

Highline Public Schools | School Board Meeting - May 1, 2024

Welcome, everyone, to our regularly scheduled board meeting. And with that, let's please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Well, again, thank you, everyone, on this beautiful, sunny day for being here. And with that, I'll ask Adriana for roll call, please.

Director Tidholm?

Present.

Director Hagos?

Here.

Director Van?

Here.

Director Petrini?

Present.

Director Alvarez?

Here.

And with that, I'll call for any changes or additions to our board agenda.

I make a motion to move action items 8.1. 8.1 is the motion to approve the surplus of district property 8.2-- Motion to approve the Microsoft infrastructure licensing renewal. 8.5-- This is to approve the Evergreen Replacement Project. 8.6-- to approve the Beverly Park Roof Replacement Final Acceptance. And 8.7-- this is the district-wide emergency supply purchase order to the consent agenda.

So you're making a motion. So I need a second.

I'll second that.

All in favor?

Aye,

Aye.

Any opposed? So those items mentioned will be moved from our consent to a consented agenda. And with that, we move to recognition. So I'll hand it over to Dr. Duran.

Yes, it's my honor to start us off with Teacher Appreciation Week. So I'd like to invite our educators in the room to please come up to the podium while I read this. And we'll get it started. All of you, come forward. Come on out, all of our educators.

All our educators, oh, including the little educators.

All right. Yeah, little ones to go, also. Awesome. Two did not want to miss out there.

No.

Thank you. All right. So whereas teachers make public schools, great and whereas teachers open students' minds to ideas, knowledge, and dreams, and whereas teachers keep American democracy alive by laying the foundation for good citizenship, and whereas teachers fill many roles as listeners, explorers, role models, motivators, and mentors, and where teachers continue to influence as long after our school days are only memories, now, therefore, the school board and the superintendent of Highline Public Schools do hereby claim that the week of May 6 through the 10th, 2024 is Teacher Appreciation Week in Highline. And we urge all citizens to observe this week by taking time to recognize the knowledge, the impact of teacher on our lives. Thank you for all the work that you do.

Yes, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Good evening, board of directors and Dr. Duran. Thank you for this amazing award recognition. On behalf of our teachers, we have Katie Asare from the Puget Sound Skills Center and students that are going to speak this evening.

[INAUDIBLE], thank you.

Thank you. My name is Katelyn Asare. I've been a proud Highland educator for 12 years now. And thank you so much for the recognition. There's nothing-- no greater honor, I think, in my life than being a teacher. But I think what's most important is to hear from our next generation of teachers. So I'd like to pass it on to two of my Teaching Academy students.

Yes.

[INAUDIBLE]

Yes, we can applaud.

[APPLAUSE]

Hi, my name is Sophia Rivera.

I'm Miranda [INAUDIBLE].

Starting the journey of becoming a teacher is both extraordinary and life changing. Being a teacher isn't just a profession. Being a teacher requires resilience, patience, dedication, courage, and love. In Teaching Academy, we've learned that being a teacher isn't all about how much you value the subject you're teaching. It is about how much you empower the students.

A significant highlight of our experience in Teaching Academy has been the emphasis placed on understanding the social and cultural aspects of education. It is important to value diversity, all cultural backgrounds, and perspectives and to bring those into the curriculum. Our last parting word is that Teaching Academy should be available to students district wide and not just at PSSC. Thank you for honoring Highline educators and future educators.

Wonderful. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Why don't you y'all come on up and we'll do a picture?

Yes.

Come on up.

[INAUDIBLE] OK, I think there's one in there.

[APPLAUSE]

Our next item is Director Van recognizing Arts Education Month. Thank you very much. If you guys haven't had the opportunity, right outside the board room, we have some great art that were created by our students. So at the end, please go out there and just take a look. It's great. Thank you for giving me this opportunity. Whereas the arts embody much of an accumulated wisdom, intellect, and imagination of humankind, and whereas, learning in the arts enhances and enriches the lives of all students, and whereas the arts play a unique role in the lives of our families and our communities, and whereas all children deserve a quality arts education, and whereas arts education can teach creative problem-solving and cultural knowledge, and whereas the arts offer multiple pathways to understanding for different types of learners, and whereas arts education increases connections between teachers, students, and their community, now, therefore, the school board and superintendent of Highline Public Schools do hereby proclaim May as Arts Education Month in Highline and urge all Highland citizens to celebrate and promote the arts in our schools, and to take action, and provide equitable access to arts learning for all students in our learning communities. That's it.

And I believe Adina Thea, Gabriela Olivarez, and Tim Wind are here, so please come on up.

Good evening. I wanted to thank the board and Dr. Duran for officially taking this opportunity to recognize the importance of fine arts in our schools. Our fine arts teachers are working hard to continuously improve their programs to match the needs of our students as well as the needs of our community and larger society. Our Highline Board arts policy is really strong. 2160 states that the board believes that through arts education, students learn to develop creativity, discipline, perception, perseverance, self-expression, and critical thinking. And these capacities are fundamental in preparing students to graduate, prepared for the future they choose.

The board further believes that a comprehensive arts education program promotes and strengthens our cultural diversity. Our goal is to truly use the arts as a vehicle to empower our students to realize our district promise of every student graduating prepared for the future they choose. Thank you for this recognition. It is our goal to continue to show, through the arts, that true brilliance and endless capacity of our students. And now, I'll introduce Gabriela Olivarez.

Hi, I am Gabriela Olivarez. Thank you for the recognition. I am the music specialist of the fine arts team. I also have the privilege to be a teacher at Evergreen High School, teaching music. So far this year, within our music programs, over the past two years, we have had two curriculum adoptions. And within these adoptions, we've had a cohort of teachers who are dedicated to refining that curriculum to reflect our students. So those are our initiatives in both elementary and secondary music.

We've also added a new course-- mariachi-- to our music courses. This is the act of being culturally responsive, responding to the community's needs. We aim to be culturally sustaining, so sustaining that program and then ultimately, culturally expansive, so expanding upon that program and hopefully adding more programs that reflect the community. Thank you.

I'm Tim Wind. I am the visual arts dance and theater specialist for the district. I've only been in this position for a year. I have been in Highline for 12 years at Pacific Middle School. I choose to teach art. Because I want students to learn perseverance and patience, confidence, and creativity. And I feel honored and proud to work in this district that takes those values and that takes the work of art education seriously. Thank you so much for this recognition.

Thank you all. So, come.

Thank you.

I also want to say thank you for the arts. I'm a proud grandma of a-- he plays the cello. And so he's in seventh grade and can't wait to get-- I'm trying to get him to go into mariachi. So I'm excited about that. I think he's buying into it. So with that, we'll move on to school nurse recognition. I'll ask Michelle Jarvis to step up to the-- and with that, our proclamation. Whereas children are our future and by investing in them today, we're securing business, community, and state leaders of tomorrow.

And whereas the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of our children is paramount to their growth and development, and whereas Highline School nurses are dedicated health care professionals who work in collaboration with families, schools, and communities to develop and promote comprehensive health care programs for our youth, and whereas in addition to providing for students immediate health needs, school nurses continually promote healthy lifestyles and provide health and safety education to students and staff, now, therefore, the school board and superintendent of Highline Public Schools do hereby proclaim that May 8, 2024 is National School Nurse Day in Highline and urge all Highline citizens to promote good health of our students and recognize school nurses for their contributions to the health of our children. Congratulations.

Thank you.

So, do you have any words to us?

Yes, I do. And then I have some of my crew here today.

Yay.

[LAUGHTER]

So, thank you, again, for the board directors and Superintendent Duran. It's easy to really picture nurses as ones who just hand out Band-Aids or ice packs. But we are so much more than that. They're quiet heroes who interact with our students when they're at their most vulnerable. Care goes beyond just administering first aid. We build relationship with students. We become their trusted confidant, sources of comfort.

And we advocate for their health and safety. We're there to listen to them, offer support, and provide guidance when needed. So I just want to express massive thank you to all the nurses in the district. Your dedication, and kindness, and your all-around awesomeness does not go unnoticed because I see it every day. And I'm truly lucky as a leader to have each and every one of you on my team, so thank you. Thank you.

