

Well, good evening, everybody. Welcome to our regular school board meeting. It's Wednesday, December 18. Can you please stand up 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.

Thank you. Roll call please.

Director Alvarez.

We'll come back to her.

Director Hagos.

Here.

Director Tidholm

Present.

Director Petrini.

Here.

President Van,

Here. And to my left is our superintendent, Dr Ivan Duran--

Director Van, let's just make sure that Director Alvarez can hear us.

And Director--

Yes, I'm here.

And that is Director Alvarez. She's joining us by phone this evening. Thank you so much. Any calls or changes or additions to our agenda this evening?

Yes. I've got-- I've got one request to remove a consent item off the consent agenda. And it's 6.2. I just want to make sure I'm reading the right one. No, it's not 6.2. Sorry, it's 6.5, removal from consent agenda. Do I need to have it. I don't think I need to have a second or anything like that?

This motion is to move 6.5 to the remove it from our consent agenda. So we're good with that, and we'll bring that up to number 7 there.

And then I have two others for general consideration of agenda topics. One is, I'm still quite in love with the idea of having some sort of budget committee, advisory committee. And I do want to move, and I see it as an agenda item. I'm proposing that as an agenda item for the Board to consider a dedicated budget committee. And I'm thinking of composing of diverse representatives, including staff and educators and students and families and community members. And the idea is the purpose of providing direct recommendations to the board on budget priorities and resource allocation in alignment with Policy 6,000. That's been a part of our conversation this past week. So that's one.

And the other one is just an update around robotics, the robotics situation. Those are the two that I don't see on the agenda that I would love to have some opportunity to discuss.

Thank you so much. In regards to the robotics, I will be sharing that during my director's reports, and we can have the conversation then. And then the other one was in regards to creating a community action team in regards to our budget. Did you want to speak to that this evening or for future board meeting?

I'm proposing that it's an agenda item. It would be great if it's tonight, but if folks are not ready with tonight, I'm OK with another day. But I do want to see that as a discussion topic we can cover.

Directors, what are your thoughts in regards to that proposal for this evening or for future?

I'd be OK with if we talked about it tonight.

I have no objections to that.

Director Alvarez?

I'm more than happy to have a conversation. I did make it very clear that I hate to add another committee when we already have a committee that really oversees a lot of our-- we have the CPAC and we tend to provide a lot of other tables. And then we make more silos than what we're trying to prove. So I am not for that, but I'm open to a discussion.

OK I would propose, since we have a lot of questions around that, we will table it till our next board meeting. And I'll work with you in regards to what that's going to be.

Thank you for considering it as an agenda item.

And Director, Vice President Van-- I'm sorry, President Van. I just want to look at my colleagues, just get clarification on this request. I believe we need a motion and a second to be able to add it to an agenda for the following meeting. Confirm that please.

OK. So we need an actual motion and a second and then roll call vote.

Can I ask a clarifying question? So all the other agenda items don't usually get approved by the Board ahead of time. So why do we need a vote to add something to the agenda next time?

Also, I would like to respect President's Van and his wishes to consider questions and conversation before we add this to a vote.

So I just want some clarification. So we can have Holly and Aaron come on up.

Good evening.

Good evening.

It's always so far away.

So because this would be a proposal to add something new onto the agenda, it would need to be seconded, and then a roll call vote. A motion would need to be made, seconded, and then a roll call vote. And your motion would probably be something like I moved to add a conversation around budget advisory committee to the January 22 or whatever meeting date agenda.

So if it's just a conversation, does that require a vote?

If you're adding something to the agenda. Yes.

OK.

Yeah, that was Director Hagos' proposal was adding it to the agenda.

It was.

So you're OK?

OK,

I'll do it.

All right. OK, so I moved to add an agenda item proposing we discuss a dedicated budget Committee. And then I don't know if there's any other words that are needed, but I think I should stop there for now.

That's good enough.

To the next scheduled board meeting, correct?

To the next scheduled board meeting.

January 8.

Excuse me. January 8 or January 22?

January 8.

Director Alvarez?

Yes, Director. So, just to be clear, so we're adding an agenda topic to have a discussion about adding a new budget committee. Is that what I'm hearing?

That is what I'm proposing.

That is correct.

And I'm sorry. I just want to confirm January 8. I'm just making sure I write it down.

I'll second that.

Roll call please.

And just to clarify, we are calling for a roll call vote for to have an agenda item added to the January 8, 2025 board, regular board meeting for a dedicated budget committee and dedicated budget committee discussion.

Director Tidholm?

Yay.

Director Petrini?

Yes.

Director Alvarez.

Nay.

Director Hagos.

Yay.

President Van.

Yay.

This motion passes 4 to 1.

Thank you.

OK. Any other changes or additions to our board meeting agenda for this evening?

I would like to move that action. Item 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3 are moved to the consent agenda.

Directors, if there are no questions, Vice Chair Tidholm would like to move 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3 to the consent agenda.

I'm still interested in 8.3 just for discussion and presentation tonight, so 8.1, 8.2, I'm OK with.

I'll move then that we move, well I will renege that motion and move that we move action item 8.1. 8.2 to the consent agenda if there's no questions.

I'll second that.

Roll call, please.

Director Hagos.

Yay.

Director. Alvarez.

Yay.

Director Petrini.

Yes.

Director Tidholm.

Yay.

President Van.

This motion passes 5 to 9. Item 8.1 and 8.2 have been moved to the consent agenda for tonight.

Thank you very much. Any other changes or additions to the board meeting agenda?

I have one. Did you have something?

No,

No. You go ahead first.

Are you sure?

Yeah.

I had a name from personnel report, a teacher that wanted us to hear their case before termination. And I wanted to make sure that if we approve the personnel report as it is tonight, if that removed that person's ability to appeal to the board once it's been approved? Is that board action already, then the board action? Or can we remove it for executive session to-- I'm losing my words tonight-- to evaluate the performance of employee of the personnel records? Did I do that right?

Just a clarification, this is in regards to the

Personnel report.

Personnel OK, for an employee. So based off of your request, his appeals won't be-- he won't be able to appeal until after we approve the personnel report.

