

Highline Public Schools | School Board Meeting - August 3, 2022

Good evening, everyone. Welcome to the Wednesday, August 3 board meeting. Can everyone please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance?

Thank you. Roll call, please.

Director Van.

Here.

Director Howell.

Here.

Director Alvarez.

Here.

Director Hagos.

Here.

Director Garcia.

Here.

We're on agenda item 1.4. Is there a call for changes or additions to the board meeting agenda?

I have.

All right, then we'll jump to agenda item number two, recognitions. Dr. Duran, do we have any?

Not tonight.

All right, sweet deal. That moves us on to scheduled communications. We'll do some updates on the screens for our communication rules, but I just want to remind everyone of our group norms-- to be present, to be respectful of different opinions, to be easy on people and hard on ideas. Be as concise as possible. Enable all opinions to be heard. Assume best intentions of each other. And seek to understand and then be understood. And I will call the first person. Is there a James Payne here?

James Payne with two at North Hill Elementary. What if I told you that according to all OSPI data available, in the past six years 1,409 students left Highline Public Schools? That's a 7% decrease since 2016 and, as you know, dramatically affects your budget. You've discussed this.

But what if I told you that a certain demographic of minority children comprised 81% of the kids who've disenrolled from Highline in the past six years? Now what if I told you that out of that 1,409 lost students, 81% were American Indian? What would you think? You would be absolutely alarmed, right? You'd surely ask yourself, why are we driving these particular kids away in such great numbers, and what can we do to bring them back?

If the OSPI numbers are correct-- and there's no reason to believe they're not-- clearly there are system inequities at work within Highline, clearly. Highline would likely scream systemic racism, publicly self-flagellate, hire equity consultants from the local shakedown nonprofit to predetermine why the racism occurred, illegally hire teachers based on their race, change the school mascots, adjust your curriculum, to include daily land acknowledgments, and force your teachers into even more anti-racist training, right?

Now while the numbers I gave you from OSPI are real, the demographics are not. The actual minority children who fled were white kids, 1,252 of them in the past six years. 81% of your lost kids in the district are white. You should be as alarmed at this statistic as you likely were with the fake example I provided previously.

Because despite what you may, think white kids are no more dispensable than anyone else. Why is it that no other demographic even comes close to the white children Highline has run off in the past six years? Indeed, Highline has only lost 157 of all other demographics combined during that same period, compared to 1,252 white kids. Why?

Past behavior indicates that Highline would ascribe this phenomenon to white flight, white privilege, or my favorite, white fragility. By the way, these are intolerable racial smears directly cited in your official policy 0010.

It could be because of the tremendously poor outcomes, academic outcomes, that Highline is offering to students, as borne out by the OSPI testing. But most likely the majority of these white kids have left due to your racially hostile environment that you people have created with your race policies as adopted since 2017.

And they're leaving before they get academically or physically hurt. It's only logical. This OSPI statistic should be the clearest example of a problem you created and now must confront. Driving white children away from Highline in such shockingly disproportionate numbers is neither equitable nor inclusive.

Now I'll walk you through the math and statistics of this outrage, if you want. But board, you must immediately act on this clear and present systemic racism against white kids. This is totally unacceptable.

[APPLAUSE]

Do we have Katy Radelich here?

Good evening, Highline board members. My name is Katy Radelich. I had prepared a speech, but I decided that I want to speak from my heart. I don't know what your guys' policy is going to be en masse this year, but I will first off say I'm really glad to see everyone's face tonight and no masks up on the board.

[APPLAUSE]

But I know OSPI has said that it's going to come down to the school districts, and I know they're not going to make a mandate. So I'm just asking that we don't in Highline School District make a mandate of masks this year, and we let it be parent choice or family choice.

My daughter just went to Des Moines Elementary, and they had the masks implemented the last week of school. And she cried when she had to go back to school wearing a mask. I personally do not believe that masks work. My one daughter who goes to Des Moines Elementary throughout the school year when masks were in place, there was multiple COVID cases. I have another daughter who goes to child care in a daycare system. They don't wear masks, and they had one case during the same time, and that was actually brought in by a staff member.

So I don't understand how people can say masks work when clearly COVID cases were still being spread throughout the school when the children were wearing masks. I also want to address that when children get sick with colds and coughs, at least at my school, they get sent home. And if they have a negative COVID test, they weren't allowed to come back until their symptoms were gone.

This is not sustainable. How do parents who are working take care of their children when they need to be at their jobs because of a cold? So I'd really like to address that, look at that policy, and if someone has a negative COVID test and they just have a cough to let them go back to school.

The only way I was able to get my child to go back to school last year was by going to the doctor and getting a doctor's note. And then the doctor looked at me funny that I was bringing my child there, all for a cough. I've done lots of research on masks, and I'd be more than happy to share that with you all about why I don't think they're effective, or why I've discovered they're not effective. I just really appreciate the time. Thank you so much.

[APPLAUSE]

Do we have a Patricia Bailey here?

Good evening, Highline School Board members. I'm Patricia Bailey, a member of this community. We have learned that after OSPI dropped the unlawful mask requirement beginning April 12, 2022, making masks optional, an official in the Highline School District chose to require masks in one school in the last two weeks of the academic year.

The directive from that school reads as follows, quote, "Due to the number of positive cases identified in Des Moines recently and the uptick in cases in the surrounding community area, Highline will be requiring masking for staff, students, and visitors while indoors at Des Moines Elementary School.