Yeah, let's come up. Yeah, let's applause. Come up for a picture.

[APPLAUSE]

OK, I think I'm going to have to have you go back a little bit, otherwise I'm going to get this podium in.

[INAUDIBLE]

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you. Good night. And with that, we'll have School Lunch Heroes Day by Director Hagos. And we'll ask Lisa Johnson to step up to the mic. Director Hagos?

I'm so excited you're here, Lisa. I got to get to know you during our school lunch. Or, what's it called? Our March Madness Month. And let me just say, you care very deeply about the nutrition of our kids, so I'm happy you're here. But let me get to the proclamation because it's for all of our school lunch heroes. So whereas nutritious meals at school are an essential part of the school day, and whereas the staff of the district school meals and nutrition department are committed to providing healthful, nutritious meals to the district's children, and whereas the men and women who prepare and serve school meals help nurture our children through their daily interaction and support, now, therefore, the school board and superintendent of Highline Public Schools do hereby proclaim Friday, May 3, 2024 as School Lunch Hero Day in Highline. And we urge all Highline citizens to express their appreciation to these valuable employees-- incredibly valuable and commend their good work on behalf of our children. If you have a few words, we'd love to hear from you.

OK. Well, hello, everyone. Thank you all for your support of school meals. We serve almost 2 million meals every year-- breakfast, lunch, after-school meals, and summer. So we really appreciate having you come and see and have an inside look on what we do. Clint just reminded me, at the high school, we served asparagus, and we sold out. And that is a farm-to-school item.

So we get to expose kids to a lot of different things and a lot of farm-to-school fruits and vegetables. So we're really proud of that. Please do make sure to promote our survey. We are looking for feedback and input for next year's menus. We took some of that from last year and incorporated a lot of soups, especially this year, and some additional breakfast items that are lower in sugar. So thank you very much.

Thank you. Come on up for a picture.

[APPLAUSE]

Wow, asparagus selling out at high school. That is amazing. So with that, we move on to our school presentation and ask Danny Calderon, our executive director, to come on up, so we can introduce our guest.

Thank you, President Alvarez, Superintendent Duran, directors of the board. It's my pleasure tonight to introduce White Center Heights Principal Maria Osses-Watson and the team over at White Center Heights for tonight's board presentation. Thank you.

Thank you.

Good evening. [SPEAKING SPANISH] board directors and Superintendent Dr. Duran. It is my pleasure to celebrate with you some of the accomplishments at White Center Heights and how they relate to our district vision and mission. Everything that we do at White Center Heights is connected to the Highline promise. We have a mission that our staff co-created that is directly in line with our goal to deliver on the Highland promise.

Tonight, we are going to feature some priorities that are connected to the culture of belonging and bilingual and biliterate. And my team is going to help explain how we are accomplishing these goals. Our first priority that we're going to highlight tonight is increasing the sense of belonging by decreasing disproportionality of discipline for our Black and African-American students. This is a long list of strategies that we're using.

But I just want to highlight that we always start with relationships. We always think about the students and their needs as we make decisions for our students. And we ensure that our teachers have the professional development. And that we create the systems so that everyone has the same vision and mission around behavior and discipline for our students.

Two things that we did this year that I want to highlight from this list is we implemented a Black Student Union. And we interviewed several of our Black and African-American students to ask them how they love to learn and how they feel about school. And we took their feedback as we develop professional development. We also launched our Somali Enrichment Program that we're going to hear more about in a few minutes.

So the impact of our work has been to increase the sense of belonging of our Black and African-American students by 15%. And we've been focusing so much on this group of our community, that they actually communicated in the Panorama Survey a much higher sense of belonging than our other racial groups. So that's really interesting. And we are thinking about how we can address those needs for all of our students. And we will be having, now, interviews with students from all different backgrounds so that they can also have a voice and so that we can respond to their feedback.

Another impact has been to decrease the disproportionality of behavior incidences of our Black and African-American students. As you can see on this slide, last spring, we had 17.4 disproportionality, which means that there were many more students who were receiving discipline, compared to the percentage of students of that racial group.

So we want to make sure that we do everything we can to bring that to 0 or to a negative number as you see in some of the other racial groups. But nonetheless, we have gone from 17.4% disproportionality to 7.6%, which is a 9.8% decrease. It's not where we want to be, but we're headed in the right direction. So now, I'm going to introduce Miss T, who is going to share with you the work that she's been doing with our Black Student Union.

Hello. Everyone calls me T, but my name is Tiara Staley. This is my first year at White Center Heights. Prior to this, I taught for four years at Cascade Middle School. And Danny Calderon was one of my principals. And actually, he gave me an opportunity. Oh, I'm trying not to cry. As a Black educator, I'm always one of the few or the only. And he gave me an opportunity to have an affinity space of students who identify as Black.

So I had an advisory of all Black students for three years because of him. And when I left Cascade, that was one of the only things that I considered that would keep me staying there, is, what am I going to do about this space for Black students? And luckily, when I went to White Center Heights, it's the same community. I know a lot of the families. And Maria was like, our goal is to really serve these African-American students, get rid of some of these disproportionalities, provide opportunities, make sure that these kids can be successful.

And when I asked her if we can do a club like this, she threw out ideas. She asked me, do you want people to support you? What do you need? And so, now, we have 10 amazing, amazing students between the grades of 3 and 5 from various parts of Africa. Some identify as Black, some identify as African, some identify as biracial, mixed race. So it's just really nice to get those group of students together.

And what it has become so far in its first year at White Center Heights is a space for Black conversations. So we're able to talk about things that students feel like they can't discuss in a normal classroom. And the things that come out just really show their knowledge, their experience outside of school and their potential as Black students. We gain a lot of knowledge about their experiences at school. We get to teach them games. In the next slide, we'll talk about what they think of Black Student Union.

But we really just talk about our culture. What are some of the games we need to play? What are some of the meals that we cook together? How can we incorporate the arts and learning about Black people and Black history? And then we also learn like, how can we navigate school? So we know that these students have disproportionate disciplinary data. But what is their experience? Where do they see their roadblocks? And then, how can we navigate that so that they're successful?

Here are some of the feedback from the kids. What do you like about Black Student Union. Why did you join? There are a lot of Black people there and we play fun games. So a lot of these students haven't had spaces where they can just be Black and talk about Blackness in a positive way. So to them, that is just the biggest way for them to be able to express themselves in this space. There's lots of fun games. My friends are there. It's OK, dada. A lot of my friends go there, so it's really fun.

One student said, I can meet other people who are like me. And I can also meet people who I haven't met before. And also, I can be with people who have stuff in common with me that I would have never, ever get to meet. So they just really wanted an opportunity and a space for them. They see programs like Vietnamese dual language, Spanish dual language. And now, we have Somali enrichment. So they're really craving that, like, where can I have a space for me? So that's what we've been trying to do and allow them to have a culture of belonging.

Thank you, Miss T. Our second priority we want to highlight tonight is the way that we have developed a strong tier one literacy program at our school. What we mean by tier 1 is instruction that's provided to all of our students. We have been really committed to implementing our new curriculum-- the art curriculum, the school pay system to make sure that our students are receiving rigorous lessons, lessons that help them think, where they can express themselves, where they can respond in writing, or by speaking, or in art like was what was mentioned earlier.

We want to make sure that our students can express themselves through their culture and their identities as they learn the art curriculum. Arc-- ARC. And we make sure this is happening by providing our teachers with professional development and making sure that our teachers are working in teams and following the [INAUDIBLE] questions as they develop lessons and analyze student learning.

The next two slides are showing data, just to show the growth that our students are making from one year to the next. And I want to remind everyone that the majority of the students at White Center Heights are bilingual or multilingual. And so if you can imagine, they're coming to school, learning a new language as they are learning how to read in English. So it's a lot that they are carrying. And we're proud of all the growth that they're making.

