

## Highline Public Schools | School Board Meeting - February 7, 2024

Welcome, everyone, to our regularly scheduled Board meeting. And ask that we stand, and I'm going to call for a Giovanni to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

To the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

And with that, I'll ask for a roll call, please.

Director Tidholm?

Present.

Director Hagos?

Here.

Director Van?

Here.

Director Petrini?

Here.

Director Alvarez?

Here. Thank you very much. And with that, I'm calling for any changes or additions to our Board meeting agenda or any previously items on our consent agenda. Thank you.

I motion to move consent agenda 6.5, I think it was, off of the consent agenda for further discussion, or questions, and comments.

So Director Petrini has made a motion to move agenda consent agenda item 6.5 off for discussion.

Would that be to action or back to intro?

That would be back to action, I believe.

I think so. Yeah, action.

OK, to action. Thank you.

Yes. Is that correct? Yes. It's back to action, not to intro.

So just to clarify the motion, the motion on the table is to move item 6.5 to the action items.

That's correct.

Is there a second?

I'll second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye. Aye.

Any opposed? No. So then the consent item has been moved to an action item. So with that, we move on to recognition-- CTE Month. So do I send it back to you, Dr. Duran? Or who do I send it back to? Dr. Duran, you're on.

So not this one's not on me.

Oh, well.

I think it was Director Petrini has a recognition for the CTE. We're going to be doing some recognition tonight for CTE Month and School Counseling Week. And so we'll start with the resolution, Director Petrini.

Sorry about that, Doctor-- Director Petrini. I'm making everybody doctors all the time.

That's all right.

You get one, and you get one, everybody gets a doctor today.

You can make me a doctor. So whereas the month of February has been designated Career and Technical Education Month by the Association for Career and Technical Education, and whereas profound economic and technological advances necessitate a capable, educated workforce with career-ready skills, thereby placing new and additional responsibilities on our educational system. And whereas career and technical education connects Americans with potential careers and is the backbone of a strong, well-educated workforce, which fosters productivity and business and industry and contributes to American leadership in the international marketplace and fill the growing skill gaps.

And whereas career and technical education offers individuals lifelong opportunities to learn new skills which provide them with the career choices and potential satisfaction, and whereas the ever increasing cooperation efforts of career and technical educators business and industry stimulate the growth and vitality of our local economy and that of the entire nation by preparing graduates for career fields forecasted to experience the largest demand in the next decade. Now, therefore, the School Board and Superintendent of Highline Public Schools do hereby proclaim February as Career and Technical Education Month. in Highline and enable to urge all Highline citizens to become familiar with the services and benefits offered by the career and technical education programs in our district.

Great. I think we'd like to welcome Dr. Andrew Benitez and the CTE staff that's here, and I also want to make sure and give a big shout out to Sofia from Evergreen for the great cookies.

[APPLAUSE]

Led by their teacher, Yesenia Hernandez.

Yes. Thank you so much. I want to recognize that I stay busy, but I don't do the important work. So our teachers do the most important work in CTE, so I want to thank you all for being present to great experiences, like as we have in culinary that you all had the chance to taste some of our cookies created by Chef Sofia and the Culinary Program at Evergreen.

We are committed to continuing to create relevant, and rigorous, and career-connected, and fun and engaging learning experiences for our students. So thank you so much to our students and to our teachers. If you all can come on up to be recognized for all of your hard work, including-- I got to brag a little bit-- our 18 DECA students from Mount Rainier who are moving on to the state competition. Thank you all so much for being here. Yes.

[APPLAUSE]

So for all of my CTE teachers and staff, if you will come on up to be recognized, we appreciate you so much. You can keep the applause coming.

[APPLAUSE]

If you'd like to join us, so we can take a photo with our proclamation.

Juan, please come forward also-- our humble leader back there.

Yeah.

Leader of our Puget Sound Skills Center.

And Director of PSSE as well. Thank you so much, Juan Lozano.

Can we have everybody come--

I'm here.

[LAUGHTER]

[CHEERING AND APPLAUSE]

I'd like to allow our culinary teacher at Evergreen, Ms. Yesenia Hernandez, to say a few words about her experiences and the importance of CTE.

Oh, perfect. OK, cool. Hello. I'm Ms. Yesenia, as the students call me.

I just wanted to show my appreciation for being here. I was actually just like Sophia when I was younger. I took a culinary program, and I never went to culinary school.

I just continued working in the industry right after high school and just started working my way up. I'm really a product of what these programs do for our students, especially in areas like this. So I'm just really proud to be a teacher here.

I'm really proud to be a teacher at this district and all of the wonderful impacts that we're making on our students. So thank you so much for having us here today. Thank you, Sophia, for all of your hard work. And hopefully, this is not the last time that we bring you treats.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you, everybody.

Thank you for being here, all of you. Thank you. And with that, we'll move on to School Counselor Week.

All right. I get the fabulous privilege to read this. It is close to my heart and near and dear to all the things that I believe in. So let me just jump right into it.

Whereas school counselors are employed in our schools to help students reach their full potential, and whereas school counselors are actively committed to helping students explore their abilities strengths, interests, and talents, as these traits relate to career awareness and development, and whereas school counselors help parents or guardians focus on ways to further the educational, personal, and social growth of their children, and whereas school counselors work with teachers and other educators to help students explore their potential and set realistic goals for themselves, and whereas school counselors seek to identify and utilize community resources that can enhance and complement comprehensive school counseling programs and help students become productive members of society, and whereas comprehensive developmental school counseling programs are considered an integral part of the educational process that enables all students to achieve success in school-- someone sounds excited about this proclamation. Now, therefore, the school board and superintendent of Highline Public Schools do hereby proclaim that February 5 through 9, 2024 is National School Counseling Week in Highline and urge all Highline citizens to join us in honoring and recognizing the dedication and hard work for all school counselors.

[APPLAUSE]

So thank you, Director Hagos, for reading. Thank you, Director Hagos, for reading that. And with that, I'll ask Jeanette, and Val, Melissa Knudsen, and Melissa Poynter, and Mayle to please join us at the podium.

And the team.

So do you--

[INAUDIBLE]

Sure, absolutely.

Did you want to have a comment?

Do you have any words to say before we take a picture?

We just want to thank everyone for recognize the--

Bring everybody-- counselors, everybody.