Public Health Seattle and King County has recommended that we require masking for Des Moines Elementary until the end of the day on June 16, 2022. All students, staff, and visitors at Des Moines Elementary will be required to wear masks appropriately, effective June 8, 2022. Unquote.

First of all, Public Health Seattle and King County does not make law and cannot require people, large or small, to use medical devices. Second, community cases are counted in local hospitals, because hospitals reportedly test everyone for COVID who comes through their doors, whether for asthma, injuries, heart attack, cancer treatments, or whatever. This testing routinely turns up positive cases, even though those people have no evidence of COVID.

Third, as I reported on June 22, *The Lancet*, an esteemed medical journal, found, quote, "no significant relationship between mask mandates and case rates." Unquote. We should not be burdening students with invalid and illogical practices.

Fourth, and most importantly, it is against the children's and staff's God-given constitutional rights to be compelled to comply with medical procedures unless individually ordered by a court for cause, and that has not happened. Perhaps the person who ordered this requirement for the school had approval from central administration or perhaps acted in a rogue manner. We don't know. We only know this individual violated the rights of the children of this school, as well as the adults involved.

Although the courts move slowly, the rights of the people to bodily autonomy are being upheld regarding unlawful mandates. A ruling against a Chicago hospital was settled a few days ago in favor of the employees for \$10.3 million. It is for the financial and legal health that the Highline School District and its employees to understand and comply with the laws of the land. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Is there a Lauren Welch here?

Good evening, Highline School Board members. My name is Lauren Welch. I'm here to talk about COVID injection requirements for Highline School District personnel, specifically teens who would like to tutor second and third graders to help them achieve reading success in the Team Read program.

Hiring teen coaches in the Highline School District is an important part of connecting older, more seasoned students to help younger students become better readers and develop confidence in their skills. And this coming school year is especially critical, with all the developmental delays caused by COVID crisis isolation, virtual education, and masking protocol.

In order to qualify for Team Read, teenagers are no longer deemed as students who have a choice in the matter of bodily autonomy. Here's a short excerpt from a general email titled Team Read sent out to all Highline district families.

Quote, "You will be asked to provide the following documents. You must provide proof of COVID vaccination once hired." Unquote. When a Highline parent inquired about why the inoculation requirements, here was the response from our very own Highline Administrative Secretary.

"This is district policy that all Highline Public Schools school employees, associated vendors, community members, and volunteers need to be vaccinated in order to be on campus. The teen coaches are hired from the district, which makes them district staff, making this requirement fall on them, too."

A Washington state licensed lawyer responded to the Team Read written statement, saying that, quote, "Because they, the district, are employing students, they will have to accept accommodations." Unquote. She also noted that Title VII and WL80 make this clear.

In first presuming the best about others, I do not believe that the Highline School District leaders want to intentionally harm or violate trust with the families that they serve. But misleading written policy violates the trust of families. Because this is a top-down district violation of trust, it raises legitimate concerns about the emotional safety of our children at schools.

You yourselves would feel the same way with matters of great worth. You'd never trust a bank if it promised you a return on your investment but instead squandered your investment. Parents are passionately watching over their children, our most treasured investments. We do not want those who influence them to do so by way of deceit or by discrimination.

This Team Read policy violates the employee's Washington State constitutional rights. It violates the students' US constitutional rights, and it violates the Civil Rights Acts of 1964. No president, governor, or board of health, nor CDC, OSHA, or WHO can make US law. Only the legislature has that authority. There are no laws regarding face coverings, COVID medical tests, and injections made in Washington State.

COVID directives from governors are not laws. This means that each local administrator or director that imposes policy based on unlawful suggestions may be held personally responsible for voting on and engaging in coercive employment measures-- coercive because very few people have the freedom to walk away from a career without severe serious personal repercussions. This applies to Team Read.

Constitutional and civil rights are enforceable by law. Last week, as Patty noted, there was a \$10 million settlement at North Shore Hospital in Chicago in favor of the employees over the requirement for injections as a condition of employment. The courts are beginning to set a legal precedent. Please immediately change the Highline School District policy, and please do not hold yourselves responsible for allowing or requiring administrators to practice medicine without a license.

I believe that you want to teach children how to treat one another with indiscriminate truthfulness and kindness through example, and I'm just urging you to please do so. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Is there a Bonnie Radelich?

Good evening. I spoke last September about masks, asked some questions. And after a year, I'd like to readdress the topic and reevaluate where we are today and what we've learned. My name is Bonnie Radelich. I've lived in Highline District all my life, raised my children here, and now have grandchildren in the school system.

I retired about a year and a half ago from 41 years of surgical nursing, and I'm very familiar with masks. I did-- I was still working for the first year of COVID before I retired. And when we had a COVID case, a mask was not adequate. We wore a fully hooded gown with pumped in air. That was what we did for a COVID case. It wasn't just a mask.

I'm here today, though, as a concerned grandparent, and I'd like to re-ask the questions that I asked a year ago. Number one, do masks protect against viruses? By now everyone making decisions for themselves or their children has surely asked this question. And there's now more information and data and research that speak to the inadequacy of protection of just wearing a mask.

There's many sources, frontline doctors-- Americanfrontlinedoctors.org is one source that you could go to, and they have much more information than they had a year ago. Rules and mandates should be based on facts and not on fear. And I'm concerned that important decisions have been made on fear instead of facts.

Number two question. If masks do not protect against viruses, why would we force our children to wear them, the dirty rags on their face for seven hours a day. I called them dirty rags last year, and I'm saying it again, because that's what they become in the hands of children.