So here, you can see the growth by grade as measured by i-Ready. And then, here, you can see how, from one grade to the next. For example, in the first line, kindergartners in 2021, '22 showed 43% typical growth. And then as first graders, the following year, they showed 82% typical growth. So it's just a lot to celebrate. Now, it's my pleasure to introduce Mr. Ibrahim, who is going to come up and help us celebrate our Somali Enrichment Program.

Thank you, Maria. Sorry, Mrs. Osses-Watson. Thank you so much and board directors and Dr. Duran. And my name is Abdullahi Ibrahim. This is my second year at White Center Heights Elementary. And this, also, my first year teaching as a Somali enrichment and kindergarten teacher. So I'm honored to be the pioneer of the Somali Enrichment Program. It's a position that I've bravely, bravely accepted to start a program that has never been started before me. So I was like, yes, I get this. And I did it. And it's successfully going through right now.

And at Western Heights, we are offering to-- and we are completing our first year of the Somali Enrichment Program. And it's going to the next year and through first grade. So we're also increasing to science. And for 30 minutes of science, in addition to the 30 minutes and of the literacy. And this language program is in response to the community need that has been going on for a very long time.

And as a Somali under the Somali community at large, this is a dream come true. So we are like, yes, now, we are part of what we belong to. So it has increased the sense of belonging of the Somali community and generally at White Center Heights. And the school offers three languages in support of the heritage of the three largest communities in our Highline School District. Thank you so much.

Thank you, Mr Ibrahim. So this last slide is just some of the ways that we connect with our community. Like Mr. Ibrahim said, everything we do at our school is in response to the needs of our community. And I'm really proud to call White Center Heights a community school. At this time, I would like to know if you have any questions or comments.

So I'll open it up to our directors. I'll start on this end, this time. Director Tidholm, any questions or comments, please.

Thank you, Director Alvarez. No questions, but some comments. First of all, I really appreciate what White Center Heights is doing, just for our culturally diverse community. As many of you know, I had a couple babies that went to White Center Heights for a number of years. Really happy to see you at the BSU at White Center Heights, although we're very sad to lose you at Cascade. I'm happy you're still in the community. My child, my oldest son, was actually in Miss T's BSU last year. The iftar dinner-- I also had the pleasure of attending that and serving everybody for Ramadan. And that was just really beautiful to be able to experience and just be in that community. And the food, also, was amazing.

And I know that at White Center Heights, we had a number of principles when I was there for a lot of years. And then we finally ended up with you. And you stuck around and have done a great job. And I just really appreciate the support that my kids felt in the community and in the school. Because we've been at schools where we didn't feel that supportive. And my kids didn't feel as welcome to go from being in an environment that for my children was hostile to being very welcomed and understood and seen. It was just a welcome experience and change. And I really appreciate you guys and your little baby.

Thank you so much.

Thank you. Director Hagos?

You stuck around. Those words are important. And it is-- I can't remember if it's National Principals Day or if it's just called School Principals Day, but kudos. Sustainability in our administrators is really important. So I'm glad you stuck around. And just another piece, going back to that part around the representation of your student body with 4-- and, no, that's way too low of a number-- with 40 countries represented in your school and 80% of them speaking a different language. And to be able to show the results that you are showing is quite impressive. And I think it is because you stuck around. And with that piece, what I do know and I want to call out is that you have won the Washington State Academic Achievement Award for growth in literacy and math for the last four years. Did I get that correct? That's what I read.

That's news to me, but I'm not surprised.

Well, it is what I read.

All I know is that there's a team of leaders from central office that are coming to visit some of my teachers because of the high growth that they have brought along through their students.

OK. so it's on your website. [INAUDIBLE] if that's not true.

But that is data from a few years ago that I believe you're referring to.

So what I'm seeing today in the data is there is still some impressive growth happening. Thank you for doing that on behalf of our kids.

Thank you so much.

Thank you, Director Hagos. Director Van?

Thank you so much for being here. A comment and a question. I had the opportunity to come and visit and share with you all in regards to the Lunar New Year. Such a great event was at the cafeteria. It was packed. Thank you so much for the invitation and being able to participate in that. In regards to your growth by grade cohort percentage, can you share with us? What is the success in regards to getting you to that next level? Was it the professional development? Or can you share with us what that is?

Yes. So, as you know or you might have figured, since this is my fourth year at White Center Heights, when I arrived, we were right in the middle of COVID. And so I feel like even though we're making good strides right now, it has been challenging. It's been a slow start. But what I believe is that something consistent that we've had since I arrived at White Center Heights is a strong professional-learning community system, which means that every grade level team-- they meet regularly, and they have a protocol that they follow.

And like I mentioned earlier, responding to the [INAUDIBLE] questions means that they understand the standards that students are supposed to learn. They understand how they need to teach to those standards and measure them, measure the successes and measure the needs of students. And then they share their best practices with each other. So they're learning as educators in a community. And then they're modeling that for their students. So it's that concept of collectivist learning that we are really highlighting for our staff and for our students. I believe that is what is taking us to the successes that we're having. And then as we continue growing as a team, I can see that we're going to continue to grow exponentially.

All right. Thank you very much. Just one shout-out. Christina Fritsch, your assistant principal, was my kiddo's teacher when they were at McMicken Heights, so just kudos to you guys.

Yes. Yes. Oh, and if I have a moment to highlight Christina, she is an amazing team member. She was supposed to be here tonight. I just have to mention her because she oversees our social-emotional learning and behavior goals. And so she is a pivotal part of the successes that we've had in that area.

Thank you. Thank you, Director Van. Director Petrini?

Thank you for that presentation, and for your testimony. And just sharing, making spaces for these students to feel safe and connected is really, really important. I had a comment about the slide about the disproportionality discipline. Is my mic on?

Yes.

OK. And seeing that the discipline has decreased, but also in some other demographics, it's increased. Is that related in any way? Or is your priorities of literacy-- does that play into it? Are you seeing a decrease in behaviors as well?

Yes. We, like I said, are really focusing on giving voice to our Black and African-American students. Because historically, as you could see, there is a huge disproportionality. And so any of the other data that you saw for the other racial groups-- we want to analyze those data per student like individual student stories. That's how we address those students' needs.

But I agree with what you're saying in terms of the more that teachers are collaborating and the more that they know their students and are meeting the students' needs based on data, the more that students are going to be engaged in learning. And when students are engaged, they are happy. And they don't have situations where they get dysregulated emotionally. So everything is connected.

But one thing that was on a slide that I didn't mention is that my team is monitoring this data weekly. Every Friday, we monitor our data. And we have a spreadsheet where we monitor every student that is demonstrating challenges around behavior because we care about the student. It's not just about giving them a consequence. It's about teaching them how to be their best selves. And it's about listening to their needs because that's what students need and want. They want to be seen, and they want to be heard. And so regardless of what the numbers say on the graphs, it's more than just numbers. We look at the actual students, and we work with them individually.

Yeah, thank you.

I hope that addressed your question.

Yeah, I was just noticing for the Black students that saw a huge increase in the sense of belonging which is amazing. I also noticed, though, that all the other demographics were still below what the Black students were in the fall. And then to see the discipline increase for those same students, wondering if there was that correlation there, that they don't have a sense of belonging just yet. We can always do better, making sure all our students are feeling welcome, and giving them the tools to excel in school, and making sure that they're all literate and can help themselves. So do you see any correlation at all?

Yeah. I just know that all of our data school-wide is-- the rate of discipline is either similar or decreased compared to past years. It's just that disproportionality that we're really concerned about. Because as you could see, it was very high. But if you look at the district-wide sense of belonging, our numbers are pretty close. But we don't want to be at 50% or 60%. We want to be at 100%. So we're going to keep, like I said, focusing on each student and each need, and continue to make sure that we build strong relationships, and listen to our students.

Oh, thank you so much.

You're welcome.

Thank you, Director Petrini. And with that, just only comment is that it's been a blessing to be able to come and observe. I was there, coming out to events before, when my grandson was there and just a lot of praise for listening to the community and bringing in what the community needs, so just so thankful for that. So thank you again for being here today.

Thank you.