--amazing work of our school counselors. They really do make a difference in the lives of our students, and they are doing amazing work trying to transform the way that we coordinate our student support services so that our students leave us future-ready. So thank you for recognizing all of their hard work.

Thank you, all. Let's take a picture.

[APPLAUSE]

[APPLAUSE]

So with that, we move on to our school presentation, and I'll call Jacqueline up so she can introduce our principal from Tyee High School.

[BABY COOING]

That's happy sounds.

Good evening, Superintendent Duran, President Alvarez, directors of the Board. My name is Jacqueline Downey, and I'm a Secondary Instructional Leadership Executive Director. And I have the pleasure of working with the incredible principal of Tyee High School, Ms. Victoria Terry, and the Tyee team, who I look forward to inviting to come up and introduce them now-- so Principal Victoria Terry, Assistant Principal Don Miller, and two fabulous Tyee students, Nena Seymour and Marcina Jackson.

Thank you.

[CHEERING AND APPLAUSE]

Go, Tyee.

Good evening. I am Ms. Victoria, like Jacqueline said. I am the proud Principal of Tyee High School.

Thank you for this opportunity, President Alvarez, Vice President Joe Van, Directors of the Board, and, of course, Superintendent Duran. Anytime I can talk about Tyee or brag about Tyee, I'm there. OK, Don.

Our Highline promise couldn't be more true. Every student in Highline Public Schools is known by name, strength, and need, and graduates prepared for the future they choose, not us. Delivering on the promise-- this is our mission.

Tyee High School challenges and empowers students to uplift their voice, uplift their communities, and thrive in the world. How we deliver on our Highline promise is we have increased intentional work around ninth-grade transition and 12th-grade success, intentional work for inclusion for multilingual and special education students. We have continued focus around building a strong sense of belonging and community for students, families, and staff.

These are our priorities for the 2023-2024 school year. Sense of belonging-- it is so important. Our overall panorama data from the spring of 2023 showed 37% sense of belonging, and it was a decrease from the fall of 2022 of 2%.

Mastery of learning in ninth-grade Math in ELA-- 68% of our students received a passing grade in Lit Comp 1, and that was for the school year of '22-'23. 71% received a passing grade in Algebra 1 for the school year '22-'23. We're also focusing on post-secondary enrollment and success. 92%-- that's the class of 2022-- expressed interest in post-secondary enrollment, but only 54% class of 2021 enrolled according to the National Student Clearinghouse data. And the Panorama data from spring 2023 showed 66% of our students college and career-ready.

I am sure we are all familiar with our strategic goals. Culture of belonging-- so important. You're going to hear me keep saying that because it is so important-- innovative learning, bilingual biliterate, and future-ready.

Our main focus this year, like I said, is creating that culture of belonging just like the district, which we believe is so important. We also know if somebody feels welcomed, safe, and loved, everything else that you're trying to work on-- it's going to all fall into place. Firm believer of that.

We can leave it there. Thank you. So what have we done about the culture of belonging to foster that? We have student listening sessions for community circles. We have increased student voice engagement in our decision making, like the creation of our master schedule through student voice and choice, which is so important. We make sure we get our students' input.

We are increasing inclusion of students in special education, and multilingual, and general education courses because inclusion is support for those students. We are also very excited about the PLC work that we are doing with Chinook. We're doing some good stuff partnering with our students.

The next two slides that we're going to talk about are really important for me as well because as a former teacher at WELS and innovative program and then as a former multilingual teacher, these two are pretty important. So some of the innovative learning that we are doing at Tyee-- we are expanding our Core Plus construction. So it was great that it's CTE Month as well.

We're expanding the Core Plus program. We're bringing the WELS-- the Waskowitz Environmental Leadership and Service program-- is going at Tyee. We're having College in the High School pass.

We increased from two College in the High School classes to five for the upcoming school year. We have five AP offerings. And then we really-- as a part of that strong transition from eighth to ninth grade, we wanted to have every ninth grader enrolled in a career choices pathway or a class so that they can start to think about the other pathways that they can get into.

Some of the innovative learning that we've been doing is having coaching cycles and learning walks with teachers because we know that our teachers are doing great things. But often times, they don't have the opportunities to be able to go into each other's rooms to see that. So we're trying with our instructional leadership team to create that space. And then, as well, we've been partnering and continue to partner with Transcend to redesign the experience for students and families.

Like I said, for bilingual/biliterate, as a former newcomer teacher, this one's really important to me. And at Tyee, as our amazing students are going to talk about, we are extremely diverse. We have 45 languages 48 birth countries. Tyee has already been a multilingual school. So when we brought on a dual-language program, it wasn't really anything new.

It had always been a multilingual school, and now it's just great that those students and their culture and their experience gets to be put at the forefront. So we really want to bolster the biliteracy skills, which can include the expansion or the maintenance of our dual-language programs. We've been actively trying to shelter our multilingual classes so that students are having more experience in their general education classes with general education peers. And then we have an entire school focus where all PLCs are either focused on multilingual students or our special education students, knowing that there's often times a crossover of both.

Future-ready-- we are really trying to increase the post-secondary exposure for students at Tyee-- like we said, College in the High School classes and advanced placement offerings, running start options, different CTE pathways. Something we're really proud of are our Senior Success Day, where we have a lot of workshops to prepare seniors for what does life after high school look and feel like-- financial aid nights, and then something else that we're really proud of and excited to bring back this year is Community Day-- you all are invited March 15, save the date-- where we have community members coming to talk about a wide variety of things between college career and self-exploration for all students. And like I said, the career choices for all ninth-grade students, we want to start from the bat. Freshman year, you're starting to think about what are you interested in.

For the next part, we thought a lot about the impact on how we're doing. And we thought that the best way to do that would be to bring up two of our amazing students. So they're going to introduce themselves and continue. [LAUGHTER] They're going to introduce themselves and talk about some of the impact, the sense of belonging, especially for the Islander community at Tyee.

Sorry. You all can give them--

[CHEERING AND APPLAUSE]

Oh, thanks. You didn't have to.

[SNEEZES] Sorry. I'm supposed to talk? Hello. My name is Marcina Jackson, and I'm Micronesian, and I'm from the island of Kosrae. I am a ninth grader, and I was born and raised in Guam and came to Seattle when I was 12. I went to Chinook Middle School, and now I'm in Tyee High School. So I just want to say that Tyee makes it easy for me to joke around with our amazing staff and admins because I feel very comfortable.