A lot of adults don't know how to wear a mask. They're touching them all the time. They put them in their pocket. They reuse them. But children, you got backpacks, stuffed in the pockets, fall on the floor, all different places and then back on their face. If we could analyze the bacteria of these at the end of the day, what would we find?

We teach our kids to do hand-washing, and yet they're putting all this back on their face and breathing it for seven hours. How many germs accumulate on them and are transferred to their face and then introduced into their respiratory tract?

Number three, what other respiratory conditions have we seen develop from the mask mandates? I have one example of a woman, of-- excuse me-- of a woman's daughter who was forced to wear a mask, and she had four consecutive staph infections on her face and then was forced to be behind glass when her mother refused any longer to wear this mask. So that's abuse.

Number four, what about proper oxygen and carbon dioxide exchange for the brain, for maximum learning needs? There's lots of tests on the scores that have gone down. I have a granddaughter myself that's going into third grade and still is struggling with reading.

Number five, what about psychological, social, and emotional consequences for some of the children? Taking away their faces, their ability to express and communicate with each other, who they are, what they feel, what they need, limiting their full ability to build relationships?

God gave us noses and mouths so we could breathe. He gave us a face for our identities, to communicate and to know each other. How much more crucial is this for our children as they're forming their identities and establishing new relationships? Please don't take this away from them again.

Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Is there an Annemarie Kebre?

Good evening, Highline School Board members. My name is Annemarie Kebre. I had children who attended Highline Schools, and my grandchild-- actually I have two attending next year. I'm here to talk about removing the required COVID injection or testing as a condition for employment in the Highline School District.

I was dismayed to learn that the Highline School District requires all employees to have the COVID mRNA injection, knowing this is still the experimental use medical injection as a condition of employment. Comirnaty is the FDA-approved injection, and it's still not available.

Generally speaking, most people, given a choice, would prefer not to be part of a medical experiment and would rather wait until the product has been proven by thorough investigation to be safe and effective. The time needed for such a study has not passed. So the idea of requiring the COVID injection for employment is an illogical and unethical practice.

We are part of an ongoing trial. We are unwitting test subjects. Additionally, the results from Pfizer that have already been released are very disturbing. There are hundreds of known adverse effects, but the doses were approved and released anyways. As a result, thousands of COVID vaccine related injuries and deaths have already been reported. Please consider removing this policy as a requirement of employment. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

All right, that has concluded scheduled communications. Up next we have superintendent updates. Dr. Duran?

Yes, good evening. Thank you, and it's my pleasure to be able to introduce a number of new administrators that we have here within our district. And we're probably going to have additional noise, too, as I know many of our administrators also brought their families, as I did also. And I'll be anticipating that very soon.

Well first I start with Daniel Calderon, who is going to be one of our instructional leadership executive directors. He's is in the back there. Daniel began his career teaching Spanish at Rainier Beach High School in Seattle Public Schools. Most recently he was a principal at Cascade Middle School for the past five years.

He has a bachelor's from Macalester College, a Master's in education from the University of Washington, and earned his administrator certificate in the Danforth program at the University of Washington. He is most proud of the growth of the dual language program at Cascade over the past five years.

In the 21-22 school year, the first cohort of Vietnamese dual language students went to high school, and in 22-23 60% of anticipated Cascade sixth graders will take Spanish or Vietnamese dual language classes. In his downtime he enjoys watching and playing soccer in the backyard with his daughter. Welcome, Daniel.

[APPLAUSE]

And Daniel, would you briefly like to introduce who you brought with you?

My wife [AUDIO OUT] and my daughter [AUDIO OUT].

OK, great. Thank you. Next I'd like to introduce Sarah Talbot, who is also going to be one of our instructional leadership executive directors. Sarah began her career as a high school English teacher in Orting, Washington. Most recently, she served as the principal of Lowell Elementary School. She has a bachelor's from the Evergreen State College and a master's from Seattle University.

After teaching for nine years she earned her administrative certificate and doctorate in educational leadership from Seattle University. One accomplishment she is most proud of is building a team that supported Lowell's students and families through a year and a half of online learning. Lowell's families were able to focus on academic growth through virtual learning, while also building strong supports for basic needs. Outside of work she loves to garden and hang out with her dogs. Welcome.

[APPLAUSE]

And would you like to introduce your guest? Welcome.

Jana Parker. Jana Parker is our executive director of teaching, learning, and leadership. Jana started her career earning her certification through an alternative route and started her first teaching position 25 years ago in a rural Missouri high school. Most recently, she served as deputy superintendent of instructional services for the Ferguson Florissant School District in St. Louis, Missouri.

She has a bachelor's from Truman State University, a master's in education from Lindenwood University, and an EdD from St. Louis University, all of which are in Missouri. She is most proud of having had the opportunity to serve in districts consisting of a diverse group of students. She is committed to supporting all students learning at high levels. In her downtime she enjoys plants and traveling. Welcome.

[APPLAUSE]

And next up we have Natasha Richardson. Natasha is going to be one of our assistant principals at Highline High School. Natasha came to the field of education as an Army veteran. She began her educational career with Tacoma Public Schools as a special education teacher. Most recently she worked with Seattle Public Schools at Interagency Academy.

She has a bachelor's degree from Trenton State University, two masters from the University of Phoenix, earned her educational leadership certificate from Western Washington University, and is currently enrolled in a doctoral program at Liberty University. She is most proud of her work supporting students poorly served by the education system. Each year she takes pride in watching students that don't believe they could graduate do it. Outside of work, Natasha loves to travel. Welcome, Natasha.