Thank you, Maria. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

And with that, we're going to transition over to our scheduled communications. 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. 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 your testimony during this meeting. Thank you again for coming and speaking. And our first scheduled speaker is David Kudlow.

Good evening. I spoke at the last board meeting, saying that reading at grade level is the path to equity. The Seattle Public Schools understands this. The first goal of their equity plan is making sure all students read at grade level by the end of third grade. Because they say reading by third grade is predictive of high school graduation and life success. In fact, according to the National Assessment of Adult Literacy, two out of three students who cannot read at grade level by the end of the fourth grade will end up in jail or on welfare.

Currently, as shown by state testing, 2/3 of Highline students read below grade level. Even if we don't count ELL students, 55%, more than half of Highline's non-ELL students read below grade level. That's much worse than the Washington state average. Highline's equity policy defines equity as a commitment to educate each student in a way that ensures every Highline student is achieving excellence.

The essential skill needed to achieve excellence is reading at grade level. Yet, Highline has thousands of students in grades 3 through 12 who are reading below grade level, many substantially below grade level. Highline's definition of equity says equity focuses on outcomes. Trying isn't enough. You expect results. So you must bring students who are behind in reading up to grade level.

Highline's equity policy calls for distributing resources in a way that corrects these inequities in achievement. I urge you to follow your equity policy. Distribute resources so that poor readers are rapidly brought up to reading at grade level. That is the path to equity. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Kudlow. With that, our next scheduled speaker is Ben Folgers.

Hello, board. Hello, Dr. Duran. Hello, other camera. I am here to demonstrate a tool that I typically use in my ELA classroom that's known as found poetry. It uses publicly available media, just like school board comments. And it gives it new meaning through the scratching out and the inclusion of new words. And so I wrote mine to address a big issue I'm seeing at Mount Rainier, which is vaping. Because we don't call them fire alarms anymore. I just call them vape alarms.

So here it goes. I know that you want the best for 17,000 children in your care. For you to advocate or even condone a life-changing intervention for a child, you must have compelling evidence. I submit that this evidence is lacking. This is not an issue of left versus right or religion versus science. The people who agree with what I'm presenting here include liberals and conservatives, people of faith and atheists. As humans, especially teenagers, we are easily addicted when exposed to harmful substances, such as nicotine, fentanyl, alcohol, cannabis, et cetera. Nearly every system of our body is affected by vaping. And scientists have documented, since time immemorial, that addiction has been known to be a public health crisis.

The lobbyists who promote so-called "less harmful tobacco alternatives" have redefined tobacco addiction as a disease which requires alternatives such e-vapes or dip. We're talking about addictions that affect fertility, brain, and even more-- the destruction of vital organs like your lungs. The two assumptions teenagers make about vape addiction are, one, lung damage is reversible and low risk, and, two, vapes are just water vapor. Some of you have tuned me out. Others will forget what I said as soon as I sit down. This may be because we should have been exploring the same theme in this forum for years, instead of arguing about gender identities or pronouns.

Thank you, Mr Folgers.

[APPLAUSE]

With that, our next scheduled speaker is Deborah Lip.

I know you don't care about everybody's feelings or we wouldn't be going through this tonight. I'm really sick every time I come to this board meeting. And we want to segregate everybody by what you look like out here. How many times? We went through this how many years ago? My daughters are both married to Black men. You want me to say it? Out of 13 grandkids, half are mixed. You tell me. You look at them, and you tell me. They're Linux, they're Oreo, they're Isabella, they're Kira.

It makes me sick that you are doing this. You are the board. Why are we segregating? OK, so on my bus, I'm going to say, are you Black? I love you more, so you come sit with me. All you white kids to the back. If I did that, you would have me out of here, while my kids are mixed. So Linux and Aria-- one's dark, one's light. You get to go to grandma's group because you're white. Aria, you got to go to the brown group. You can't come to grandma's group. My daughters have been told, are you the nanny? When they take their kids out.

So what? She's not a victim. She loves her children. I'll tell you who they are. She'll tell you who they are. I wasn't talking on this. I was talking on MFA. But Scott answered me tonight and said I had a choice. I marked your Highline right now, tonight already. I thought it was May 13 we were kicked off. We can't get on the district website, so won't be doing your symposium, or your equity, or your stuff outside of the district. Because I can't use my phone, even tonight. It's only May 1. But that's what your new thing is to have a new nothing about everybody. In two weeks, we're all fired again if we don't sign up for this MFA. Come on. My time is up, but I'm just sick. I'm going home.

Thank you, Miss Merrick. Thank you, Miss Lip. The next one is Alex Myrick.

Good evening, directors, and Dr. Duran. My name is Alex Myrick. And I am a former educator, and 30-year resident, and taxpayer in the Highline School District. You routinely point out the need for respect and decorum in these meetings. I wonder if you think of this as a one-way street. Is it not reasonable and logical for this to be expected from both sides? The people who address you in good faith from this podium sometimes have different values and priorities from your own. And we have a right to express that.

This is natural in our American democratic republic, just as you have the right to continue to disagree. You have several advantages in this pseudo-dialogue. You are never limited to a two-minute testimony. You'll reserve the right not to respond. And you spend over \$1 million a year for a huge communications staff to disseminate your messages. In spite of this, you have, from the dais on multiple occasions, pretended that those with whom you disagree have said something which they absolutely did not say.

You then adopt a false, righteous indignation and tear down the straw man you have built. This is unnecessary, unfair, unethical, offensive, and dishonest. It is also profoundly disrespectful. I believe that you can be better than that. I call upon you to renounce this underhanded tactic and work toward wholesome, honest communication. The real threat to the schools is not conservative community members saying things with which you disagree or disproportionality and discipline. The real threat is students bringing weapons to school and not being held accountable. Please reexamine your priorities and do the right thing. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Myrick. With that, our next scheduled speaker is Patricia Bailey.

Good evening. For the past 25 years, reformers have convinced school boards that poor academic achievement is due to racism. And if the schools could only solve racism, the academic inequalities in academics, in achievement would magically disappear. Of course, there is zero data available to show this simplistic concept is true. In fact, using these reformers methods every year for the past 25 years, scores remain alarmingly low. You cannot improve academic achievement without improving academics, period.

Walkthroughs and high-sounding strategic goals like students prepare for the future they choose and culture of belonging will not remedy the problem. The vast majority of Highline students graduate with deficient skills and limited choices. I recently had the occasion to speak with author and master teacher Robert Fimiano. He said he had offered his services free of charge to the Highline School District after seeing the extremely low language arts performance of students.

Mr. Fimiano is retired and has served as adjunct faculty at SPU in training teachers in reading methods, specifically phonics. His program has been praised by teachers as highly effective with traditionally low-achieving students. What a shame he never heard back from this board. It's sad when a seasoned expert is passed over in favor of the vacuous approach offered by the Transcend corporation, which I reported on in my March 6 testimony. This is the question-- what specific systematic phonics-based methods is Highline using to correct the alarming underperformance of students in reading? Thank you.

Thank you, Miss Bailey. And with that, we are going to be moving into our superintendent's update. Dr. Duran?

Awesome. Thank you. So I wanted to start off. By last Friday, I had the opportunity to attend the regional executive leaders of color convening sponsored by the Puget Sound Educational Service District. I was there with Directors Alvarez and Tidholm. The mission is regional leaders of color support leaders of color through direct support, based on needs and a strive in our educational system.

I just have to say that I just deeply value the opportunity to be in a room of leaders of color. So we can just be together to have conversations and do some of the healing that we all need. Well, one of the highlights from the convening was hearing from one of our local community leaders, Shawn Good, who really challenged and encouraged us in our work with all the frenzy and craziness that we sometimes get ourselves caught up, is really fine times to be in the moment and ensure that we're leading in support of all of our students.