And I also want to talk about how my people, the Pacific Islanders, need more from the district Tyee. Us Pacific Islanders from different cultures need to be represented more because, like I said, we all come from different cultures, and we are different. And just because we're called Pacific Islanders doesn't mean we come from the same island or we speak the same language.

And it's annoying knowing that me and my people are recognized in all of our districts. But also, I would love to add that having a trusted adult is important. And my trusted adult is T5, also known as Fonso the Security.

He's my trusted adult because I would always go to him to tell stuff that happened to me, and every good thing that happened to me, and what he's done for me and stuff, and he's like a father to me. And yeah. Thank you very much for listening.

[APPLAUSE]

Hello, everyone.

Hello.

Sorry. Hello, everyone.

Hello.

Thank you. My name is Nena Ethan Seymour, and I am a gay Micronesian senior attending Tyee High School. First and foremost, I am humbly appreciative of the fact that I was chosen as a representative for not only my school, but for my people and every Pacific Islander student in our district. Now, first, let's start off by recognizing Tyee's reputation as ghetto, ratchet, and broke.

These are all labels that we have received throughout the years, which I am working on changing. Starting off at my school, where I want our diversity to be seen as pride and not a problem. Don't get me wrong.

I get annoyed every single day I am there. However, I give major props to each and every staff and teacher at my school because there's one thing I know about those children, and it's that they will try to rip and tear each and every piece of humanity you have left in your body. However, thanks to our amazing staff, they never gave up on us and always prioritized our mental health along with our education and acknowledging that each and every one of our students have different weaknesses, strengths, and goals.

I'm well aware of my role as the hardest, smartest, and baddest attending the school. However, that is also why I work the way I do. I'm a natural-born leader, which is why I guide my youth.

However, I can only do so much. I need my Islanders youth to know that it's possible for them to achieve the same goal as everyone else in that classroom. My people are used to being brushed aside and offered no help, which is why I ask support from the Board. When will my people get the help? Where are our organizations, our financial aid, our support systems to help after school?

I want them to receive the hope that I didn't get all four years of my high school. I want there to be a change. And this can start off by recognizing-- oh, sorry. And this is can start off by recognizing that Tyee is like no other school, where we find our richness in the pride of our Titans. Our diversity is where we will be best at.

I also want to recognize that all of our islands are different. The only similarity we have is the love for the Pacific Ocean. The change has already begun on our side.

All I need from you is to meet me halfway, if not for the morals of the School Board, but for the safety and sake of every PI student's future that lay in your hands. Thank you so much for letting me speak. It's been an honor being here. And again, just meet me halfway. That's all I ask.

[APPLAUSE]

Ooh, now let's celebrate some success at Tyee-- my favorite part. Here we go. That sense of belonging that I talked about earlier that is so important-- it went up for us.

We know that we are on the right track. So the initial data shows that an increase of our sense of belonging for those students that I talked about increased from 37% in spring of 2023 to 40% in the fall of 2023. We're doing some stuff.

Increase in mastery of learning-- I just want you guys to look at that increase before I talk about it. Just take a peek at it-- 68%, semester 2 of '22-'23 to 81% quarter one '23-'24 in Lit Comp 1. 71%, semester 2 '22-'23 to 88% quarter 1 '23-'24 in Algebra 1.

I think that's worth a hand clap-- some snaps or something, right? Increase in college and career readiness-- initial data shows an increase in college and career readiness from 66% in spring of 2023 to 71% in the fall of 2023. What this tells us is that we are on the right track. We are doing what we need to do in service of our students.

And a huge way that we get a lot of this done is through our community partnerships. It is really important that we have these partnerships like BAM, Choose 180, Why Scholars, College Success, LCA, Latino Civic Alliance, the Achieve Program. They run a lot of our tier 2 interventions with students because we want our teachers focusing on the academics. Like Nena said, though, something that we at not only at Tyee, but through our partnership with Chinook are crying out for-- you'll see nothing on there that is specific for Islander students. And I don't think that that is a out of malintent from anybody, but it is a giant need that we have with CTEC having the largest group of sub-demographic of Islanders.

OK. So now we celebrated some stuff. So what are our next steps with the work that we're doing? We are going to continue with our coaching cycles and our learning walks with our ninth-grade ELA and Math classes. We're going to expand those cycles.

We're going to figure out how to do these instructional rounds with our teachers because, like Don said, that's something they want. They want to see their peers in action. They want to learn from them because that's what good teachers do. You take something that you see that's good, and you make it your own. And we want to give them the opportunity to do that.



Secondary redesign work-- we're having our listening sessions with the design team that we created. We're going to continue our work with Transcend to redesign secondary experience for Tyee for our students and their families. And we're really excited about that work.

Inquiry problem-based learning-- we're going to pilot with two of our teachers in March of 2024. Comprehensive school counseling redesign-- so important. That clarifies the role of a counselor in alignment with current best practices. So we're going to have our counselors in front of the students more in the classrooms for that social, emotional, academic, and career development.

[CHEERING AND APPLAUSE]

That's right. We got you, counselors. Ninth and 12th-grade specific event and programming-- example, like our Senior Success Day that Don mentioned, our senior one-to-one check-ins, our ninth-grade Waskowitz trips.

This is all good stuff that we're going to continue. Now we're ready for your questions, or your comments, your praise, encouragement. We'll take it all.

Thank you.

You're welcome.

Thank you, thank you. So I'll open the floor for our directors. We'll start with Director Petrini. Any comments, questions?

No, just good luck or congratulations on that work. I only had one question. A term I wasn't familiar with-- sheltering of classes is something you had talked about. Can you just speak to that real quick?

Yeah. There are several classes across the district that, for example, a sheltered biology class will look like everybody in that class is new to English. And so what we're working on is rather than having a class where everybody is new to English, knowing that it's going to be an intensive support of thinking and live with one teacher, how does that become our school's focus? And how are our students coming in and integrating and being included across all classes? Because we're at a point now where 45% of the students at Tyee qualify for multilingual services. So it's no longer a one-track or a one-class thing. This is a school movement we need to move towards.

That's how we're going to support our students, that inclusiveness.

Thank you, Director Petrini. Is that Director Stephanie?

I just had a comment. I just wanted to Thank the students for coming. I know that was incredibly vulnerable and scary to talk in front of everybody.