OK. I think the request was that we heard things before the termination. So could I ask to have their name removed from personnel report?

Just to clarify, this is not a teacher. This is an employee. This is an administrator. And this person is not represented by a bargaining unit. And so if the Board approves the termination night, then he will then have the right to appeal to King County courts, which is the process under the law.

Not the Board. We don't--

Not the Board.

But if I were to remove the name, would we be able to go to executive session, to learn about the pieces around that ahead of time?

So there has to be a motion, and there needs to be a vote for that to happen. OK. I make a motion to remove the name Jon Youngblood from the personnel report for further review before termination.

I'll second that.

Roll call, please.

Director Petrini.

Yes.

Director Tidholm.

Nay.

Director Hagos.

Yay.

Director Alvarez.

Nay.

President Van.

No. Nay.

This motion does not pass with a vote of 2 to 2.

Can I make a statement, President Van?

Excuse me. What was that?

I'd like to make a statement.

OK.

I just wanted to make sure that we understood what the importance of our duties are. And these are recommendations that are coming straight from HR. HR takes these things very seriously. They seek legal counsel. They don't take this just lightly. My concern is that here it shows clearly there's no trust in our HR. And by removing, we set a precedent. There is a process and a procedure that they have to follow.

And that is not our job or our duty as a board to supersede HR. And so we just want to would like to say we need to thread this really lightly as we make these motions to make sure they are being heard. And a lot of times, like I've said, a lot of times we state that we're not being heard because we're not like what we're hearing. So I just want to make sure that we understand that HR does its legal duty, its duty, full process of making sure they're getting all the legal counsel we get. So we don't, because then we start jeopardizing our districts with lawsuits. And so I just want to make it very clear what we're doing here. Thank you. President Van.

Thank you. And Director Hagos has a point of privilege.

Thank you. Just to-- in terms of my interest around approving this, it's really more about the fact that we have been-- there has been a board request. I would like to find a way to remedy when there is a board request on behalf of anyone, whether it's an employee or a community member or a family. If there's a board request, what are we going to do about those requests? It came to the it came to the whole Board. And so hearing and being debriefed, I think, is following our duty and making sure that we hear our people.

And so that was my aim, has nothing to do with the mistrust of HR or anything like that. It really is. There was a board request, and I'd like to know if we're not going to be able to hear things as a whole, board together to get debriefed on things, then how else are we going to be able to follow through on some of those board requests? I guess that's my question and comment and intent around the approval of the removal of the name.

And then just second, real quick is that in terms of technical difficulties, I get this one came to me by way of what is it called, spam? It didn't come directly to my Board email, it was spam. And the only way that I saw it is when there was some sort of a reply. And this is not the only one that's going to spam, whether it be it its staff or community member who's emailing me for whatever reason they're going to spam. So just, if we can get some workaround on that to make sure they go directly to our inbox, because I won't see it if it's in the spam box.

Thank you. Point is taken. Appreciate that. All right. We're going to move on to our recognitions.

I have, I'm sorry, one more thing. I have a clarifying question. Our meeting, December 4, I believe it was, there was a motion that passed to have an executive session for the evaluation of an employee. Clarifying question on that. Director Petrini, you had made the motion. Is that executive session, I should have asked it then, but in hindsight, is that executive session to evaluate the performance of our superintendent?

No, it is not.

On that note, then who is it to evaluate?

With legal counsel, I was told I did not have to disclose that name, that person has been notified and has the right to ask for either a public hearing if they wish, or to have it just in executive session.

OK. Thank you for the clarification. And on that note, given that I have more information now, I know that we had passed the motion, but and given that it's not for the superintendent, I'm not comfortable having an executive session to evaluate the performance of an employee that's not our one employee. So I will move now that we do not have that executive session.

Well, per our own regulations, we have the rights to evaluate the performance of any employee under the district, because that is within our purview, especially if there comes to a complaint or an investigation, the board does have the right to ask for insights into that investigation. We had three board members within conversations and emails who all cited that they wanted an executive session, and then it passed 4 to 0. So I ask that we uphold that and have that executive session, not that it comes out to any different determination, but it's more informal information.

Thank you for that clarification. And to clarify, I was one of the board members that voted yes on it, but that was with the impression that it was for the superintendent. So I will move now that we do not have this executive session. Can I get a second?

I second that.

Roll call please.

Director Alvarez.

Yay.

Director Hagos.

Nay.

Director Tidholm.

Yay.

Director Petrini.

Yay. Excuse me, we're asking for it to be-- I'm going to say nay.

To remove it.

To remove it.

Yes, this motion is to remove the executive session as requested.

Nay. In motion. No. OK.

And President Van.

Yay.

This motion passes with a vote of 3 to 2.

OK, I'm going to ask one more time. Call for any changes or additions to our Board meeting agenda this evening? Hearing, seeing none, we're going to move on to our recognitions, Doctor Duran.

Yes, it's my honor to welcome Instructional Leadership Executive Director Gil Parsons to the podium to introduce our school presentation for this evening. It's always great to have our schools here tonight. And welcome, Mr Parsons.

Thank you. And Thank you. Good evening to President Van, members of the board, Dr. Duran. It is my distinct pleasure to bring up for a presentation tonight our principal of Sylvester Middle School, Mr Chad Kodama. If we can all just-- if you can all join me in welcoming him and his team to the podium, that'd be greatly appreciated tonight.

[APPLAUSE]

OK. Great Thank you, Doctor Duran, President Van and board members for welcoming Sylvester. Yes. Good. All right. Got you for welcoming-- oh, that's better, for welcoming Sylvester so we can talk a little bit about our school. I have brought with me our assistant principal, Lori McEwen, our Success Dean, Kristi Suznevich, our Re-engagement Specialist, Kiana Briscoe, and our Instructional Coach, Liz Basta

Sylvester's mission and vision, this is near and dear to our heart, and we lean into it when we make tough decisions. Our mission is to lead with equity and love, to serve an ever-changing community that is determined to learn.

Our vision is to be a student-centered oasis for all community members, where students believe in learning and engage with power and passion.

They develop their minds to understand their world around them.

And leave our school confident to make choices about their life's direction.