On Monday, I'm participating in the Muckleshoot Tribe Consultation. I'm just really grateful for the Muckleshoot Tribe and the way that they pull us together to share information around all the work that we're doing. I always just learn so much from our staff as well as from the other districts. There are some great things that other districts are doing that I think could really benefit our students here, benefit our educators, so look forward to really gathering some of the information-- want to Thank Director Tidholm for participating and for cabinet members prioritizing their time to be there with us and all of our staff for the work that they did to prepare for that consultation. It was really meaningful. And again, I just walk away from them, which is wonderful ideas and really proud of the work that we do in Highline to ensure that we are doing everything we can to respect the rights of individuals who are part of a sovereign nation.

Also, just have on the personnel report-- one of the final things I'll say, I just want to note that there's two people on this personnel report, if you didn't notice, who are retiring this year. And for closely with Catherine Carbone Rogers, chief communications officer, and Scott Logan, chief operations officer for the last two years-- I just want to thank you both for your service and your commitment to the Highline Public Schools, to our community, and to our students. I just want to thank you for all you've done. So let's give them around of applause.

[APPLAUSE]

And tonight, we have two labor partners. So before I welcome Clint Sallee from president of the Highline Association for Washington School Principals to give remarks, I want to recognize that it is School Principals Day today. I want to just thank all of our Highline principals and assistant principals for all the work that they do to support our students. I was at Bow Lake today. Took me a minute to realize, well, they had a bunch of confetti on the doors and hanging around. And I was, oh, yeah, it's Principal Day. So welcome, Clint, to the microphone.

Good evening, everybody. It's my pleasure to be here representing the Highline Association of Washington School Principals at HAWSP. And in thinking about my remarks this evening, I pulled out some data that we reflected on with the team just this evening around our Panorama survey that we've been giving to students and staff. Students for longer, the staff this last year. And specifically, I've had this opportunity to have a great conversation, looking at HAWSP vice principals, and assistant principals, and principals data on the Panorama survey from fall. And they'll all be taking it this coming week-- our students, and staff, and our principals, and assistant principals as well.

And I have some things to celebrate in the data. Despite the incredibly challenging work of being a school leader, our school principals and assistant principals are considerably more excited on a daily basis about coming to work. They're considerably more happy about coming to work every single day and considerably more hopeful than the average staff member of Highland Schools.

And in reflecting on that, often as the association lead, I sometimes am dealing with challenges amongst our members. And you can lose sight of the fact that this is incredibly challenging and important work that our leaders are engaged in collectively throughout this district in service of all of our students in the Highland promise. In fact, a special area of bragging that I have to put before us all is in the question-- we ask the question-- how meaningful do you find your work in the Panorama scores-- these things as favorable or unfavorable?

Well, every principal who took that survey scored 100% response rate in the favorability, which is really unique across all staffing groups to have a core of professionals and educators leading our schools who are saying, despite the difficulty-- and I will say they're disproportionately exhausted. But despite their exhaustion, despite the challenge, they come every single day, hopeful, happy, and energized. And to say that every single day, they come with great meaning, animating their work, I think it speaks to the promise of the district and what an honor it is to be a leader here, so thanks again.

Thank you, Clint, again. I just want to thank you for bringing the data and having us spend time digging into it, learning from it. Appreciate it. All right. Our next [INAUDIBLE] partner update is from Shawna Moore who is the vice president of the Highline Education Association. As we heard earlier, it is Teachers Appreciation Week and National Teachers Day next week. So thank you again to our Highline teachers for all that you do for our students. Welcome, Shawna. Good to see you.

Good evening. It's me again. This is what duties as assigned looks like, right? Jeb is my president, is in Washington, DC at Superweek, preparing for that as he's talking to legislators on behalf of students, and families, and communities across the state which is amazing. Quick update-- we had two HEA listening sessions over the last week. One was around inclusion. What does that look like and sound like? And the other one was around student behavior support. And so we're really excited to share that back with the joint bargaining team. Because we generally feel the power of story, which is really, really important.

We had a scheduled joint committee meeting this evening or this afternoon that was canceled due to a couple scheduling conflicts. So for the record in the room, Bernard, you owe me for snacks. He tasked me for snacks, and then he canceled the meeting. So next one is on him. I wanted to share out about Miss T and what she was saying and speaking her truth this evening. And that's really, really hard.

I am the first BIPOC person to ever hold the position of vice president, ever in the history of HEA. It is hard to be the first and is really hard to be the only. And so I love the fact that she's advocating for all of her students, all of our babies to embrace, and lean in, and learn, and grow in Black excellence and Black brilliance. That's amazing. And I think other schools need to model what they're doing at White Center Heights. And I just want to say thank you for recognition, for teacher appreciation. Jeb and I pride ourselves in ensuring that all of our students, our families, our communities, and our educators are seen, heard, and valued, but also championed, so thank you.

Thank you. That concludes my update.

Thank you, Dr. Duran. And with that, we move on to school board reports. Any legislative reports?

We do not have any legislative reports at this time.

Thank you. Director reports. We'll start back over here on this side again. Director Tidholm?

Director reports. As Dr. Duran said, I also had the pleasure of attending the Regional Executive Leaders of Color convening last Friday. And again, to reiterate, it was just really amazing being in a room full of other leaders of color and really being able to just bounce ideas and experiences off of each other. The Muckleshoot Consultation was also amazing, hearing what not only the districts, but the Muckleshoot Tribe are doing for their students. It was just really beautiful just to hear the different programs and hear about what we're doing in our district as well.

You know I have my bimonthly announcement about White Center Heights and their Family Resource Center. But they also have recently won the King County Community Engagement Grant, which is going to help the Family Resource Center. Again, it's open Thursdays from 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM and Fridays from 2:15 to 3:45 PM. So this grant is going to help support it and help them continue to serve the community.

Anybody within the Highline District, not just that specific school, where you can access diapers, clothing, food, including fresh fruits and vegetables every week, household goods. They have assistance with building your resume. They do some language classes as well. And it's open to, like I said, the whole district. It's ran by the PTA, and volunteers, and their families.

My son and I have volunteered as well, so please utilize it-- super excited that they're going to be able to expand that. And also, to note the iftar dinner that I had went to at White Center Heights-- it was just really beautiful, just to be able to be in the community and to serve them after they'd been fasting all day. And the food-- I mean, it was obviously amazing. And the children were there and doing their prayers. So again, just really, really grateful to be in a community, in a district where we're celebrating all of the different cultures. And that's all that I have.

Thank you, Director Tidholm. Director Hagos?

All right. So, yes, there has been lots of community events and it never fails. April and May and March-- there are constant, constant events. And the beauty of my weekends with my kids is that we get to go and visit our families in different areas and enjoy participating in some of these events. And the biggest one that I recognized across our district by way of communities and engaging our students and our families-- I was surprised. It was Earth Day. It was last year. It was the same thing, too-- Earth Month, Earth Day, and those kinds of things.

And so every single community had something going on. And anytime I was in a neighborhood with my kids over the weekend, something exciting was happening. And our students were involved. That's what I really liked about these different community events. With SeaTac, they had a salmon release. The community center had put together a program which we actually see in schools as well, which is where they have these baby salmon.

And they follow the life cycle of the fish. And they let them grow in the tanks at the community center. And the families and the kids get to watch this life cycle happen and unfold. And at the end, it's accumulating event where the kids then get to go and release the salmon in the water. And so that happened in Des Moines. So it was a SeaTac Community Center that put it on. And they were able to come down to my neighborhood and release the salmon with the kids. And that was really fun. And so that was one thing.

And another one was-- which I was kind of pleasantly surprised by this event as well. There was an event at Hilltop Park. And this one blew me by surprise. And I actually was talking to the Director Tidholm about this one. Pleasantly surprised. It was a Earth Day event. It was a cleanup. My son absolutely loves any type of activities where he gets to dig in the dirt, and pull out weeds, and plant trees, and all those kinds of things.

So when I found out about this one, I said, we're going. And so when we got there, it was much more than that. And I'm looking at Scott because I see him smiling. And I think he knows what I'm about to say. So Hilltop Park-- there is an after-school program. It's an environmental science stewardship program. And it's one that comes by way of a grant that's put on and provided by the port, which I remember being a part of the Highline Forum. The port had mentioned this opportunity for the grants in the community.