[APPLAUSE]

And just in regards to what you're saying, I met some of you when I had come to the civics class and had a conversation about-- one of the questions I always ask the kids are, where do you-- I say kids. I know that you're young adults. I'm sorry.

Where do you see yourself in five, 10 years? And what's the biggest barrier for yourself getting there? And there's always all these beautiful answers. And one of the things that are really common in the barriers is just the support, and the opportunity, and even knowing what's out there. So I really appreciate you coming out here and being vulnerable and also recognizing that the sky is the limit for you.

Yep. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Director Hagos, any questions or comments?

Wow, just wow. We had one of our students talk about the reputation of Tyee, and that reputation needs to go. Your school is fabulous, and you work hard every single day.

It shows in your presentation. I see you. I see you.

And I'm very proud of the work that you're doing. Thank you for working on behalf of our kids. Thank you.

Thank you. That means a lot.

Thank you, Director Hagos. Director Van?

Wow. That's all I'm going to say as well. I am living your success story. I am living your success story through my son or my two other kids that graduated from Tyee.

But my current student-- thank you. Thank our CTE staff at PSSE. He attends there as well.

So this is a collaborative. So when we are celebrating the sense of belonging, I thought personally, moving to the Olympic site this year was going to be very difficult for my kid, but he has soared. And just thank you for that and for all the other kiddos there. Keep on doing what you're doing. Appreciate it.

Thank you. I appreciate that.

And then I just want to echo the wow piece-- the wow factor of all of this. But also, thank you for giving me the opportunity for our youth to elevate their voice for them being here and expressing what they have to say. Thank you to our students for being here and for speaking. Standing in front of people sometimes it's not that easy to speak. And the fact that your courage and being here-- that's what we want.

We want to hear directly from you. It's great that we have data and all of this stuff, but it doesn't, I think, feel so real until we hear it directly from you all. So thank you again for being here.

And thank you to your leaders for making that opportunity as well. So thank you to you both. And again, wow. And with that, Dr. Duran, anything?

Just thank you all for the work you're doing, and keep dreaming big.

I will, Dr. Duran. Thank you all.

Thank you so much for being here tonight.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you. Bye.

Thank you. So with that, we're going to be moving into our scheduled communications. Just a reminder for public testimony-- on behalf of the Board, we'd like to Thank you for coming and speaking this evening. Our norms and rules are posted on the screens as you see them.

Please be mindful that you're here to speak to the Board and that there may be students here or watching that are paying attention to your words. In addition, the Board will not be able to respond directly to you about your testimony during the meeting. Thank you again for coming and speaking tonight. And with that, our first scheduled community speaker is Alec Myrick.

Good evening, Directors. The district has designated this as Black Lives Matter Week. While most of you see this as striking a needed blow for anti-racism, please consider the collateral damage.

BLM is patently Marxist. The small minority of Highland families that favor Marxism are free to teach it in their own homes without pushing it on the rest. Last year's BLM curriculum was divisive and discriminatory in that it ascribed traits to individuals based only on their skin color.

Two of my own ancestors operated a station on the Underground Railroad, helping slaves escape to Canada. I lived without indoor plumbing and trudged for miles in inclement weather to provide health care to needy patients. Upon returning, I volunteered for three years with the Youth Service Bureau in the most diverse census tract in King County, often laboring until after midnight. I'm not here seeking kudos for my past sacrifices.

I'm not even here to complain about being judged by the color of my skin instead of the content of my character. I am here to speak up for the students currently in your care. You are placing a grossly unfair and dangerous burden on minority students by teaching them that their opportunities are circumscribed by the color of their own skin and that they can judge the attitudes that others will have towards them based on their skin color.

Among other risks, this makes them less motivated toward academic achievement, graduation, and post-secondary education. It also gives them a pessimistic, fatalistic outlook on their own future and makes them more susceptible to the wares of their neighborhood drug dealers. Please, have the courage to be less ideological, and let these children know their true opportunities and potential allies. Thank you.

With that, our next scheduled speaker is Jill Hulings. I hope I pronounced your name right. Thank you.

Good evening, Board members. As a parent of a Mar Vista second grader and soon to be kindergartner, I'm asking for support to add contracted before and after school care or some sort of program at our school, but really, all elementary schools. I personally understand the struggles of balancing work and family responsibilities and know that having access to reliable programming and child care is essential for many families in our district, like myself.

Several Highline elementary schools already offer this resource on their campus, which provides a safe and enriching environment for students before and after school hours. However, the need for these services stretches far beyond the schools that currently offer them. Expanding before and after school care to my neighborhood school, Mar Vista, and the remaining schools in our district would alleviate the burden on working families and continue to ensure that all students have access to quality care during these critical hours.

This decision also supports parents in their professional endeavors and contributes to the overall success and wellbeing of our students. Also, these programs could offer a sense of community within our schools by providing a space for children to engage in supervised activities, interact with their peers, and receive academic support. With this, we can strengthen the bonds among students, parents, and educators.

The district recently announced budget cuts stemming from a number of factors, including declining enrollment, which in turn impacts state funding. And I know that personally many families are in the process of deciding whether to send their children to local public schools for kindergarten next year and who often cite lack of on-campus before and after school cares among their list of concerns.

So I'm hoping we can work together and make it easier for families to choose their local public school. I urge the School Board to prioritize this implementation of contracted before and after school care at Mar Vista and the remaining elementary schools in our district. This will benefit not only working parents, but serve to strengthen the school community and support.

Thank you for--

Thank you. Thanks, Melissa, for your support.

So our next scheduled speaker is James Payne.

James Payne, two at North Hill Elementary. So due to Highline's massive loss of revenue, largely from losing over 1,200 white kids who fled the district after you approved the colossally stupid equity policy, the district will now need to rip a bunch of teachers. Congratulations. Might I suggest you fire the faculty and staff who've been most zealous in teaching IRI, which is educational malpractice of almost inconceivable scope.

Under IRI, you people have had some serious problems lately with so-called supplemental curriculum. And this week, your underperforming schools probably plan to worsen those outcomes, if that's even possible, by teaching the supplemental Black Lives Matter curriculum. Board, do not abdicate your duties to activist conspirators who sneak BLM's corrupted creed into our schools.