The Highline Promise is another document that we lean into when we're making our tough decisions. The current state of Sylvester Middle School engaged these three areas are called out directly, and they're tied to our annual action plan. Engage reading across content areas, this is something we've been working on for over a year. And as you can see, we still have room to grow. For increased sense of belonging, we've been working on this for a couple years. Our percentage is around the average for Highline. But again there's room to grow. Decrease behavior incidents for students receiving special education services. This ties directly to our inclusion work, and we need to ensure that our discipline data is proportional to our student body.

So directly tied to increasing our sense of belonging and also working on our inclusion efforts, we are focusing on our co-teaching practices this year, so really ensuring that as soon as our students receive services step into a classroom, they're already set up for success. We're also working on our first kind of inclusion for PE. So making sure that we're not just sending our students to receive special education services into the gen ed setting, but also making sure that our gen ed students have opportunities to go into special education settings as well.

Another critical way that we're working to build a sense of belonging across Sylvester students is through our advisory program. Our advisory team works really hard to put out lessons weekly that build community amongst our students, that help students develop their social emotional learning, and that helps students develop their academic skills. One key feature of this program is that all students have an adult advocate and someone that they trust at school.

To support our discipline efforts over moving to more of a restorative system to ensure that when these situations are coming up, if there's a conflict between peer to peer or peer to adult, that we're sitting down and having these tough conversations so we can see where they went wrong and then get back on the same track. And then also being proactive, so as soon as we hear about something that's being reported, trying to resolve the conflict right away so that students don't end up in a deeper situation.

Our professional learning community is our PLC work. This is one of our highest leverage practices to impact student academic outcomes. We are aligned to the district, work around, engage reading and direct vocabulary instruction. Our teachers meet regularly. They get together and they look at student work to inform their next steps. They unit design together. They create common assessments and rubrics together.

This is not a new slide for any of you. This is Highland Strategic Plan, and we wanted to take a moment just to share with you about what we're doing at Sylvester and how it relates to each pillar of the strategic plan. We also really, really value student voice at Sylvester. And so throughout the next couple of slides, you're going to see videos from some of our Sylvester students speaking to their experience with each of these pillars of the strategic plan at Sylvester.

So we'll start with a culture of belonging. You heard Kristi speak about advisory being the heart of what we're doing to try to create a culture of belonging, and really ensuring that students have a trusted adult that's with them throughout the entirety of the year. And then we also have a variety of student-created clubs and athletics, where students can continue to find additional spaces where they can feel a sense of belonging. This is one of our eighth grade students. His name is Day-day. And I'm going to have him share a little bit with you about what a culture of belonging at Sylvester means to him.

[BEGIN VIDEO PLAYBACK]

- Hey, what's up, Day-day?

- Hey, man.

- How you doing?

- Good.

- All right, so when I say a culture for belonging here at Sylvester, what does that make you think about?

- It mostly makes me think about how the teachers get a good connection with the students and how they check in with them, walk them around the school, having a deep talks with them and just making sure they feel like they belong here with everyone else, even when like they might feel different than others.

And another thing too, advisory we have, we have lessons that like we circle up around in circles. And we all just talk to one another and we just connect with each other. And I think that's just like a good way to help the students make sure they feel belonging here and just making sure like they feel a part of the school, which is a big part of what Sylvester is trying to show here.

- Thanks, Day-day.

- Yep.

[END PLAYBACK]

OK. For our innovative learning, we did some work around our secondary redesign with our sixth grade transition. And we know that the sixth grade transition is not going as well as we want it to go. We want to provide a better experience for our incoming sixth graders. So we have done some things like they have their own hallway, they have their own bathroom, their own lunch. We've lowered their class size. And we've also we've also done a cohort model with our sixth grade. I'm going to go ahead and read a quote from one of our sixth graders.

"It's nice that sixth grade has our own lunch, bathrooms, and hallway because we get to be surrounded by people who are still learning the school. That way, we get to all learn together and it's less scary." That's Merida, sixth grader.

OK, so Sylvester continues to foster a bilingual and biliterate environment for all our students. We do that through our multilingual learner program, our Heritage Spanish program, as well as our world language program offerings. Our multilingual learners are clustered in classes, so they're able to learn content alongside language with their grade level peers. And then our Heritage Program strengthens our students biliteracy in all four language domains.

We also provide professional development opportunities for our teachers to embed language scaffolding like glad strategies. Here we have Jonathan. He's a sixth grader. He is one of our-- he's in our heritage Spanish program, and he's going to speak a little bit about how important bilingualism is to him, his school and his community.

[BEGIN VIDEO PLAYBACK]

- Hi, Jonathan. How are you?

- Very good. And you?

- Good. So I hear that you speak more than one language. Can you tell us what languages you speak and tell us a little about that?

- I speak English and Spanish. I was born in Honduras, but I grew up here mostly seven years. I've been here seven years. And yeah, my family speaks a lot of Spanish. And I learned English from the schools or other places. So I'm very good with Spanish and English.

- Awesome.

- And what's your fav-- you're in sixth grade, right?

- Yeah.

- What's your favorite part about Sylvester so far?

- My favorite part is the teachers and how I get to hang out with my friends in free time. I also like that the teachers are very kind. And they are-- they help me out and things that I don't know. And they-- When I get-- like when I get some-- I'm stuck on something or I can't do something, they teach me through it. They let me know what I need to know. And they just are great teachers.

- Awesome.

- And so why is it important to you that how to speak Spanish?

- Important to me because I can translate to my family, and very important because my mom or my siblings don't speak English, so don't speak that much English. So if anything, they get a call or they need help, I'm there for them. And I just translate for them from Spanish to English.

- You help students at school too?

- Yeah, that's what I did in my old school, Gregory Heights, I went-- there was a new student that didn't speak English. I helped him with knowing what to do and what to get his work done.

- Awesome.

- And what's to you-- how do you think that knowing more than one language can help you in your future?

- In my future, it can help me improve my skills. And it can also be helpful to other people, since some people in the world are getting to the United States, they don't know how to speak English. I can translate for them from English and Spanish, and I can let them know to what they need to do and more things like just help them out.

- Awesome. Thank you, Jonathan.
- Yeah. Thank you.
- Those are radio calls.