Well, [? Burien ?] took on this role. And they provided an after-school program for the kids. And from what I hear, it's one of the most popular after-school programs from that school. Oh, sorry. I should say the kids are from Innovation Heights, which is why I mentioned Director Tidholm. And so the kids that participate in this after-school program from Innovation Heights puts on this entire-- they participate in this after-school program. They learn about the environment. They learn about different pieces. They get to choose a cumulative project of some sort. And then they get to present their project at the end of this time that they're in this after-school program that's in alignment with the Earth Day event that's put on at Hilltop.

So these children or these teens got to present to over 75 people their projects that they participated in with the environmental service after-school program that was provided in funding with the port. So anyways, my point is I was blown away. Because they were able to do it and do it so eloquently and really describe the different scientific pieces of what they were trying to explain in terms of the climate, and the plants, and all those kinds of things. And that was a really nice surprise to see. So that was another event in the community that also involved our kids. Let's see.

There were a few more. There was another one over in Des Moines where we got to do a couple of things. I'm trying to remember now. Because again, it's been very busy, by the way, I should say, this is two weekends. So two weekends, all of our kids, all of our communities engaged in something. So the one in Des Moines had to do with an Art Day project as well as an Upcycle event as well. And I'm forgetting all the details because there's a lot to say. Normandy Park had Arbor Day. I went with my cousin and her kids to the Arbor Day event at Normandy Park.

And it's just been really nice these past weekends to be in and with our community and seeing our kids participate, and engage in these different activities, and host and lead these programs. So that's kind of taken up quite a bit of my time in terms of my experiences. But I have been doing other things, too. There was a-- I think it was National Youth Violence Prevention Week. And during that week, there's a group that's been providing supports. And I'm forgetting what the acronym stands for. Now, maybe Director Petrini can help me. I think she was there as well. Maybe you'll speak to it a little bit to yourself as well. But anyways, it's a community program that supports this one. Gosh, what is that acronym? Trying to remember now. Do you remember?

It was AVP-- Alternatives to Violence.

Alternatives To Violence. Thank you for helping me remember what that was all about. And that program-- again, kids were on the panel, supported the presentation of these events. But really, more importantly, the kids loved the activities and really the humanizing of connections and interactions with kids. And there's a lot more to it. And you may be able to do more justice to the program than I can right now. But it was another thing that was out in our community. And I can probably speak more to it again later when I collect my thoughts around it.

But anyway, so there was just so on and so forth. What I really appreciate is when I am out and about, I get to see the kids. I get to see the families. I know they're engaged in our communities. And our communities are really making the effort to connect all those dots for us outside of the school day. Because we cannot do this work alone with developing our children. So that's it. Oh, by the way, I cannot end without saying, I would not be here if it wasn't for public school teachers.

It is Teachers Appreciation Week. And I say it every opportunity I get. My parents were completely illiterate, had no way of figuring out how to support our education system. However, they were dedicated to getting us to school. And without the determination of our public school teachers, I would not have the opportunities that my parents never got. I can never say it enough. Thank you to public school teachers.

Thank you, Director Hagos. With that, we move Director Van.

Well, good evening, everybody. Just a couple announcements here in regards to our Highline Schools Foundation, our Gold Star Breakfast is this coming Friday. Looking forward to seeing all of the directors there as well as cabinet and celebrating our powerful teachers and staff. We also have a scholarship reception at the PSSC on May 9 at 6:00 PM. We're awarding about 45 scholarships this year to some deserving students, so please get those onto your calendars. If not, I will send calendar invites.

We showed up at the Discovery Workforce Summit. When I say we, the four of you ladies showed up and represented Highline. Thank you so much for being there. And I'm learning about our workforce agreements with our South Sound Chamber of Commerce, our Success Foundations. So I think when you guys are there, and sharing the vision of Highline, and just being there, it was great. And I just heard nothing but just rave reviews, so thank you.

In addition to that, I've been nominated to the board of the Success Foundation. The Success Foundation is the charitable arm of the Seattle Southside Chamber of Commerce. The primary goal is to bridge gaps in the school to work pipeline. It is also focused on education, workforce development, and community enhancement. So I just wanted to share that with you. That's it for me.

Congratulations, Director Van, and thank you for your service on that board as well. With that, Director Petrini?

Thank you. You guys kind of stole some of my thunder. But it was also great to be able to go to the South Seaside Chamber of Commerce and to hear from our State Superintendent Chris Reykdal and from a lot of our community business partners throughout the Puget Sound, just listening and hearing from the different panels. And one of our own students from Raisbeck was on one of those panels and just sharing how these opportunities have helped them to be able to get a leg up, and to get the training, get the internships, and graduate almost ready for a career in space and aviation.

And there's just so many good things that our business community partners are doing to help our students. And I really did not know that. And I really appreciated hearing about that, all the opportunities that are given to our kids these days that 10, 15, 20 years ago did not exist. So it's pretty, pretty fascinating. Attending with Director Hagos, the alternatives to violence prevention at the Burien Library this last week was really great.

I loved hearing from our students from Evergreen, loved hearing from previously incarcerated members who had talked about how AVP actually helped them find healing, and find connection with other people, and find ways to forgive themselves, find ways to just find a way out, and now be contributing members to our society and continuing to be mentors to these kids, and helping them stop that school to prison pipeline. I just loved hearing their stories, was deeply touched by them, and loved to see how AVP continues to help a lot of our students as they put these programs in different schools, and helping students and get them trained as mentors as a peer-to-peer mentor which is really, I think, important when kids don't really want to listen to the adults.

And I think having that peer mentor help other students is really, really powerful. So I'd love to see the kind of work that they are continuing to do. And that's just myself. Director Tidholm and Director Hagos are going to be putting together some board member community engagement opportunities. I don't know your dates, but May 23 is the one that we're looking at.

And I'd love to just have the community come and to be able to just engage, ask questions, just talk about the things that you're concerned about, things that you're excited about. I just really want to hear the good, the bad, the ugly, and all in between. But I think just having those connections, being able to give information to our community members is powerful.

It usually quells a lot of that anxiety and just helps it just subside. I know a lot of the information that you're eager to get-- I think this is a great night for you to come, and just listen, and learn about the things that we're passionate about and the things that we're fighting for our kids over. So I hope that you see that coming in the next few weeks and come and join us. So we hope to see a lot of our families also come and engage. So that's all I have for tonight.

Thank you, Director Petrini. I'm sure there'll be some communication out around dates for all around where to be and so people can come join. With that, just I don't know if you guys have noticed. But the Sylvester Field is under construction. I'm excited to see it. The field and the track are under construction. Sylvester families and community members are looking forward to a synthetic turf field built with the bond funding as promised.

Funding includes \$20,000 earmarked by this field, by the tin room stand house back in 2018, when he recognized by KeyBank for giving back to our community. KeyBank donated in his name for his dream project through the Highline Schools Foundation. Now, we get to put this donation to work. The track will have surface lanes. No more red dust. Man, my kids went to Sylvester. I had to throw away so many tennis shoes. Because even if I washed it with other things, everything got red. I used to want to go walk there. And I just either had to use only those shoes for that track and leave them outside. I hated that. So I'm so glad. No more red dust.

In addition, a soccer mini pitch is being added next to the field through a partnership with the Seattle Sounders RAVE Foundation. A modular restroom will be partly funded by the Department of Commerce Grant. I look forward to celebrating this asset with our students and community when it opens. The other thing I also want to mention-- I was at the Workforce and Educational Summit that we attended. And I can say that the highlight-- I had to leave a little bit early.

But I had some colleagues that were there and said that the highlight of that for them was hearing the students, but also hearing all the work from the Puget Sound Skills Center. Shout-out to Director and Principal Juan Lozano, just for his amazing work and his partnerships. I was told he was there. And he said, man, he just brightened up the space as soon as he went up. And so I'm just so thankful for our leaders in our district.