[APPLAUSE]

All right, greetings. Thank you. Welcome. And we also have Christina Fritsch, who is in the back with her family. She's going to be the assistant principal at White Center Heights Elementary. Christina started at McMicken Heights as a long-term kindergarten substitute and was hired from there. Most recently she was the social-emotional learning dean at Seahurst Elementary for the past three years.

She has a bachelor's in education from Northwest University, a master's in education, and earned her administrative leadership certificate from Western Governors University. She is most proud of the relational and system work she did at Seahurst Elementary. In her downtime she is busy running around playing with her three children. Welcome.

[APPLAUSE]

She was an amazing student.

Great, well welcome. And finally [SPEAKING SPANISH] I'd like to present my family. My wife, Kelly, please stand up, who has both boys in her arms tonight. And we have our son Mateo. Hola, Mateo.

Bienvenido, Mateo. Bienvenido. Bienvenido, Joaquin.

Joaquin? There he is. And somewhere around here also is Tio Marco, who did not want to be introduced. But as you can see, he's here helping support while I'm here doing the work. So it's great to have you all here. Can we do a quick photo? All right.

Yeah, we're going to do a little family portrait.

[APPLAUSE]

Hola Hola.

Thank you. I know he wanted to use that microphone. Because when we were in the Waterland parade in Des Moines, we were on the new electric bus. And Mr. Logan-- we handed him the microphone, so Mateo was saying hello to everybody. So thank you.

Thank you. That was amazing. All right, we're going to move on to agenda item number five, school board reports. I'll start off with a legislative report. The only thing I will update everybody with is that the Washington General Assembly Handbook is out with all the legislative priorities that are being proposed.

If there is-- it's an awfully thick packet this year. It's right there. Director Van has it. But if there's any particular policies that you'd like us to go to bat for, please let me know. And if you're interested in joining the two-day session, I do not mind tag teaming this and giving the credentials off. So just let me know. It'll be a fun thing to do together. So that two days in Hawaii? Oh, I wish. Other than that concludes my legislative report.

I'll go on to director reports. Director Van, what you got going on?

Thank you so much. Well, I just want to congratulate and welcome our new administrators to Highline. It's great to see all of you and the promotion. Christina had my son as one of her first kindergarteners, so it's great to see her grow within the Highline family.

In addition to that, the Raisbeck Aviation High School, the Green Energy team, if you haven't heard, they won the national title for their solar car in Dallas, so congratulations to you guys.

And thank you, Dr. Duran and President Garcia, for joining me at the Tyee Totems memorial, or handoff. They're the Tyee Titans now. So it was great to see a lot of friends, and just seeing the new movement. My kids were there, and they were excited to be part of the new Titans, so I'm excited for that.

And then from a foundation standpoint, we had the SEA golf tournament that happened in July, July 13th, raised a lot of money for the foundation. If you guys are runners out there, the Brat Trot's happening October 1st, so sign up and come out there for a 5K in downtown Burien.

And last but not least, I know Kelly and Joaquin and Mateo left, but I just wanted to thank them for sharing their dad and their husband to the Highline community, to our staff, students, and families. So that's it for me.

Thank you, Director Van. Director Alvarez?

Oh, I just wanted to say the same thing, basically just welcoming everyone. And also for the promotions and to hear about their pathways, it's so interesting, so thank you. And also, I know Joaquin and Mateo left, but I think Joaquin is following already in his footsteps. I walked in to say hi. They were in the other room, and he right away said,

[SPEAKING SPANISH]

I said OK, OK, OK. So he's off to a good start. It's such a blessing to hear how bilingual they are, and truly. So to me it's a blessing to be able to have two languages, and to hear others, and starting them young.

And again welcome to everyone. And I know that we haven't started the school year yet, but the hiring is on full force, so we want to welcome all those. I know that yesterday they had, I think, over 40 employees did an onboarding, so thankful to have still, for choosing us to come to this district.

Do we have a lot of work to do? Absolutely. But the work is happening. So we're just thankful for Dr. Duran for choosing us as well and for his family, like Director Van was saying, for sharing their dad and their husband with us. So welcome again, Dr. Duran. So happy to have you here.

Thank you. Director Howell?

Ditto. I'm very excited as we head into this new school year. I feel a lot of hope and excitement about not only who we've chosen, but the kinds of conversations that are happening around instruction and helping empower students to be the best selves.

I'm just really, really thrilled. And as a parent to two Highline students, we've been having conversations about OK, we went on some trips. We had some fun at the pool. Now we got to start reading again. We're getting them back. And you know what's exciting? There weren't that many groans, so we're getting there. We're getting there.

So I just want to say I have a lot of optimism for this year, and I feel like we've been making some really great decisions. I want to thank Dr. Duran for this first month and seeing him out at schools. It's been really great, so thank everybody.

Director Hagos?

Director Van and Director Alvarez always speak so well when they're welcoming our administrators, so it's hard to follow. Call me first next time. No, actually, never mind. It's OK. They speak well. But no, I just-- of course, welcome to all of our new administrators.

But I just wanted to highlight some of the things that-- our Mount Rainier athletic department, they've been working out in the community. They've been volunteering. The kids have been volunteering at farmer's markets or any type of community event that they are privy to in Des Moines. And what I got to say is what I witnessed at the last event.

I was over at National Night Out, and I had witnessed the football players connecting with the young elementary kids who were just sitting around, not really knowing what to do, and eating their hot dogs and hamburgers, and weren't really engaging much. And they went in and they pulled the kids out. And they played soccer with them, and they played basketball with them.