[END VIDEO PLAYBACK]

All right. And then at Sylvester, we are preparing our students to be future ready in a variety of ways. Some of those include field trips, leadership opportunities, and career exploration. We're going to share a video from Maya, who's in eighth grade and is actually in the room tonight to share her experience with these.

[BEGIN VIDEO PLAYBACK]

- Hey, what's up, Maya? How are you doing?
- Good.
- OK, great. Can you tell me just a little bit about just your middle school experience? And then talk about how Sylvester specifically has prepared you for high school and beyond.
- OK well, my experience with Sylvester at the beginning of sixth grade, it was really hard for me because I didn't really know a lot of people, and it was going to a new school. And so I just made new friends, and it kind of just helped me learn about myself and just really getting to know the whole school and new people.

And Sylvester's just really prepared me for the future with experiences and opportunities to go to PSSC and doing a survey of like careers that you think that you're interested to. And it's just been giving me a lot of really nice opportunities to know about myself and what I want to do in the future.

- Got you. Nice. Well, talk a little bit about your leadership experience, because I know you're highlighted a lot in different talking places for leadership and assemblies and morning announcements and things like that. Talk a little bit about that.

- Well, I'm an ASB. And I am in charge of the assembly committee. So I make the assemblies happen. I like design them and stuff. It's really fun. I don't even think I would do that in sixth grade. I really sort of like our leadership class. It's really fun. Yeah, it's really nice to just be in front of people talking about stuff and just really like expressing myself in front of the whole school.

- All right. Thanks, Maya.

[END PLAYBACK]

- So we really want to-- we have been focusing on centering student voice and input, but we also want to pull in our families as well to get their input, to make sure that what we're doing for their student is the path to success. Families are one of our greatest assets in supporting their student. And so I hear some feedback from Mary, who's got two students at Sylvester.

[BEGIN VIDEO PLAYBACK]

- Hi, Mary. How are you?

- I'm doing well.

- What has been your experience as a parent here at Sylvester Middle school?

- Over the last three years, it's been a great experience. I have a son in eighth grade, a daughter in seventh, and another one coming here in a couple of years. But it's been a great experience for both my children and for myself and my husband. The staff here really have a sense of community with the students as well as the families. They're very responsive. If you ever reach out, I get a reply very quickly and they're very easy to work with and talk with my kids, participates in lots of activities as well as sports and any clubs that they have here at the school.

- Great. Thank you.

[END PLAYBACK]

All right. And then at Sylvester, we have six community partnerships that support and engage with our students in a variety of ways. I'm going to share a little bit more about BAM, the first one that you see on the list there, Becoming a Man. BAM is currently serving 65 students at Sylvester and is focused on areas, including integrity, self-determination, positive anger expression and accountability.

We have a highlight from the school year from one of our eighth grade students who said, "When I'm able to consistently express my emotions in a healthy way, I feel proud and loved by the people who care about me."

OK, for our next steps, engaged reading across content areas, our next steps are to layer in explicit and intentional vocabulary instruction in all content areas for inclusive practices. Our next steps are to really build off of what our feeder schools are doing around flexible case management. And for our sixth grade transition, our next steps are to really lean into this cohort model, to try to minimize the number of transitions that our sixth graders have to do and hopefully improve their experience. Thank you so much.

Thank you so much, Mr Kodama. Directors, any questions? Let's start with Ms Petrini, Director Petrini.

All right. Thank you for that presentation. I was driving my son to school who goes to Sylvester just yesterday, and I kind of started asking him a lot of these questions we ask our kids. And I said, do you feel like you belong at school? Like, do you feel that? He's like, yeah. And I was like, tell me your favorite things about school. And he was like, oh, I love PE. And I love this, and I love that. And his friends, it's a really great group. And he had things to say about different classes and teachers, which all kids would. But I just loved hearing that positive feedback from him and just thought, you guys are doing a good job.

Thank you. Appreciate that.

I don't have any questions. And although my kids go to Cascade, which is your arch nemesis, I know. We have a basketball game tomorrow against you guys. I'm cheering for everybody. I just want to thank you guys for just all of the work that you're doing and for being here tonight sharing.

Thank you. Appreciate that.

Director Hagos.

I forgot about those PE shirts with their names on it. That was-- it took me by surprise. I said. Oh, yeah, I remember those. And I just love seeing all your kids and your kids' pictures and the slideshow. It always brings home the purpose of the work that we all do together when we're here in this room and outside of this room as well. So thank you for those photos and those videos. They were great.

One of the things that's quite noticeable is that you guys are really focused in on and committed to the culture of belonging, innovative learning and that future ready component of what we do in terms of our strategic plan. So that's quite clear. I have no-- I think that you guys are doing an excellent job, and you have a very clear vision of where you're going.

As you were talking, there was only one question that came up. And then I have a couple of comments. But what is flexible case management? That was like-- I caught that. I'm like, what is that? I'd love to know what that is?

- I figured this might come up. So it's really like the next step to inclusion for our district and our feeder schools are already doing it. And it just to try to give you a quick explanation, it is where special education teachers are just that. They're special education teachers. They don't teach a certain group of students. They serve this flexible case. They case manage students from all across the continuum.

And students don't have a label attached to them. They have-- they're served with an IEP, but the rooms are-- there's no longer like an EBC classroom or an ILC classroom. They're just classrooms that have different supports in them. And special education teachers are case managers of the continuum. Essentially we're already doing like flexible delivery model, which means we meet the kids where they are and meet their needs. And this just takes like the labels off. Yeah, I mean, does that make a little sense to you?

I can see this could be a coffee chat. So yes, it does. It gives me a good opening of where you're going with that. I appreciate some of that insight. One of the things that also caught me off guard is just the percentage of cultural belonging being at 37%. I mean-- I have a couple of experiences, actually, three of them that I want to highlight today that indicate something different. So I am curious about that data point.

I know that just in a couple of things that I've experienced this past summer. I met a lovely family, and this family had taken on and was supporting a student in the foster care system who was coming to you guys as a new student. And one of the things that they talked about is a lot of fear around switching schools and populations and coming in as a sixth grader into your building and was quite comfortable in different spaces that they were at before their move. And there was a lot of hesitation to come over and join you all at Sylvester.