This is an affront to good people of all kinds who don't support that violent, racist, political organization. You know, BLM's radical manifesto states that they seek to disrupt the Western-prescribed nuclear family structure. That's most of the people here. It's appalling that Highline aligned itself with BLM's anti-family positions and would teach their divisive extremism here.

BLM's manifesto also admits they're a Marxist organization an ideology that has murdered hundreds million people in the past century. Recently, BLM publicly supported Hamas's October 7 massacre of 1,200 Israelis. By allowing BLM's politicized curriculum in, you've normalized a hostile learning environment-- not your phony culture of belonging.

In the same way, you can't delink the National Socialists from the Nazis. You cannot delink Black Lives Matter at school from BLM. They're the same. Do not ally with extremists like BLM or teach their absurd, supplementary curriculum.

[BEEP]

Thank you. With that, our next public speaker is-- [APPLAUSE] --Patricia Bailey.

Good evening. Schools need to return to academic rigor, including standardized testing. Without a standardized test for all grades, school boards are at a loss to assess the academic achievement of their district. Having followed the testing situation as a teacher in Seattle, it appears to me, Washington State has not had a proven valid and reliable test since before the Wassell begun in 1997. It appears the Wassell and subsequent tests have been agenda-driven, rather than being solid information for school boards.

About the same time as the disappearance of valid and reliable tests, we saw a new trend in school reform using non-academic methods that purported to raise academic outcomes. In Seattle, it took the form of something called courageous conversations, a philosophy that maintained the achievement gap existed because of racism. Instead of analyzing the multiple factors that impact achievement, it was supposed that if we could identify the racism in our schools, it would correct the situation. This assumption has been a 25-year failure.

Students need to have a thorough understanding of foundational skills that will serve them well for life. For example, students need a systematic approach to phonics, so they can easily read with proficiency. Every effort should be made to be sure children do not leave second grade without these skills.

But if they do, schools need to have programs in place to address these deficiencies, even up to grade 12. This is just one specific example of an action that can be taken to greatly aid students to be successful in school and in life. Valid and reliable standardized tests can be found at certified testing centers. Thank you.

With that, we have one more scheduled communication. He has stepped out for a moment, so I'm going to ask the Board if we can reserve that time when he comes back in. Would that be OK with the rest of the Board?

I believe he does not want to speak.

OK, yes. Thank you. With that, I hand it over to Superintendent's update.

Thank you, Director Alvarez. I want to first start off that we are finishing up our all-staff meetings this Friday at Madrona. So I think, in total, it's 35 visits that we have made, including visits up to Camp Waskowitz to meet with their team. And so really grateful for Jeb Binns from the Highland Education Association for partnering with me and Dr. Rynning in the Cabinet to go and have this process.

We really have learned a lot through the process and are really grateful. And I'm just really grateful and thank the staff for everyone who's given us some really valuable feedback. We really learned a lot through this process, and I look forward to wrapping this last one up.

And today, I had two great visits, one at over at the Southern Heights Campus. We have Highline Virtual Academy and innovation Heights. But today, it was really great to be at Highline Virtual Academy and really get a clear understanding around the three models that they have there. They have the blended model, which is where majority of students are participating in.

We also have the self-directed model, the independent model. But they have been doing a lot of work to take a lot of the coursework and put it into our Canvas learning management system-- and so moving away from the Edgenuity curriculum and creating their own and really creating some great classroom guidelines to build expectations. And it was really fabulous to walk through the classroom just to see the level of engagement with students and the majority of students having their camera on. Still some work to do there with some of the school students, but they have some ideas on how they can keep expanding that. But they have really found a great balance around supporting students who may need just the online environment exclusive and then also students who are getting the opportunity to come and serve in person.

A big shout out to the Digital Transformation Team. The use of technology there between the Zoom cameras and the Zoom rooms and the Promethean boards, which is so seamless. It was really wonderful to see our educators who are really doing amazing work with their students to meet their needs-- so great visit there.

And then also, at Highline-- or Innovation Heights, just that's a school that, I think, is really doing some great work to serve our students. They had a projected enrollment this year of 89, and they are currently serving 124 students and just really seeing, again, some really big impacts. I had the opportunity to be able to sit in what they call their Wellness Time, where they're actually getting into advisory groups and sitting around. And they were really focusing on a culture of belonging. And what does it mean to be in community? What does it look like when you're in community? How do you participate? And how does Innovation Heights support you with creating a culture of belonging? So some really good work going on over there.

And then I just-- so some of the data I thought was really striking in some of their credit earning that they have there is that in 2021, they had an average pass rate of 53.7. And currently, in session 3, they're at 78%. So they are really making some great strides to help students reimagine and revision what their futures could be-- so really great work happening there and really grateful.

Some of the quotes that I captured I thought were just really great, I wanted to share. "I feel like I can actually be successful here." "This place helps me to take care of myself, so I can focus on school work and get the credits I need to graduate." "This is the first time I've passed all my classes and actually tried in school." "A lot of times, I don't understand what I'm supposed to do. It's usually hard to ask for help, but I can ask my teachers here. And I love it here. I wouldn't be able to get to graduation if it weren't for this school."

So really appreciate the work that's gone on there. And again, just another shout out to our instructional team for all the work they do to support our educators there, especially with the work transferring over to Canvas, and then our operations team because Southern Heights is just a really great campus. And we really have changed the learning environment for our students-- so grateful for the work that's gone on.

And then, finally, I want to share some of my thoughts on Black History Month because that is what we are celebrating this month-- Black History Month. So a colleague shared a quote from a scholarly paper that really resonated with me as an educator. "A learning stance involves becoming interested in others' story. Moving from certainty about one's own point of view to curiosity about how someone else thinks differently is a powerful skill that can lead to new insights and understanding." So I just really love that thought around the position that you can take when you're trying to understand the perspective of another person.

The same colleague went on to share about his experience being a Black man in a white-dominated culture. "Before you engage with a Black person, stop and think about anti-Blackness and the impact of being corrected, questioned, patronized, dismissed, ignored, rejected, judged, unknown, unheard, denied, devalued, criticized, despised, and decentered. We are human.

We have already had our double portion of what Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. called the bad things in life. We need more than a double portion of the good to heal. We already paid the price. We need more than a double portion of the good to heal. We already pay the price."

So I want to encourage all of us in the Highline community to become interested and curious about experiences and stories that are not our own. What can we learn? What are new insights and understandings of what we discover as we reflect on the story of those who are different from us?