And there was so much joy and laughter, and this is coming from our high school kiddos working directly with our younger kiddos. It was such a joy to watch. But also I can see-- seeing the smiles on the kids' faces was important to me. But these kids, when they were looking at these high school students, looked at them like they were superstars. They had on their football gear, and things like that.

And these small moments help kids to realize that at least when they see the high school students that they, too, will be high school students someday. And I believe those small moments will lead to kids wanting to be in our high schools and looking forward to being a part of these different things that are happening in our high schools. So I just wanted to say I was really-- it was a proud moment. I loved seeing it. Highline strong. So I just wanted to highlight that.

Dr. Garcia, I just wanted to say one more thank you to Aaron for always communicating, and for Adriana and Sharon for keeping us on task and making sure that we're getting all the communications. Even though it may seem a small task, but they have five people and more, all on the same page and calendars. So I'm just thankful to have you guys on. So thank you Aaron and Adriana and to Sharon.

Ditto to everything that was just said. I also wanted to give thanks to all the folks who were working during the summer school programming that just wrapped up. I hope that all the folks who got to work during that time period are getting a little bit of a break in right now and getting restored and getting ready for the school year, but thank you, thank you, thank you for the amazing summer school program.

And what else? There was one other thing. Well, before I forget, I got invited by Encanto Arts to attend a planning session. They're planning to host a Latin American family concert on October 15. And the Highline community is welcome to attend. It's going to be at the Performing Arts Center on October 15, and I'll share this out with everybody later.

Other than that, there was one more thing. It was White Center specific, but I'm blanking, so it'll come back to me and I'll shoot an email out to everyone, but thank you. That concludes all the superintendent-- or the school board reports.

All right, we are now on agenda item 6, consent agenda. Is there a motion to approve the consent agenda?

I make a motion that we approve the consent agenda.

And I'll second that.

All those in favor, please say aye.

Aye.

All right, consent agenda has been approved. We are now going straight to introduction items. Our first introduction item is agenda item 10.1, motion to approve ratification of the 2022-2023 collective bargaining agreement between Highline Public schools and Highline Education Association. We have Steve here to give us an update.

Well, and I brought a friend, a long-time friend of Highline, Buzz Porter. Buzz is our lead negotiator for the HEA contract and has worked with us for really close to a decade in that critical space. I can't tell you how excited I am to be coming before you in August, in August with a tentative agreement. In fact, the team reached a tentative agreement in late June. And with the board schedule we want to get this to you for introduction.

And we have kind of a little bit of the luxury of time to separate introduction and action by a couple of weeks. And also just wanted to be able to luxuriate in having Buzz here. He's not quite yet booked with almost 24/7 bargaining the way it is in late August, often, and to be able to walk you through some of the key provisions of this agreement.

Before I turn it to Buzz, I want to thank you so much for your work on this agreement. I want to acknowledge Chris Larson, who is getting some well-deserved vacation but who sat at the table, as well as Elizabeth Beck, the Uniserv representative, and Veronica Fairchild with HEA. A strong relationship, a problem solving, interest-based process. But with that, Buzz, you want to take us through some of the highlights?

So I would start by echoing one of the themes that Steve was starting to hit there at the end, which is about the teamwork behind this particular agreement. What you're seeing is the product of really 18 members working together as a single team to come up with changes to an agreement. And those 18 people spend about 10 full days together working in actual bargaining sessions, and then behind that about another 10 days for each of those members in subcommittee meetings, data gathering meetings, or preparing proposals.

And then behind those folks is probably another three dozen folks who are gathering data for us, or serving on subcommittees with us, or bringing forth proposals. And that included building administrators, central office administrators, teachers, educational staff associates, classified employees. All sorts of folks had their hands on this tentative agreement.

The tentative agreement that has been presented to you is about 75 pages worth of changes, and that's showing you the strikeouts of the things that we're taking out of the contract, underlining of new language we're adding to the contract, or things that we're adding that are altogether new.

Those roughly 75 pages of changes, however, don't reflect the entire contract. The entire contract, if you want to just look at a clean agreement, is about 244 pages. That tells you that about 3/4 of that contract isn't getting touched, which means that we're building on a legacy of a document that's been really worked on for the last 45 years with hundreds of people.

And we're building on a legacy of a lot of people who've been working on this document for a long period of time. With that document it reflects the relationship that we have been building on for 45 years. And we are the beneficiaries today of a very positive working relationship that, on topics that can be very contentious, we find a way to get to an agreement every single time, and that's what we're showing you tonight.

First, we're going to highlight just a few topics-- three that were highlighted-- but I'll answer questions on anything that's in the agreement if you have a question about it. The first topic we wanted to hit was where most people often go to first. It's the compensation area. It's often tied with time, because when we're doing time, it often relates to compensation.

Salaries in this particular agreement are rising 7.5%. That's comprised of a 5.5% inflationary adjustment based on the implicit price deflator, which is a variable that the state inserts into its state budget that we borrow as an index, and then adding 2% on top of that.

As a part and included within that 7.5% raise is also an additional day of work, an additional professional learning day, in the first year of the contract, this one coming up, the 22-23 school year. That was specifically to support district initiatives. And I would say there was a lot of issues where the parties, when we were talking substantively about the issue, we identified that we wanted more professional learning for our staff on that topic.