Now everyone worked it out, and then the kiddo went into Sylvester. But they started with that four-day summer bridge program, and that was life changing for this kiddo. I want you guys to know that I heard that personally from the kid and the family, that had they not had that experience to meet the teachers, to see the school, to walk the campus, to talk to peers, they would have not felt as comfortable. And they did make a connection that day.

So what you guys did with that summer bridge program, I know personally impacted one of the students that spoke with me. And I just want you to know that that's when I think of sense of belonging. I think of that as one of the tools that you possibly are using to develop that. And so that was impressive to hear as well as a situation at the-- I think it was called the Ribbon Cutting for what was it? I probably have the words down. It was-- there was a new turf installed, and we did this whole ribbon cutting at Sylvester. I missed the first 30 minutes of it just due to work schedule, but it was well attended.

And there was a long line for the taco truck. There was a host of taco truck and everybody wanted tacos, which was really fun to see. All the kids are talking about it. The parents were there, and the line-- and it was hot, you guys. That day was really hot. So people were-- this long line was going around in a little bend. And there were some kids in front of me waiting, and I they were all grouped together. They were not. There was a couple of different groups in that group.

But anyways, as they got to the front, one of the girls in that group had said something along the lines of she had been waiting for 20 minutes for this taco truck. These are students of yours. And so when she finally got up there and got her order, she was starting to grieve the fact that all her friends and family are doing the activities, and here she is waiting for their order to come out so she can join them. And she thought oh my gosh, I've already missed all this time. Time is closing and the event was about to end.

And some of your kids was a group of boys that had told her, we got you. If you want to go, we'll get your tacos for you and we'll bring it to you. You can go ahead and head out to the field and we'll bring it to you when you're done. Now, I learned later she couldn't eat it because the fields had no food, no food entrance kind of a thing. But the point is, they offered. They don't know this. They just know that they've seen this girl around. They don't know who she is in particular. They weren't friends, and there was zero hesitation to jump in and ask her if she needed some help.

She was relieved that there was help. And she did join her family and they did follow through. And as teens do, they went on and talked about what do they say, they're cooked their shoes were because of all the dirt. Cooked, I think is now a term that mentions how done their shoes are or anything, but the point is, that situation helped to show that sense of belonging, that connection between your kids, even when they're not friends or not like people that they know in their classrooms.

And then there's one more. I'm surprised by how many experiences I have with Sylvester, but the last one was it was a Saturday brunch my family and I had gone to gone on to. At the Saturday brunch, there was a family kind of debriefing their SLC experience. I was stunned. I'm like, here it is Saturday. SLC's are over, the student led conferences are over. And yet they are-- here they were talking about the academic goals or whatever it was, all the things that were discussed. And they were sharing that with their students. And they were literally debriefing one of your SLC conferences right in the middle of the community on a Saturday morning, just enjoying their time together.

So that to me, also just highlighted that the value of what you are doing transcends just beyond just your students. They do go out into different elements along with our families as well. So the personal expression, all of this to say that those personal experiences highlight to me a stronger sense of belonging than your data point indicates. And I'm curious to know if you-- like, is there a disconnect there in terms of kids realizing those same things that I realized in random experiences throughout the last six months of this year?

Right. No. I thank you for sharing all that, I appreciate it. And that means a lot to us. That data point is based on one snapshot in time, when they take the panorama survey, depending on how they feel that day, what happened at home, what happened that week, what they have coming up on the weekend. And then it also is that-- I thought you were like-- I thought the music was like-- I thought I was at the Oscars, they were like ushering me off.

If you really dive into the panorama data, that number is based on students saying, I'm having a positive, I'm having a really great experience. And it doesn't account for kids that are, I'm having an OK experience. I'm having a neutral experience. Not that we want that experience for our kids, but that's a step away from I'm having a really terrible experience.

And so that number that you're looking at is just like, you see what I'm saying? And there are some kids that are just, I'm going-- I'm OK. I'm good. But that doesn't include that. So there's different components to that. But I do think about that a lot. But I appreciate you sharing those experiences that you had.

That's all I have. Thank you.

Thank you so much. Director Alvarez.

Director Alvarez, can you hear us?

Yes, I'm sorry. I'm having a hard time going screen by screen. The only thing I want to say is thank you for bringing the student voice into our space. I love hearing directly from them and for all the work that you are doing. So I have nothing else to say. Just thank you so much for all your hard work.

Thank you, I appreciate that.

Thank you so much.

So, Mr Kodama, thank you so much for the testimonials to Day-day, Jonathan, Maya. I know she's in the audience right now. So one of the questions was, around the 50% of Sylvester students are within one grade level of their expected level-- based on the IRead data. Great numbers, but what are you doing to continue to increase that, to get them to grade level and moving forward?

So yeah, so we lean into the district initiatives around engaged reading, explicit and intentional teaching of vocabulary. And in a lot of this, like I said in my presentation, a lot of our student outcomes are determined by our PLC work. Teachers getting together and doing the right PLC work. And we have just broken down the IReady data that you're talking about for reading and have a protocol and a plan for teachers to dig in, so that they can look at the specific standards where we need to grow in.

And that actually was work that we were going to actually do that today at our PLC. But as you know, Sylvester didn't have school because we didn't have power. So it'll be pushed back until after winter break. But we have a protocol and a plan to have teachers dig into the standards that we know that we're falling short at Sylvester to continue moving forward. And then also with the district's engaged reading and explicit vocabulary focus.

All right. Thank you so much. Please let us know how the district can Additionally support you on that.

Awesome Thank you.

Appreciate it. Thank you very much. Can we give them a hand, please?

[APPLAUSE]

All right. We're going to move to our scheduled communications. We're going to give Adriana a few seconds here to get set up. All right. On behalf of the board, we sincerely appreciate you taking the time to join us and share your thoughts this evening. You'll notice that our norms and guidelines are displayed on your screens for your reference. Please remember that you're addressing the Board, and there may be students present or watching who are listening carefully to what you say. Please note while the Board is unable to respond directly to your testimony during the meeting, we value your input. Thank you again for being here and speaking with us. First on to speak is Afifa Chow.