This is what our board policy on equity, race, and identity requires of us-- to know our students and their families deeply, to honor their cultures and identities, and to be willing to engage with all people, honoring their full humanity. So to me, those words really express to me what Black History is about, and I'm really grateful that we're taking time to honor the history of this country because Black History is all of our history. Thank you.

Thank you, Dr. Duran, for that.

[APPLAUSE]

With that, I pass it over to legislative report. Any reports on legislative? Oh, go ahead.

I'm sorry. We're midway through the session, so we have four more weeks to go. Unfortunately, the Levy regionalizing bills have died.

These bills would have allowed us to collect some additional money from our levy, which would have gone a long way towards helping our budget deficits. And while OSPI and multiple other districts did support these bills, there were some that were opposed. So unfortunately, they did not make it. Director Petrini?

Yeah, I feel like maybe Director Van might want to be excited about this one. The bill that would officially recognize Lunar New Year has made it through the House and is now in the Senate. While it would not create a legal holiday, the state would be recognizing Lunar New year as a celebration of Asian-American joy, cultures, and beautiful diversity.

And Director Van gave us all a Chinese New Year little gift here. I thought that was awesome, a little good luck for the year. So thank you for that.

And we also continue to be hopeful to see an increase in MSOC funding, which is Maintenance, Security, and Operation Costs, as well as a movement in special education and funding. Either one of these could result in increased funding starting in the '24-'25 year. That is all I have.

Anything else to add, Director Van? No? OK. Thank you. With that, we're going to thank you both. I know that being previously on the legislative representative-- it's a lot of work, and a lot of reading, and a lot of following.

So thank you both for doing that. And next up is our director reports. So I'll start with Director Hagos. Anything to add?

I have nothing to report.

Director Petrini?

I have here about the Tyee construction, which I'm sure a lot of our students, again, would be very excited about. And I love driving by and watching the progress every time I head to the freeway. So it's really exciting to see the walls are coming up, just the underground and ground level, the plumbing is coming together, electrical and concrete.

So if you haven't stopped by, it's pretty fascinating. There's a park right next to it. My kids love to hang out there and watch what's going on. They say a crane will be erecting a structure steel this month. So if you haven't received also a district e-newsletter with construction updates, you can go to the school construction page on the district website for future updates.

Thank you with that, Director Petrini. Director Tidholm?

Yes. At White Center Heights, the Somali Enrichment Program, which just started this year in kindergarten, will be moving up to first grade next fall. And what that looks like is 30 minutes of lessons in Somali-- learning the language during the school day and also studying the science and social studies in Somali-- so super excited about that. One of the parents at White Center Heights said that "I love the Somali program that is being taught at White Center Heights.

I have noticed my child's growth in participating in Somali enrichment, knowing a lot of new Somali words that he shares with mom at home every day. And he loves engaging in conversations in Somali, knowing that we've had Vietnamese, and we've had Spanish for some years, and now we're able to also have Somali because there's a huge Somali population at White Center Heights is really exciting for not only for the native Somali speakers so that they can learn the language and to read and write it, but also, kids that just want to learn Somali."

In January, five DECA students from Evergreen High School attended the regional competition at the fairgrounds. I was actually supposed to judge it. But unfortunately, it got rescheduled due to weather.

I was so incredibly sad that I could not make the new date. But the students gave presentations on buying and marketing to volunteer business professionals. And it's a great example of career connecting learning in Highline.

Only other thing-- friendly reminder, White Center Heights Elementary school does have, every week, on Thursday from 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM and Friday from 2:15 to 3:45 PM, their Resource Center, which provides anybody in the district. There is a food bank with fresh fruits and produce. There are clothing. They have toys, household items.

They also assist with resume writing, a number of things-- pretty much anything that you can imagine. If they don't have it, they can help you get it. So yeah, utilize those resources. And that is all that I have.

Thank you, Director Tidholm. Director Van?

A couple of things. Thank you so much in regards to Lunar New Year. I know representative Me Lin Ty, a former School Board Director for the Bellevue School District, helped pass that legislation. So White Center Heights is actually having their Lunar New Year event that's coming Friday from 5:00 to 7:00. I'm going to stop by and hang out for a little bit and watch the kids with their red envelopes-- just really great to see that.

Earlier, Ms. Victoria was talking about inclusive education in high school. But if you guys have not seen, the Communication Department shared a really great video featuring one of our great kids at McMicken Heights.

He's a fourth grader. His name is Seth Bobbitt. He was born with Down syndrome.

His school experience is very much like any other fourth grader. His classroom includes kids from all over. He's not secluded or anything. This inclusive education approach is happening at a number of our schools, and McMicken was an early adopter and is recognized by the state as a model for other schools. So I encourage everybody to go on to our website and take a look at that video.

It's really inspiring just to see him smile. It's great. Other than that, that's it.

Thank you, Director Van. I got to see that video. First, I'd like to say that, at my home, we've always-- since my grandsons were born-- my grandson is 12-- celebrated Black History Month.

This year, I discovered that, every year, they have a theme. This year is arts. And so my grandson plays in the orchestra, and it's just celebrating and uplifting him.

And I just want to say that I am super, super excited about how we're lifting up people that don't look like us. A lot of times, that's what's scary, is the unknown-- when people don't look like us, don't behave like us, don't talk like us, don't have the privilege that many of us have. And that scares us.



And instead of joining and loving one another, we start spewing hate. And it impacts our children more than you think. And so I am so thankful to have an African-American grandson. He is our proud and joy of our household, and I am so thankful for that.

And the other things-- today, besides the Black History Gallery of Heroes, I thank you for putting that up, Adriana. February is Black History Month. When we celebrate the contributions of African-Americans past and present, our communications team has developed a Black History Gallery of Heroes.

And you see that on the promethium. And you can see the post every day this month on our Facebook and Instagram. Our household has enjoyed them. We actually pull them up every night.

Also, Gold Star nominations-- the Highline Schools Foundation is collecting nominations for the 2024 Gold Star Awards. There are so many people in our schools, in our community, making an impact on our students. This is an opportunity to honor people who make a difference in Highline. You can nominate a teacher, an administrator, support staff, or volunteers. Anyone can submit a nomination on our foundation website.