The other thing I do want to say-- there's a lot of recognitions in May. Again, thank you to all the educators and teachers for all that you do. Some of us are here where we're at, like Director Hagos said, is because, for me, it was one teacher believed in me. And that's all it took. So alongside the recognition showcase tonight, we have many, many more throughout the month of May. I invite you to continue to visit our website calendar to explore these additional recognitions. We have the Asian-American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, also the Jewish American Heritage Month, Mental Health Awareness Month, National Adolescent Health Month, School Principals Day, National Teachers Day, National School Nurse Day, and National Speech Pathologist Day.

So with that, that concludes all our director reports. Thank you, everyone. Yes, Director Petrini?

You forgot to National Melissa Day on May 17. Joe told me about that. I also just want to quickly say, thank you to all the board members. I have loved learning all the things that you guys are doing. You guys are all very busy. And just all the different-- I am enriched by learning all the things that you guys are involved in. So I just forgot to say that in my last report. Thank you.

Thank you, Director Petrini. And we need to honor the National Melissa's Day. I know that there was a National Stephanie's Day. Excuse me.

That was last month. Thank you, Joe.

And, thank you, Director Van, for always letting everybody know what day there is. I have never, in 15 years, heard you say there was an Angelica Day, but that's OK. I won't hold it against you. That's all right.

Give it some time.

Your time is running out. All right. Thank you, everyone, for all your reports. And with that, we move on to our consent agenda. So I'll make a motion to approve our consent agenda.

I'll make a motion to approve our consent agenda.

I'll need a second.

I second that.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Any opposed? Our consent agenda has been approved. With that, we move on to our action items. Action Item 8.3 is our first action item. Motion to approve the resolution number 05-24 authorizing interlocal contract with Harris County Department of Ed to education to access competitive bid contracts. So with that--

I ask for Chief Financial Officer Jackie Brian to come and give a little more background information on this, who understands why we are very interested in this opportunity to be able to potentially save money for our district. Thank you, Jackie.

Thank you, Jackie.

Thank you. Good evening. I'm here just to add a little more information around interlocal agreements and why there is benefits to Highline entering into these agreements. So interlocal agreements allow us to be as fiscally responsible as we possibly can, while maintaining the highest level of procurement requirements for audit. So it really protects us from a lot of potential audit findings as well as allowing us to be fiscally responsible with our contracts.

Also, some of our interlocal agreements will provide rebates through the contracts that we may or may not sign with them. The competitive bid process that interlocal agreements partake in is a national search. So when, for example, we do our internal competitive bid process, we usually receive three bids. And then we'll choose from those three. These interlocal agreements are at a national scale. So they are receiving multiple bids which actually results in better prices for districts throughout the country.

Without these, we'd also have to do all of our own internal bid processes, which one bid process alone can take months. It's a very long process. And so this saves us time. It saves us money. And it also allows us to be compliant with all of our audit requirements. So there were questions around why these two in particular that we were entering into.

So Harris County Department of Education has over 120 contracts that have already been through the bid process that would be available for us to look at and examine. It doesn't mean that we would necessarily sign any of those contracts. It just allows us to use those contracts that have already gone through the request for proposal bid process. The second one, the government MVMT-- that is particularly focused on K-12 contracts, so K-12 education contracts.

And again, they've already been bid sourced and are available for us to sign if we choose to. With all local interlocal agreements, Highline-- we still follow all of our procurement processes and procedures. They all would still come to the board if it was \$250,000 or above. So none of our procedures or processes change. The only thing that changes is how we would source the potential contracts. Entering into this agreement is no cost to us. And we are under no obligation to use any of these contracts. It just allows us the visibility into the pricing and the terms of these contracts if we choose to.

Examples of a few of the contracts that we already have through interlocal agreements because we do have interlocal agreements that we already have signed-- some of them are Amazon, Office Depot, T-Mobile, Verizon, MicroK12. So a lot of our contracts that we use very, very often are done through these-- again, are local agreements. Happy to answer any other questions.

So I thank you for that clarification.

Sure.

Because I think that really those are some of my questions that I had around like, what does that really enter us into? Are we buying by that? But the other thing is you mentioned some contracts right now. Were those through some interlocal agreements that were not from the state?

Yes. Yes.

Thank you. Any questions or concerns or comments from anyone?

Look, I have a couple, if that's all right. Are all these contracts, if they come in under the \$250,000, do we as a board still get to see those, even though we're not needed to approve them, but would be able to see what those are or what services-- it's pretty ambiguous in the contract about just goods and services. So I was confused, like whereas when we did the Auburn Interlocal Agreement, that was very specific to buying produce and under the nutrition. So where would these products kind of go under when it comes to our budget?

So it's a variety, which is why it was vague. Because there's so many contracts available under these interlocal agreements, there's a wide variety of contracts we could potentially enter into. So it's as varied as curriculum or athletic supplies, athletic uniforms, a lot of the ones that I just spoke of-- Amazon, a lot of the things that we purchase on a daily basis. And so there would potentially be contracts over \$250,000. And those would follow the current board policy. And then for anything other than that, we'd follow the same process procedure and that we've used in the past.

So for the Harris County Interlocal Agreement, it specifies Panorama. What goods and services would be surrounding that? Are we sharing that information out? Is there any kind of exchange of data or anything like that in those contracts?

No. So Panorama is one of 120 contracts available under Harris County. By signing this interlocal agreement, it does not mean that we have entered into any contract with any one of those 120. Yeah.

OK, I think that's all the questions I have for that one.

OK. Any other questions or comments? No? Thank you, Jackie.

Thank you.

I think with that, I move that the Highline School Board approve resolution 05-24, which establishes a cooperative government agreement between Harris County Department of Education and Highline Public Schools. This agreement enables both entities to collaborate and jointly pursue procurement of services and goods to the mutual benefit and efficiency of the community. So I need a second.

I'll second.

Roll call, please.

Director Tidholm?

Yay.

Director Van?

Yay.

Director Hagos?

Yay.

Director Petrini?

Yay.

Director Alvarez?

Yay.

This motion passes 5 to none.

And our next action item is I move that the Highline School Board approve resolution 06-24, which establishes a cooperative government agreement between GOVMVMT purchasing cooperative in Highline Public Schools. This agreement enables both entities to collaborate and jointly pursue procurement of services and goods to the mutual benefit and efficiency of the community. And I need a second.

I'll second that.

Roll call, please.

Director Petrini?

Yay.

Director Tidholm?

Yay.

Director Van?

Yay.

Director Hagos?

Yay.

I'm sorry. It was?

Yay.

Director Alvarez?

Yay.

This motion passes 5 to none.

And that concludes our action items. So now, we have a couple of introduction items. The first one is motion to approve biology, instructional materials adoption. So I'll ask Laura Schneider and Nicole Flynn to come up and tell us more about this.

Here. Good evening. Thank you. It's been a little while since I myself was a high school biology student. Maybe some of you can relate to that feeling. But when I was thinking about that and the importance of learning biology, I also reflected on the fact that the world has changed so much since I was a high school student. And there's so much new information and new things to be learning and thinking about.

And so I'm excited to be here and to have you see and learn about the OpenSciEd curriculum that we've had for many years, it feels like-- completed the process for and our recommending for adoption. And I just want to start out by saying that students have responded really favorably to the curriculum. We know that there was a strong ask in the student voice data last year that students are really asking that their learning be relevant.

And so I'll open with sharing something that a student shared in their feedback. The student said OpenSciEd had helped me acknowledge the actions humans create which affect the environment and animals surrounding us. And so to learn more about what the curriculum is and how the process worked, I'm going to turn it over to the fabulous Nicole Flynn. And I know it's Teacher Appreciation time. And central office specialists don't often get included, but I do want to say that we have very hard-working teachers in the central office as well, so I want to appreciate her work.

It's a little bit shorter for myself here. So as the facilitator of the high school biology instructional materials adoption process, I'm really excited to share with you the recommendation that Laura teased a little bit that was made with the input and feedback of more than 300 students and educators. Our committee members included members from three high schools and central office.

But that was a little bit of a limited sample size. So we made sure that our process included feedback from pilot students and teachers at five high schools, including three that weren't represented on the committee, central office staff, including folks from our digital learning and language learning departments, and additional student focus groups at two high schools, and the Puget Sound Skills Center, including those two lovely students who came up and talked about the Teaching Academy. So they helped give us some feedback on our screening for bias content.