[CHEERING]

Can you also share with us what school you go to?

Oh, yeah. Of course. Can someone help me? Oh, thank you. So my name is Afifa and I am a senior at Evergreen High School.

[CHEERING]

Hello, everyone. My name is Afifa Chow. I'm currently a senior at Evergreen High School. And I'm here today on behalf of my peers of our community to address a pressing issue, the urgent need for increased funding and access to mental health resources in our school. This is not just a school-wide issue. It's a matter of equity as historically underserved Black, Brown, and Indigenous people of color within our schools continue to face disproportionate barriers to mental health care.

Mental health crises are not rare, nor are they isolated. They affect every school, every grade, and every community. Despite the critical role that mental health plays in our overall well-being and academic success, many students lack access to adequate support because of budget cuts at Highline School District. In 2023, has led to the loss of a counselor at Tyee, which then leaves many students unsupported.

This shortage is not just about numbers, it's about students who feel unheard, unseen, and underserved. This is why I'm calling for a significant investment in mental health resources at our school and across the district. Specifically, I urge you to, one, hire culturally competent mental health professionals. Students from marginalized communities are more likely to seek help from professionals who understand their experiences and cultural contexts.

Two, to provide programming for underserved populations, workshops, peer support groups, and school-wide initiatives should reflect the unique needs of students from diverse racial, socioeconomic, and ethnic backgrounds. Three, to invest in outreach and education to reduce stigma. For many families in marginalized communities, mental health challenges remain taboo. By partnering with families and local organizations, we can help normalize seeking care.

Failing to address these gaps perpetuates the cycle of inequity when students from marginalized communities lack mental health support, they are more likely to face academic struggles, disengagement, and even higher dropout rates. Conversely, schools that prioritize

[BEEP]

Go ahead and finish the sentence there.

Schools that prioritize mental health see better outcomes for all students with most significant improvements in underserved populations.

Thank you very much. Can you provide that to Adriana, your letters so she can give it to the Board? Thank you very much.

Arsemas Tsegei I apologize. It's OK.

Want me to say it?

Arsema Tsegei

Arasemas Tsegei

Thank you.

Sorry. My name is Arsemas Tsegei. Wait, do I start now? My name is Arsemas Tsegei. I'm a senior at Evergreen High School, and today I want to address the critical issue of funding for student activity. As the co-founder of the Coalition for Social Justice at Evergreen, I've seen firsthand how limited resources have affected our ability to thrive. At Evergreen, each club receives a one time allocation of just \$50, barely enough to cover snacks for two meetings.

On top of that, district regulations prohibit transactional fundraising, leaving us with few options to sustain our activities. This lack of funding stifles our potential and has forced us to abandon impactful projects. Underfunding directly hinders student-led initiatives and impactful projects for sports like flag football and tennis, and clubs like Coalition for Social Justice and the Black Student Union.

These endeavors are what inspire students to connect with their larger community and contribute to something bigger than themselves. Yet, our systems fail to support students who are passionate about driving meaningful change, ultimately eroding school spirit. Schools adjacent to Evergreen are left the last option of asking for donations, which is deeply unfair for a community like ours, where our home, where we are home to low-income families who cannot afford to give back financially.

In essence, we should-- we would be asking for help from the very people we are trying to support. Hence, this challenge calls for immediate attention and a practical solution. Student clubs need to be recognized not just as extracurricular activities, but the heart of our schools where they are harboring creativity, unity, and community growth. By providing adequate funding and removing unnecessary barriers, we can empower students like me and my peers to be leaders and creators.

Our schools should be spaces where every voice is heard and every dream is given the chance to evolve. So we can't allow potential to be wasted simply because of a lack of resources. The futures of our communities depend on the investments we make today, because when we fail to support our students, we fail to support the leaders of tomorrow. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you.

Megan Corey. Megan Corey. OK, move on to the next. Alex Myrick.

Good evening, Directors. It has now been almost 2 and 1/2 years since I began warning you about the dangers of so-called gender affirming care. I know most of you don't like listening to me because I don't share your progressive views. However, when the crowd is going down the wrong road, the one who is truly progressive is the one who turns back soonest.

In my graduate and post-graduate studies, I learned to be a critical consumer of research. Among other things, one should pay attention to how the participants are selected, the sample size and bias, the presence or absence of a control group, the criteria for success or failure, non-response bias and long-term follow up.

The transgender advocates will always point to research supporting their cause, but to date, all of their cited research has been deficient and committed multiple errors. You have always been skeptical of me, but please consider a few of the entities which have recently decided they may be going down a wrong road.

Eleven months ago, the Washington University Transgender Center in Saint Louis stopped prescribing puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones to minors. Last year, the United Kingdom indefinitely banned the sale and supply of puberty blockers. And last week they imposed further restrictions. In Denmark, the percentage of a gender dysphoric patients on hormone treatment plummeted from 67% in 2016 to 10% in 2022. In Norway, puberty blockers are banned except in clinical trials.

France, Sweden, Finland and Spain have also imposed restrictions, as well as a majority of 26 US states. The individual state laws differ and vary from felony charges to milder restrictions, but still a majority of states. It would be great if Highline School District would be the next entity to turn back. I pray to God that you won't wait to be among the last. Thank you.

Thank you. Next up.

[APPLAUSE]

Bella Saitham. Bella Saitham. OK. Giovanni Holiday

Oh, haven't been up here in a while. So first off, I think it is incredibly disrespectful comparing me and my brother and my cousin to your family. Just because your grandkids are colored, doesn't mean it gives you the right to speak down on people of the same race as your family. I'm saying all of this because at last meeting, some very inconsiderate things were said, comparing me and my family to certain someone's grandkids, implying that it is OK to be worse. I'm not going to say because there are other students here, but these comments made me feel uncomfortable and made me feel my little cousin and all the other students in the district should not have heard those words.

Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Next up, Patricia Bailey.

The people who live in the Highline area have diverse viewpoints and experiences. Board policy 1430 protects the right to speak freely and states, quote, "Board directors do not respond to questions or comments made during public comment period." Unquote. Yet there was a litany of rebukes from the platform regarding public comment at the December 4th meeting. The incongruent behavior displayed by officials was disturbing.