And the union came together with us as a strong partner to agree to something that is not easy for them to agree to, which is additional work to say that we're going to spend more time together in professional learning. Because we already spend a lot of time doing that, but to say that they were willing to do more, I think, says something for our relationship.

In year two we agreed to do, again, the implicit price deflator, whatever that ends up being from the state, plus an additional 1%. As a part of that there will also be an additional day of professional learning. Right now that implicit price deflator, there's an estimate that it's 2% if you were to go look at the state's estimates. But you all know what inflation is doing right now. I don't know that you can really take anything to the bank in terms of a projection as to what that particular inflationary adjustment will be a year from now.

The other half of talking about compensation is talking about time. One of the nice things about settling early is we get to release a real complete and ratified calendar to the community, and we can do it for the next two years here with this agreement. And the big changes are with that addition of that new day has just added one more variable into that complex puzzle that is putting a school calendar together.

So we'll be starting the school year, I believe, it's the Thursday before Labor Day this year. And we'll have the two full weeks. One of the interesting variables-- these are the fun things when you put together a school calendar-- we actually have an extra day on the winter break this year because of where New Year's Day falls on a Sunday, which means there's a federal holiday on the Monday. And so we're actually at two weeks plus an extra day, which pushes out the end of the year.

We're going to do a four-day mid-winter break, which is the Friday before President's Day plus the President's Day Monday, for a four-day mid-winter break. We have two days that are built in for professional learning during the year. We have one day that's the Tuesday after Memorial Day that is built in as an emergency make-up day if there are weather-related closures.

All of that will get us out on a Friday right before Juneteenth. I think it's-- June 16 is the Friday before the Juneteenth holiday comes up this year. And that was a new key variable we had to work into the school calendar this year, was trying to see how do we fit the end of the year and where Juneteenth falls.

In the second year, different variables come into play, one being that additional professional learning day. So one of the ways we incorporated that in was by shortening up that mid-winter break back to just being a three-day weekend. That allows us to get out on the last day of school being on Tuesday the 18th, again, right before June 19th. If we do have any emergency make-up days, they will fall after that state holiday, after the 19th.

The second topic we wanted to highlight-- because it has been such a burning issue in schools across the state-- is around leaves and substitutes. We've all been faced with this challenge during the pandemic, particularly this last year in trying to find enough staff to cover all of our classrooms. At the same time, we also have employees who are needing to isolate because of COVID, and dealing with all of the stress of coming back to the school in the way and the methods that we had to do so.

So there has been that in the midst of a labor shortage. And so there has been a lot of pressure on schools on trying to cover everything. And so we spent a lot of time, and not just time focusing purely on what I'll call the go-to solutions. And we did do some of them, for example, on substitute pay. You'll see on the slide there, we are increasing substitute pay, to try to be more attractive to attract and retain substitutes in our district.

But we really focused on, how do we make sure, if these things are going to happen? And we're going to have absences, because our employees have needs, and they're going to need to be absent from work. How do we make sure that all 180 days are high quality learning experiences? And there was a lot of thoughtful work done.

And I really appreciated some of the members, the teachers on the team, who had spent more time covering for their colleagues this past year who had to be out. They had a lot of really good suggestions on what can we do to make it easier for our substitutes who are filling in to provide high quality learning experiences.

What are the tools that we can leave behind for our substitutes? What's the information that we can have in place that can help increase the chance that all of our students, for all 180 days, whether it's a substitute or their regular teacher, is getting a high quality learning experience. And so we spent a lot of time on that.

One of the changes we did make in this area was looking at our personal leave section. So it wasn't just looking at the substitute end, but we looked at the leave section as well. And we're going to try some new concepts in this new contract, something we haven't done at Highline before, which is to separate our personal leave from our sick leave. The overall number of days stays the same, but they're in two separate pots now, rather than one pot of leave.

And then providing some incentives, one of the incentives just being a financial incentive. For those who do not use all of their personal leave, there will be a way to cash that in. So if you work instead of taking the leave, there can be a financial incentive. But also there we do have the possibility to save up those days, which is not something that we've had the ability to do in Highline before.

So there's actually an incentive now to not use them, if you would like to have a bank of days in future years. And that can be now saved up to five personal leave days that you could take. And then that we have also put some new restrictions on when those can be used, so they can't be used on certain high-stress days like the days around breaks.

So there was a nice combination of items, of providing both some rules on use of leave, but also some incentives, that it was a really nice coming together, a marriage of different ideas to try some new concepts.

The next concept that we wanted to make sure-- the issue I want to bring up was how much we also worked on dual language instruction. That's something that has been rolling into the schools in Highline for several years, and it's been rolling up-- I think it was mentioned in one of the new administrator introductions-- is rolling up into the secondary schools.

And there are some new challenges, some new workplace issues for us with dual instruction in secondary schools and how it's different than elementary schools because of the variety of topics that students are needing to take, and the differentiation of those instructions. Not everyone's taking just one science course at that grade level. I might have several science courses.

And so how does that play out when you're trying to do that in multiple languages? And so we spent a lot of time making adjustments to the contract in the area of dual language, three that we've put on the slide there for you to notice. One is by separating out and making sure people know that we have ample planning time, not just for the instruction this year, but separating out time when we're doing course creation.

Because a lot of what is going on at the secondary school level in particular is course creation, not just the teaching of the course this year, and making sure that we set aside ample planning time for course creation that is separate from the teaching time, the instruction, just for this year.

Another one that we did was just reiterating something that I think we're already committed to doing, which is making sure every single time we're doing a new curriculum adoption, that we're including multiple languages in the course materials that we're purchasing. So this will be something that we can build over time so we're not having to create as much of that curriculum ourselves.