And again, as teased, based on our thorough review of the program submitted and available, open education resources, as well as data from piloting two of the highest quality programs, the committee is recommending adoption of the OpenSciEd Biology Program, which scored highly throughout all phases of the review and pilot process. Skip ahead to this. So one strength of the program was the support for standards-based instruction and grading, which is in service of preparing students for the future that they choose, including college and career readiness.

The state science learning standards, also known as the NGSS, require a large shift from traditional science teaching. And the OpenSciEd instructional model is built from the ground up with the NGSS in mind. It's particularly strong in engaging students in the three dimensions of the NGSS. The science and engineering practices, the disciplinary core ideas, and the cross-cutting concepts scored very highly in that area.

And one of my favorite pieces of data that we looked at as we were making our decisions was that several of our pilot teachers remarked that their students were ready to do much more complex science learning than the teachers had thought prior to using these materials. So we know that this is really rigorous for our students. Another strength of the program is the student learning experience, which connects to our promise of knowing each student by name, strength, and need as well as our strategic plan goal of the culture of belonging.

Students are at the center of learning in OpenSciEd lessons as they are asked to make sense of their learning in small and whole group discussions in every lesson. Evidence from our pilot student surveys especially demonstrated this-- an average of about 80% of students shared that they made contributions to the lessons in each of the surveys that we did at the end of lesson, and that they also felt that their ideas were respected. Other data points. Students said that the OpenSciEd materials were easy to learn and understand, that they really had fun with the discussions that they were engaging in, and that they really appreciated getting to look at real data and all of the graphs and images that were really helpful for them to learn from. Sorry, this is longer than I thought it was.

[LAUGHTER]

So the program was also really strong in its support for culturally responsive instruction, which aligns with our strategic plan goals of culture, belonging, and innovative learning. So OpenSciEd uses what's called a story lines approach to science learning where students ask questions about an anchoring phenomenon or problem in the world. You can see three of the units up on the screen now. And I'll flip over so you can see the other two in a minute here.

They answer those questions through investigations, and lab with real-world data, and with grade-level appropriate texts and then collaboratively develop an explanation or argument about why the phenomenon or problem happened and how to solve it if it's a problem. There are five units in the instructional materials. And they're anchoring phenomena are shown here. So there's the other two.

We receive feedback on these phenomena from students in the pilot. Teachers and an additional student group, focus group-- that group was at Maritime. And then we plan to use this feedback to help our students and teachers make connections from the OpenSciEd phenomena and problems to related personally, locally, and globally relevant phenomena and problems of interest to our students. All right.

And then in response to a question we heard from the board, I just want to share in the initial review of all materials, our adoption committee members were looking for phenomena that also included opportunities to address justice and action as called for by the Instructional Materials Committee. There were limited materials that offered these opportunities, but OpenSciEd was one of them. And we were really excited about it.

And I just wanted to share an example. So if you look at unit 3, the phenomenon is, Who Gets Cancer and Why? And What Can We Do About It? This is our unit on inheritance and variation of traits. In one section of the unit, students are engaged in answering the question-- what can we do to support people in our communities who have cancer? The section is focused on social determinants of health, such as access to quality health care and exposure to environmental hazards, which are often affected by economic factors and cause disproportionate impact on certain communities.

And finally, other strengths of the program include Spanish and digital learning, supporting our bilingual, and biliterate, and innovative learning strategic goals. So the committee and central office specialists reviewing the Spanish translation and digital supports rated the program very highly. In addition to Spanish student facing materials-- that's a lot of Ss-- it offers a robust digital platform that offers a great deal of accessibility tools, including many more languages other than Spanish.

But it also supports remote learning in our Highline Virtual Academy and remote learning or later learning for students who are absent in class, which was one of the needs that was brought up by our pilot teachers. And then I just wanted to share a little bit about our implementation plan. Unlike when we're thinking about implementing science in elementary school, we're not thinking about 500 teachers. We're thinking about 20.

So a lot of those teachers have already piloted. So more than half of our biology teachers have already piloted these materials this year. So what we're trying to do is bring in our coteachers and a few of the teachers that will be new to this program in our summer training. And then over the course of next year, just building on the practices that they've already started to learn and really strengthening their understanding through our district professional learning communities, my support for site-based teams. And then there will be some additional optional workshops to address some of the needs that were identified during the pilot.

Just a quick question. You had mentioned there was five. There was two other-- Thank you. I know you had shown them, but I just wanted to go back. Thank you.

Thank you.

Any questions so far?

Absolutely.

So this curriculum is just for grade 9. Is that correct? This is just piloted at the ninth grade level?

It is for teaching life science. So some of our schools do not teach a biology course. So, for example, Maritime or Innovation Heights. But they do teach life science content. Also, some of our schools teach biology, but not in ninth grade. So it is for the biology course and then schools who do not teach the biology course wherever they teach life science.

They have access to this curriculum as well?

Yeah.

Would the board have access to this curriculum to see just the standards that are in there and what it's meeting? And also, so the focus groups that previewed the materials and those who piloted it-- how long was that pilot program that the students used it?

So we completed all of unit 1 in the pilot, which is rather lengthy. So it was anywhere from one and a half to three months, depending on how long the teachers took with it, so definitely lots of time to get their feet wet with it. And then in terms of opportunities for other community members to see it, we posted it on the website, which is also some place you can access it.

And we'll get you that link-- some example materials and then how a family engagement event where people were able to come in and look at more of the materials as well. And that process-- there was several weeks where it went out in the Highland headlines and then was available online. And it's actually still available online. So if anybody wanted to look at it and submit more feedback, we are still open for that.

OK, great. And thank you for the answers to some of those questions. I know I was just trying to understand, like, what does that mean? What is it saying?

Sure.

So your example about the cancer was a really great answer for that, so thank you. I have no other questions.

Any other questions? No? I just want to say, I'm excited about this. My husband is taking biology. Actually, he's taking science at Highline College. And it just aligns so well. So just a lot of this content is just aligned. So I'm excited to see where students are going.

Me, too.

So thank you so much for that presentation. And with that, the other intro item is motion to approve Resolution 08-24-- the Puget Sound Skills Center, the Electrical Infrastructure Preservation Project, the final acceptance of construction completion, and final acceptance of purchase order number CP 220026 issue to Brink Electric, LLC. Any comments, questions, concerns? Who wants to know about electrical? Because I'm sure Steve will tell us. But all right. Well, with that, we'll move on.

Our next central item is purchase to-- motion to approve Tyee High School Replacement Project, approval of contractor change order number 8, the Absher Construction Company, purchase order number CP 230091. Any questions? Because I'm sure Steve has not come. I mean, Scott, sorry, has not come to the podium in several meetings. I'm sure he's dying to run up, but not tonight. Not tonight, Scott. So thank you. And with that, any items we want to add to the consent agenda? No? All right. And just for any and all district events, please visit our website calendar, so you guys can keep in the know what's happening in our district. And with that, I'll ask for a motion to adjourn.

I'll make a motion to adjourn.

Need a second.

Yes.

Yes, we need to adjourn this, and then I can reconvene. I got this. For once I got this?

[LAUGHTER]

I'm ready.

Do we have a motion and a second?

So we had a motion. Now, we need a second.

I'll second it.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Any opposed?

No.

So with that, the board will now reconvene the executive session from earlier today. The purpose of this executive session is to evaluate the performance of a public employee who will be in executive session for approximately 60 minutes with an end time at 8:40. And so I will see you all back at 8:40-- oh, 8:42. I'm sorry. I was looking at that one up there, so. 8:42.

Thank you.

[SIDE CONVERSATION]

Oh, go ahead. It does when you're waiting. So I want to extend the time for another 14 minutes till 9:00 PM.

[SPEAKING SPANISH] OK, we have returned at 9:02. And so now, I need a motion to-- Now, I need a second.

Second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Any opposed? We're adjourned.

Thank you.

Thank you.