The prominent target of the leader's wrath appeared to be a citizen concerned with the possible misallocation of tax dollars. This individual was respectful and shared sincerely held thoughts and beliefs. The board has established common sense norms, respect differences of opinion, seek to understand and assume best intentions. However, all these rules were violated on December 4th.

Upon inquiry, Highline's communication department attributed this contradiction behavior, contradictory behavior to board policy 5,000 which requires staff to challenge any statement that conflicts with the district's equity focus. This DEI social justice policy seems to engender a strident, self-righteous attitude, resulting in bullying, shaming, and trampling on the common sense social norms established by the board.

DEI, diversity, equity, and inclusion policies are coming under attack by both the political left and right. The board meeting two weeks ago illustrates why. DEI stifles open conversation and destroys diversity of expression in the name of identity politics. Policy 5,000 needs to be brought into alignment with the constitutional right of freedom of speech. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you. Next up, Meg Vader.

Hello. I'm Meg Vader. I am an electrical engineer working at Blue Origin. I currently work on the Lunar Lander, and I am also an alum of Raisbeck Aviation High school and a mentor for Skunk Works Robotics, which I am also an alum of. And I want to talk a little bit about the opportunities that Skunk Works offers to the Highline School District and students in the Highline School District. So we facilitate, I guess, a project-based learning environment through the first robotics program.

And part of what makes Skunk Works Robotics, the team, specifically so good is that we have a lot of mentors. So we get, depending on how you think about it, either very small class sizes effectively due to our mentor to student ratio or really small or one on one tutoring from mentors to students across our various different subgroups. So we have design, shop, electrical, programming, scouting, which is a mix of user experience design and programming, and business and marketing.

And our mentors are very good. I don't want to brag about myself here, but we have a lot of mentors who are all excellent. We have people who are literally rocket scientists. We have four mentors who are rocket scientists. We have people who work at Boeing and Microsoft, and we are trying to teach these students with real hands on projects as well as we can.

One of the sayings in First Robotics is that it's like a sport, but any kid can go pro. And if you look at the alumni from our team who have been extremely successful, you can see how well we are teaching our students. And again, this is something that is open to all students in Highline. You do not have to qualify for varsity. You can just come and we will teach you. So Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you Lewis Press.

Hello, my name is Lewis Press. I'm a member of the Skunk Works Robotics team, and I am also on the Superintendent's Student Leadership Team. I just want to preface this by saying that nothing that I'm about to say will impact my work on the leadership team. I really care about that.

Naturally, with my placement, I kind of serve as a point of contact for, I suppose, the superintendent and a lot of my robotics partners. And I will not sugarcoat it. A lot of my robotics partners do not believe that the district is acting in good faith. This is probably in no small part, thanks to the fact that a lot of our resources have been stripped away from what they once were. And though I'm sure that there's plenty of nuance and I'm sure there's plenty of paperwork, I just-- I wouldn't be the one to tell that.

These resources are the thing that have allowed us to be so successful in teaching robotics to multiple generations of Highline district students, and without the resources, well, I fear-- it just kind of happened. It's a sort of an environment of frustration. And a lot of my robotics partners view the district as being responsible.

I don't believe that. I don't believe it is the fault of any one person. I don't believe it's the fault of the district. I am sure it's a tangled web, and that few of you have the ability to give us what we once had, if any at all. If you did, I'm sure you would have by now. Or maybe in the future, things change. I am certain that all of you understand the educational and economical value of our robotics team. It's only five minutes left. Five seconds.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you very much. And that concludes our scheduled communications. Dr. Duran, Superintendent's updates, please.

Yes. Thank you. I want to start by thanking our team from Sylvester Middle School for their school presentation this evening. I really think it's great whenever we get the opportunity to hear student voice and to hear the great work of our teachers and educators in our schools. Our schools are the center point for creating the culture of belonging that is at the heart of Highline Public Schools. And as a district, we are committed to ensuring every student feels welcomed, valued and safe, welcomed, valued and safe.

I am excited to share that the Highline High School's mariachi band will be performing at the Washington Association of School Administrative Legislative Conference in January. This is a wonderful opportunity for our students to share their talents with leaders from around the state. Before we move to the presentation and talk a little bit more, I want to take a moment to thank Director Alvarez for her leadership as Board president this last year.

I just really want to thank you for your service in support of our Highline students. I know you've been on the Board for a number of years, and just really grateful for the leadership that she provided. And now I would like to welcome Tova Tupper, Chief Communications Officer, to the podium, to introduce the presentation for the 2024 Highline Public schools Community Survey results. Welcome, Tova.

Good evening, Dr Duran, President Van, members of the school board. I'm excited tonight that we're going to be presenting the results of our communication or our community survey. The purpose of the survey is to understand the interests and priorities and perceptions of our community. It provides feedback not only from our families of students that are in our district, as well as community members who don't have students in our district. So it ensures that we're hearing from a broad range of people in our community.

These results highlight the values and the priorities and the perceptions of Highline Public Schools from our community. And as you will learn tonight in the presentation, the findings are that our community is supportive of the work that we are doing in Highline, including our strategic plan. So with that, I'm going to turn it over to Ben Winston from Clearpath Strategies to share the detailed survey results.

Thank you Tova. Thank you, Dr. Duran, President Van and the rest of the directors. I appreciate the chance to be here and present the results from the survey. So this was a survey we did back in June. We were initially intending to present the data little bit earlier to you, but the cyber incident pushed us back until now. The survey was conducted from June 15 to 20th across Highline Public Schools. This was conducted by myself and Clearpath Strategies. I'm a Senior Director at Clearpath Strategies and have worked on polling and research for a number of school districts across the area.

I think it's important also to talk about who the people we surveyed were. This was not a survey of students, of parents, of people just within the school community. This was not a survey of voters. This was a survey representative of all adults living within Highline Public Schools.

So I've listed here quickly the demographics of the sample of people we spoke to. You'll notice that this is a little bit different than the demographics of Highline student population, again, because this is matched to census estimates for the population parameters of Highline Public Schools. So the folks we spoke to are representative demographically, regionally, geographically of the school district.