And I'll also add that the Mount Rainier High School-- the DECA Club-- in January, the DECA students from Mount Rainier attended the DECA regional competition. Students presented two volunteer business professionals using the marketing skills they learned in class. So congratulations to the 15 Mount Rainier students who qualified to attend the state DECA conference on February 29.

And again, I just want to thank everyone for uplifting all our students. And when we say all, I mean all. And with that, we conclude our director's reports. And now I'll make a motion to-- I'll ask for a motion to approve our consent agenda.

I make a motion to approve our consent agenda.

I second that.

All in favor? The [AUDIO OUT] has been approved. We actually put back on our action agenda that was-- let me go back to--

6.5.

--our action agenda. So any comments, questions, concerns that you guys would like. So I would like Phil to come up to the podium, please. Thank you.

For clarity, and just consistency, and the things that we're doing. So I know we've had some communications behind the scenes, and I just wanted to make sure our constituents see that communication that's happening. Yeah, covering our bases, I guess I should say. Delighted to see more opportunities for our girls to have softball, so I think that's a wonderful opportunity.

And I'm looking at what is available to our students for boys and girls, and then some of the co-ed options that we have. I know that one of the concerns for the girls' softball team was low enrollment and low engagement. So one of the questions. I had asked last time was about, is it a possibility to make it like a co-ed team so that everyone feels included?

You have better enrollment. I noticed wrestling, a long time ago, was very male majority type of sport. So at what point did that help become a co-ed team that we've had? And I had some other questions just about the WIAA. I know you mentioned we have a contract with them. So I'd love to better understand that contract and what kind of liberties does the district have outside of that contract.

Thank you.

Sorry. That was five questions, all at once.

Thank you. Why don't I start with just addressing what I understood to be the questions from last week. Phil Willenbrock, District Director of Athletics. It's good to see everybody here again tonight.

And all of Highline's athletic programs, including girls' softball, operate under the rules of the WIAA. In May 2023, the Board approved an annual agreement that commits Highline to comply with WIAA rules and regulations. Under the WIAA rules, students may participate on teams that are consistent with their gender identity.

There was a question about whether we might make middle school softball a co-ed sport. WIAA does not sponsor co-ed softball teams, and no other school districts in our region have co-ed softball. Consequently, a Highline co-ed softball team would not have any other opponents to play.

So I wanted to start with that and see if that helped address any of the questions and concerns. We operate in Highline under the rules and regulations of the WIAA. And that's really what we're tied to in the sports offerings that we offer here in Highline.

So exclusively, the district doesn't have any allowances to create new teams unless the WIAA directs so? Or how does that-- yeah, how do the options come to be that we're able to give to our kids?

Correct. There's an amendment process through the WIAA that is brought forth to the executive directors of the WIAA and the entire membership of the WIAA to determine what the sports offerings may look like. And then a district has the option to sponsor those offerings.

OK. I have a sixth grader myself, a son. And having more options is always wonderful for him too. And that's what I was trying to figure out how we can-- our boys that don't have a whole lot of options either. It's one or none-- and so looking for those options.

One of the other questions that I had asked that I think is really important, again, for our constituents who ask these questions. And let me just preface this with that my goal is to help find solutions that are supportive of our trans community. So these questions are not in any way targeting anyone, and that's the goal that I feel like, that co-ed or non-gendered sports give that solution so that our communities don't feel excluded, that we don't have those barriers for a lot of people. You had mentioned the reason we don't allow boys in is because we don't have the facilities that would be for them. So if we have a student who was assigned male at birth, is now identifying as a female, and they're using the same restrooms as our girls-- my question is, are we dividing sports then based on identities? Or are we basing it off of physical differences and biological backgrounds?

A student who identifies as a boy may participate in boys' sports. A student who identifies as a girl may participate in girls' sports. And those sports are, again, outlined by the WIAA in the handbook. And then we as a district can determine which ones of those sports we will offer here in Highline.

Can I add something to that as well? I know that as Doctor-- or again, I'm giving doctorates to everybody. Phil knows I've coached all my life previously, and my kids have coached as well, as he knows. But the other thing when something like that came up I think even here at Highline before, especially like asking about co-ed and our baseball, and if our goal is to strengthen the girls' softball team so then we can strengthen as it moves up into by opening this to sixth grade, it's going to really strengthen our school sports.

And that's where we're trying to get is to have a feeder. So the goal is not to be exclusive of anything. But my understanding also is that then there's no other co-ed sports currently, so they would have no one to compete against if we had a co-ed team. Is that correct?

That's correct. And the WIAA does not sponsor co-ed softball as a selection that we would even have the opportunity to provide.

How did the-- wrestling is co-ed at this point. How did that come to be supported and then have other schools follow suit?

Yeah, I can't speak specifically to that. Those decisions made by the WIAA, whether it would be 10, 15, 20 years ago, however that all came to be-- in Highline, we provide the opportunity to participate in girls' wrestling, as we do in boys' wrestling. So we offer both of those sports to our students and always have.

Is there something a school district can do to advocate for a sport to become co-ed, seeing that softball is more team-oriented? It's not exactly individual-based. So you don't have the physical contact between players. So I'm just thinking of how does a school bring this up? Like I said, how did the wrestling come to be co-ed? Someone had to say something at some point.

Phil and I need very different microphone heights. I'm just mentioning that. The specific question about how did wrestling come to be a boys and girls sport co-ed like that-- I think we would have to take that back to WIAA. We just don't have the answer to that-- the institutional memory for that. We can certainly go back to the WIAA and ask them that question.

In terms of district advocacy, it really goes to that amendment process that Phil mentioned. So we could talk to them about what that might look like, but it would be making a-- I would imagine it would be something like making a proposal. And then, again, it goes through the whole WIAA process. It's not something that we can do unilaterally as a school district because we are part of the WIAA, and we do have that agreement to abide by their rules.

Does anyone have any other questions too? I know I--

Excuse me. Any other questions for--

I have none.

None. So with that, I move that the Highline School Board approve sixth grade participation in the WIAA girls' softball at the middle school level, and I'll need a second please.

I second. Roll call, please?

Director Hagos?

Yea.

Director Petrini?

Yes.

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

Director Van?

Yea.

Director Alvarez?

Yea.

This motion passes five to none.

Thank you for that. And with that, we move into introduction items. So our first intro item is a motion to approve resolution number 02-24 to issue non-renewal notices pursuant to a reduction in force to achieve a balanced budget and to properly staff district, educational programs, and departments.

