is that correct?

So that will be your homework to read the introduction items. And if you have any questions or Bernie, you're going to have to read it on the plane and then just send us back your thoughts. Just kidding.

But if you can reach out, if you have any questions you want to email just so you get clarifying questions before our next meeting. And with that, any other last comments or questions before we adjourn our meeting?

Kate has-- yes, Kate. Looks like Kate has--

We do have Jim McNeil available--

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

The levy resolution. It's one of the introduction items. So since we have him here tonight, I ask that you think about that one.

Thank you, Kate.

Yes, thank you, Kate. If you guys have any questions or anything.

Does Jim have anything he wants to leave with?

Is there anything that you'd like to let us know?

Sure, thank you so much. And I just have to say congratulations to Bernie on his retirement. I've worked with a lot of school board members over the years or the 30 plus years I've been a bond lawyer in, Bernie is such a unique individual.

And every time I've had an interaction with him, he has been so positive and encouraging and just a real visionary. So congratulations. You've done a great job.

With respect to the levy that's before you, this resolution will look very similar to your prior resolutions that you've done over the years. A couple of differences with this resolution just to keep in mind as you think about it, and if you have any questions, you can pass it on to Kate and we can certainly provide the answers. There is a requirement now that the board or that the district specifically receive a pre-ballot approval of the uses of the levy, specifically from OSPI.

And so that provision is contained in the resolution itself that in essence says, we've got approval from OSPI, and we're going forward as far as that particular document. The other thing is that this resolution is a little more descriptive in the uses of the levy proceeds specifically in the ballot. In prior years, we've been a little bit more generic, but under the circumstances, I think the Highline team really felt and I totally agree that having a little bit more description much like the cappelletti that the board did last year, that having a little bit more description was going to be very beneficial to explain the uses of the capital of the UPL Levy specifically.

So those are a couple quick items for you to think about. And again, don't hesitate to pass along any questions you might have to Kate. Thank you.

Thank you, Jim.

Thank you, Jim. Any questions for Jim currently now that are popping up? If not, like you said, we could email him to Kate.

I guess a quick question for Kate. Where's the projections that you shared assuming the levy was renewed earlier today or is it assuming we didn't have the levy? So like the 2026 year, those years where we were looking at a deficit.

They assume that we would continue to levy at our current rates.

Cool. That was it. Thank you.

Any other questions, comments, anything else that I'm missing? Dr. Enfield?

No. Thank you, Kate, for bringing it to our attention. Thank you, Jim, for being with us tonight. Happy summer to you.

Thank you for being patient, Jim, through all of this. Thank you. Anything else, Director Van?

No.

With that, I'll make a motion that we adjourn.

I'll second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Any oppose? Bernie?

Bernie?

You want to close?

No.

Happy summer.

Yeah. Happy summer, everyone.