And then the third thing, noticing that we didn't necessarily think we had all the solutions, particularly at the secondary level, and that we put together a study committee. And it's something that Highline has a tradition of here. We have a lot of study committees, but it's worked very well for us to be able to tackle some very complex issues in some very thoughtful ways.

And so we have created a new joint dual language study committee, specifically to look at the issues of dual language and secondary, to see what we didn't cover perhaps in the changes that we made this year that we might want to look at when we reopen this contract in two years, which we will be.

I think that's a quick summary of some of the highlights the things that were important parts of the discussion. But as I mentioned, there are 75 pages worth of changes, so if you have questions, I'd be happy to address any of it.

Open it up for any questions?

Not so much questions, but comment. Buzz, Dr. Grubb, I just want to thank you so much for partnering. You said some key words that I was picking up-- partnership and relationship-building between both sides, And you said 45 years has been building upon that.

This year it has been fantastic. When I heard that you guys had come to a tentative agreement at the end of June, I was just besides myself. So congratulations to our staff, but also our central office team here to making that happen. Appreciate that.

Just another comment. I love the idea of thinking outside of just the traditional ways of using our leave, or using their leave and then separating those, so they do have a distinctive between the sick leave and the vacation leave, and also the option of buying back. I mean, it's an incentive. Maybe they are not going to be traveling that year, and either they want to bank it in a sense or cash it out, which serves us, because that keeps them working.

So I love-- I was just telling Director Van that that's what I have in my job, and I love the way that I have that option of using or banking or cashing out, and I can plan my years and vacations forward to knowing when I can be there to support my other colleagues as well. So I appreciate that. Thank you.

I concur. I think everybody on all the sides deserves thanks. I also want to make sure I shout out our HEA leadership. I was mentioning to Joe ahead of time that in seeing HEA's communication with its members through social media and things like that, it was so positive and so hopeful and collaborative. And I just really appreciate the spirit that everyone worked together to come up with solutions.

And I also feel like, as someone who works in public schools every day, you really hit on some of the big things that are really hard for teachers and students. This year I don't know how many classes I covered. I can tell you a lot about badminton that I didn't know before. Not a lot of instructional coaching, but a lot of covering of classes.

And so I appreciate the efforts to really think ahead around those things, knowing that they're probably going to come in the future, and so how can we get ahead of those? It feels, as someone who's spent a long time as an educator, very respectful of the profession, and so I appreciate that on a personal level.

So thank you very much, and I'm really excited. As weird as it sounds, I'm looking forward to reading a 200-plus page contract. It sounds exciting. And I don't have a contract in my district, so maybe I'll have time. I'll get it down one day.

Just yeah, I appreciate the thoughtfulness behind all the work that you have put into this and working collaboratively in a collaborative way with all of the stakeholders. And I also do feel the sense of respect and honor for the folks who are working in the building, and making sure you are hearing them out on the things that they're struggling with, and the things that the folks in the building are needing to be made aware in terms of contracts and how things operate.

I think I only have one question, and that question is about the PD, that one additional day PD. Sounds phenomenal in terms of being able to provide more of the professional learning that is needed in our schools, and I'm just curious. Is this a district directed PD, or is this something where, again, working in a collaborative way with our folks in the building to create some content for their learning on that day?

Yeah, each of the days that we're adding falls into the category in this contract that are called district initiative days, which does have a district focus on it. However, a lot of that time is granted down to the building level, and there are school leadership teams who are involved in looking at the content of those days and how it's delivered.

So there is a definite-- there's a very specific process that's in place in the language for gathering that input. But it's something where neither side I think feels like they have the absolute control. And we actually get away from using those terms like control and instead looking at, how do we come up with meeting the needs that we can both jointly identify and buy into?

So I will say I think we were careful to make sure that the district's interests in using that time were protected. That was very important to us on our side. At the same time, it was also important for us to hear what the needs were from the educators who have identified those needs for us.

Thank you.

I'll also echo what everyone has said. Thank you for creating this collaborative commitment to working together and making it happen so early. Apparently that doesn't happen very often, so that's good to hear. And hopefully we can keep this precedent moving forward.

I did have, I think, two questions. The first one is around the dual language, around adopting curriculum that must be offered in targeted language. What were to happen in a situation where maybe the state requires us to adopt some kind of curriculum and it isn't offered in a dual language format? Do we have to-- as a school district, do we have to just make it happen, or how does a situation like that happen?

Yeah, I'll talk from a contractual perspective that we have made a commitment that when we're adopting new curriculum, we will make sure that we have something in the target language that is not an after-the-fact kind of thing, which could mean if it does not come as a purchased option, that is something that we have to add in ourselves to do. But we will be doing that upfront when we're adopting the curriculum, rather than adopting a curriculum without that and then later saying, oh, and by the way, now we need to come up with something in the target language.

So it would have to be built in funds set aside as part of this if we have to add it in ourselves. Or oftentimes it's not just ourselves, but if we're finding some organization who will develop that for us, it'll be part of the package that's brought to you. Since you make the final decisions on their curriculum, it would be something that would be presented and be presented as a package, so you will see it. That's the commitment that we have. How that actually plays out, there are administrators who are involved in doing that.

And as I mentioned, sometimes it will be done through consultants. It'll be done through companies who'll be doing that. Sometimes it will come as part of the package. And it could-- not always-- but it could also sometimes be our own experts who are developing that curriculum. But hopefully it will be not-- it'll be happening a lot less.