And normally in introduction items, we have the opportunity to ask questions or if anybody has any questions that they like. Thank you, Dr. Grubb. He is a doctor, so I didn't even give it to him. He earned it-- so Dr. Grubb. And thank you. Any questions or any comments, concerns at this time?

Dr. Grubb, do a quick presentation first on this one.

Yes. Thank you.

Happy to talk about the so-called RIF resolution-- Reduction In Force. This is an annual resolution that comes forward with the regularity of longer days and spring and daffodils. We do it as a matter of routine, and we work closely with Highland Education Association to do this work with minimal impact on our certificated staff. There are rules, laws, regulations we have to follow to reduce and adjust the certificated staff. And this is the first part of that process.

When I've talked about the RIF resolution before, I've likened it to a big puzzle. And Dr. Larson is the master of putting this puzzle together to minimize the impact. Just some of the constraints that we're dealing with are-- we receive about anywhere from 100 to 150 HEA resignations/retirements over the course of a year. That's around 10%, plus or minus, of the teaching workforce. That's pretty typical.

With those resignations, they don't always come in the tidy, little packages and with the certification that the district might need. And so this is where the puzzle master comes in and tries to adjust staffing in such a way that we minimize the chances of needing to lay teachers off and find spots in which certification matches. But there are some times when the certification and the need doesn't match up. In those rare cases, we employ the authority that is given to us through the RIF resolution to reduce the teaching workforce. So that's really what this is all about.

Now, any questions or any concerns or comments? And we always have the opportunity for us to ask questions later. This is just a presentation for us for intro.

So just for clarity, these reductions in force is outside the parameter of the 8 million that we have to reduce due to our budget cuts coming up. Is that correct?

Yeah, I want to be-- they interact. So one of the constraints that we have to work within is the overall budget allocation. We have, in that 8 million that you're referring to, really avoided assistant principals, counselors, school-based staff. But there are certificated staff members who are HEA members that work centrally-- curriculum specialists, imagine that-- that could be affected by a reduction in force.

Likewise, if a categorical funds-- Title I, LAP-- were that to be reduced, that could impact the budget constraints under which we're working and impact certificated staff. So I want to be clear that as the budget picture adjusts-- and right now, we don't know, especially in the categorical side, how it may impact us. We still seek the authority to be able to work with the HEA to make these adjustments if we need to do so.

I can remember only one year-- and it was during COVID-- when we sought the authority to do a RIF, but we actually were able to not exercise that authority. Every other year that I've done this for the last decade, we've had some impact in which we exercise the authority that this resolution would give us. Chris?

And I would like to add that when we have actually had to implement a RIF notification for somebody, it wasn't connected to budget because of the attrition opportunities to keep everybody placed. And there have been years where we've had to communicate, like, we're not issuing you your contract yet. But once we know who's submitted their contracts signed and who has decided not to sign, we will then issue you a contract. And we were able to basically issue contracts to almost every employee in the last six years.

The number of people who we had to say we don't have a spot for you was very limited to no more than two in any given year, and they were usually partial FTE employees who we just didn't have a partial assignment for them. And so they welcomed to apply to full-fledged assignments, but you can't take a partially employed person and just make them a full-time person. We've been very successful at not really having any kind of a significant impact-- or when there has been one, being able to go back and say, we have a job for you now.

I think, with any other questions, I think appearance hearing none. Thank you so much.

Thank you.

With that, it's 9.2, our next intro item-- motion to approve Evergreen High School replacement project approval of contractor Cornerstone General Contractors change order number 7, dash, purchase order number CP230035. Thank you, Scott.

Yeah. Scott Logan just here to say a few words. And just as you talk about these two projects, I know every time I go by them-- I was just at Evergreen recently, and it just now 3D to see it.

So it's exciting work you guys are doing. Really great work and great progress. Thank you, Scott.

So our capital team is doing some really great work right now. And maybe I just share real quick before I talk about these that as you-- we talked about Tyee a few minutes ago. And if you also drive by Evergreen, it looks like Evergreen is way ahead of Tyee.

We need to keep in mind that Tyee had to do a complete demolition project before they were able to start, where Evergreen started with construction. When they're both finished and done, Evergreen will still have demolition to do. So they're really on par with each other, but it looks a little different when you drive by them. And our capital team is doing fantastic work.

So 9.2 is the JCCM delivery model for Evergreen. In the very beginning, we talked about there would be some change orders as the price developed out through this process, I think. If I remember right, the first one was \$462,000. Obviously, on \$140-plus million project, there's going to be some changes to that number.

We are now at \$142 million. There is change order number 7 that we are in the process of reviewing and evaluating. We have a great team that looks at this and makes sure it stays fair, and consistent, and appropriate. This is addressing numerous things that come down the road as the project progresses.

The biggest one is our work with King County on our building permit and stormwater retention is huge. We are closer to the finish line on what that looks like. We will have a very comprehensive stormwater management system on site-- more comprehensive than we originally anticipated. But this is in response to King County.

All of the numbers will be provided to the Board well in advance of the next meeting. And this is still falling within the original construction budget. And it's really the same story for 9.3, other than the delivery model.

Any questions or concerns for either Evergreen or Tyee?

Sorry. Quick question again. Sorry. I noticed when we clicked on these that the change order price was Xed out, and that's because we don't have those exact numbers just yet before we vote on this next time?

That's correct. We're still in the process of evaluating. We want to try and get this as comprehensive and complete as possible.

The last thing we want to do is provide a number and then change it before the next one, which is why we will send this out to Board members as soon as the number is complete well in advance. It'll also be publicly available well in advance of the next meeting. And also willing to answer questions if additional come up at that time.

Thank you.

Yep.

So thank you, Scott.

Just quickly, I just want to give a quick shout out to Ellie and all your work you're doing. So just thank you for what you're doing. I know you're in the background leading all this work in a big way, so appreciate your work.

Yes. Thank you so much. And with that, do we want to move any items to the consent agenda?

No. At this point, 9.2 and 9.3, with those numbers not given to us yet, I would like to wait. Yeah.

Anything else? So we just leave the 3 for our regular action item agenda. So with that, I'll make a motion for us to adjourn.

I'll second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye. Let's go home.

Thank you.

Thank you, everyone.