And as much as you have a commitment here, I would also say that at the state level they're very cognizant of these issues. So if we did have something that was state-directed-- and there's very little that is state-directed around curriculum in terms of an actual brand. There's only a couple of subjects I can think of that have anything like that. But they're very cognizant of making sure that if they're going to move in that direction that they're providing options that also provide that as well.

Thank you. I was kind of thinking of the In Time Immemorial-- or Since Time Immemorial curriculum that has come down. And so I'm in complete support of adopting it in different languages. I just think, what position are we going to put ourselves in if there isn't a Vietnamese or Spanish version, and then do we have to then create one? Which I would be in total support of, but then we would have to pay to figure it out. I guess that's what's tinkered in my head a little bit as I'm talking through a situation like this.

The other question I had was, were there any changes around the displacement that happens of staff at the start of the school year, whenever enrollment happens and we have to shift folks around?

There was one provision that came an issue, that came up specifically. We have some-- we're thinking about the same one, Steve. It's some language that we had created to actually try to protect some of our newer employees from being bumped. I'm in the last contract.

And we had done that particularly because we want to create softer landing places for a lot of our newer staff-- which, honestly, is a lot more of our diverse staff-- in not wanting to move them around as much at the beginning part of their career as those who have been in education. That is not unusual that in many school districts your first few years, you end up getting moved around more than those who have more experience.

And so we had created that two years ago, some language to protect people during their first couple of years from being moved so they could actually build a career at a certain place before they would be subject to those kinds of transfers. There were as we worked that out, the first two years of that, some hiccups that came along the way with that.

So for example, in some places where maybe a department only had new staff, what do you do then? Are you having to move your only senior leader in the building because you're protecting all of the new staff? And in many cases-- not many cases, but in a couple of cases-- we had a building who was put in a place of having to lose their only senior leadership on their staff because of that language.

So we went back and reviewed that and did some tweaking of that language so that there are some exceptions where that's not going to occur now. That's the change I'm remembering.

Do you mind tracking that language down? That way I don't have to try to read the whole thing, or try to track it down, but just get me that chunk of it?

Carrie is going to read the 200 pages and give us the breakdown.

You know I like to color code, so yes.

We can definitely point that out for you.

Thank you. I think that's all I got for today. So are there any other questions? We'll move on to agenda item 10.2. Thank you very much, Buzz and Steve. So the next one is motion to approve revisions to Highline School District salary schedules for non-represented salary schedules. Approval of this motion would approve the proposed salary schedule adjustment changes to non-represented staff. We have any updates on that one? You don't have to--

No.

Oh, all right. Next up we have 10 point--

President Garcia, do the rest of the agenda items, are they mostly just renewal of contracts that-- are there any new things that are on here besides just basic renewals of all of these? Because the majority of them look like they're just annual renewals. Is there anything new besides an annual renewal on here that we really need to focus on?

For the item that was just read into the?

No, no.

For remaining items?

For the remaining items on the agenda. I know that-- well maybe, I'm not sure. So there's item 10.3, motion to approve Washington State Employment Security/AmeriCorps team placement. Maybe that's not one, but the rest of them, seems like most of them are just annual renewals of contracts or partnerships that we have.

Yeah. I guess is the question, are there any new contracts listed?

Yeah, that we need to just really focus on. Because most of them are like, I was reading through them, and I feel like these are just basically renewals of contracts that we have every year around this time.

That's my understanding as well. There are no other employment contracts similar to the HEA on the agenda.

But I think for the other items that are not due, I think they're renewals.

They're just renewals. I was just wondering. That way, we're not sitting here walking through all of these. And if they're just basic renewals, we can take the time at home and just read through them. And if unless there's anything we really need to focus on other than that, if they're just basic renewals, then we should do our homework before our next meeting.

It sounds good.

So I propose that we do our homework and look at these, since it's nothing new and that it is something that we can take our time and just go through them on our own.

I say to second that, if that's a motion.

Yeah.

OK. Can you read the motion again so Adriana can record it?

So I make a motion that the rest of the remaining items of the agenda, since they appear to be just renewal of annual contracts with the district partnerships, that we just move that we can read these on our own so we don't have to sit here and put our staff through something that is just reading, reading, reading when it's up to us to read these things, because there's no new anything. I don't know if that's a good motion, but basically we don't have to have everybody sit here while these things can be read at home.

Got it.

I second.

All right.

All in favor?

All in favor of the motion, please say aye.

Aye.

Any abstentions? All right, motion passes. I guess that concludes the introduction items. Are there any items of that said motion that we would like to move to the consent agenda?

I have none.

Yeah.

All right. Then all of these will be part of our action items at the next board meeting.

I actually-- I'll make a motion that we move 10.9. It's a motion to approve surplus of district property vehicles, which I don't think that's going to impact us in any way, shape or form. So I move that we move that to the consent agenda for next time so we don't sit here and go through the surplus of vehicles that.

I'll second 10.9 move to the next consent agenda.

All right. Is there any questions, comments? All those in favor of moving 10.9, motion to approve surplus of district property vehicles to the consent agenda, please say aye.

Aye.

All right, motion is approved. We are now on to unscheduled communications, agenda item 12. Nope? Perfect. Then is there a motion to adjourn tonight's meeting?

I'll make a motion we adjourn tonight.

I'll second.

All right. All those in favor, please say aye.

Aye.

All right, the motion's approved. We have ended tonight's meeting. Thank you, everybody.

Thank you, thank you.