The one I want to flag on this slide is a parental status. So about 2/3 of the people we spoke to, 2/3 of the adults in the district are not currently parents of a student of a child below the age of 18. About 22%, a little bit less than a quarter are currently parents of students in Highline Public Schools. And I'll reference those two groups a bit during the presentation.

When we ask about the community's perceptions of the school district, we have a couple questions on that. First of all, there are more people are favorable towards school district, have a favorable impression of the district and what it's doing, 47%, than have an unfavorable impression, 26%. You'll also note that about a little over a quarter, 28%, just don't know, aren't sure how the district is doing. And that's a very normal thing when we do these polls, especially those who are not parents, those outside the school communities don't know a lot, don't think a lot, frankly, about what's going on in their local public schools.

We also ask about satisfaction with the quality of education that's provided to students within Highline Public schools. And again, we find more who are satisfied than are dissatisfied. 41% are satisfied, 35% dissatisfied. And this ranges between Highline parents and non-parents. Those who are parents of current students in Highline Schools are-- a majority are satisfied with schools, 59% much higher number are satisfied with the quality of education provided, just 35% dissatisfied.

Among non-parents, there's a much higher proportion who say they don't know. And that makes sense. If you're not a parent of a current student, you may not know how things are going quite as closely. So we get about 30%, I think 38% satisfied, 31% dissatisfied, so still a positive ratio, but just not as much awareness.

We ask a few other questions as well in terms of perceptions of the district. We ask how the district is doing maintaining school buildings and facilities. 50% give a positive rating, say the district is doing well, just 9% with a negative rating, poor job. On keeping students safe, 44% with a positive rating. I think the school district is doing well. Just 11% with a negative rating.

You see a lot of gray here. People saying fair job or unsure. Again, that's very normal. What we look for is 30% to 40% giving the district a positive rating. That's a good-- that's a sign that a district is doing well with one of these metrics. So these are very strong numbers. On a couple of other metrics, the district isn't quite as strong. In terms of career, teaching, career and technical skills that can be applied in the workforce, just 31% say the district is doing a good job on that. And on supporting students' mental health and well-being, 28% say the district is doing well on that.

Again, we're not seeing very high negative ratings. What we're more seeing is that a lot of community members, especially those who are not parents of students in schools, just don't know how the district is doing on these metrics. It's not that they think the district is doing badly, it's that they haven't heard as much about it. So this sort of opens an opportunity for communication, to communicate to some of these non parents about the things that the district is doing in this regard, which we've heard some talked about tonight. And I know that the district is focusing on these issues, but some of that is not filtering down to the entire community hearing about it.

We ask attitudes towards the district's funding. We hear that 60% of residents across the district think the district needs additional funding, whereas about a quarter think the district either has sufficient funding now or thinks too much is being spent on schools. Again, that is a pretty robust majority there in a very strong number. We also ask whether people think that the state of Washington provides Highline with enough money. And again, we get a majority here saying they think the state provides Highline with too little funding. Fewer think the district gets enough funding from the state.

When it comes to where and how to use funding, obviously there are many different priorities that the community has for how funding should be used. But we asked them to essentially rate their relative priority of things. And I won't go through all of these, but it's clear at the top that adding CTE courses and facilities is a very high priority for people. They want funding to be used on that and they want to hear about it. This relates back to my earlier point about how not many non-parents, especially, have not heard a lot about the things the district is doing in this regard.

Support for students with special needs also comes through as a high priority, hiring more teachers, paraeducators, instructional assistants, high priority, safety and security upgrades, and school buildings and staff and mental health supports. Also goes back to my earlier point that some elements of the community are not hearing as much about what the district's doing in this regard. But really, all of the things on this list are priorities for community members. You see a lot more green on here than you do red meaning medium, high or top priority than not a priority at all.

We asked residents about the district's strategic plan, about the goals that were approved by the board in the past. We've talked about them again. We heard the folks from Sylvester talking about them. And we asked whether, or how these districts goal how the district's goals compare to people's own priorities. Do they think after hearing this, the district shares their values and shares their priorities? And we hear a resounding yes for most people. 69% of community members read these goals, hear these goals, and they say the district, sounds like the district shares my priorities. 20% say the district does not share my priorities. So that's a 3 to 1, almost 4 to 1 ratio there.

However, we read people those four goals and we asked them an open ended question. If you could add a fifth goal to the district's strategic plan, what would it be? And far and away, the most common thing to come through was, again, this idea about career preparedness, about preparing students for life after graduation. I included a few quotes here from various residents we spoke to, "better preparing students for college," "vocational programs," "emphasis on higher education," but also "career training, focusing on the trades" "preparing students for finding a profession," "giving them skills," et cetera, et cetera. So you see a consistent theme coming through in a lot of these answers that people are giving us.

One more point on that. We read people four different, I guess, approaches or frameworks, as you could describe them for things that the district thinks about or considers in making decisions, whether that be budgetary decisions, resource allocation decisions. not That they're in competition with each other, but which one do residents-- which one resonates most with residents as they think about the way that you all should be making decisions and running schools?

Is it about career preparation again? Is it about school safety? Is it about fairness and equitable opportunities and resources? Is it about focusing on students' mental health and emotional well-being? What we see, you see the green bars on the right, is basically all of these. People like all of them. They heard these four statements and they said, all four of those things are important to me.

In a relative sense, we see a little bit more enthusiastic a response for that top one. 97% of residents we spoke to said aiming to prepare students for life after graduation with career and technical education that can lead to a job and apprenticeship, military further training, that is an important approach that they want you all to have in mind as you make decisions. So as I go through this data, you're seeing a very clear pattern is that this idea of career preparation, career and technical education is something that is super important to people, really top of mind for the community.

We also asked about the district's equity goals. I know this was-- these are things that were voted on, I think 2020, 2021. And since then we've been asking community perceptions and feedback on that. We find that 75% of residents believe that public instruction should include age-appropriate discussion of issues related to race and identity. 19% do not think that should be included in the curriculum.

And we ask about the district's welcome, whether the district should be welcoming to students regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation. We see a very clear result here, with 86% saying they agree with that, 8% saying they disagree. And of the 86% who agree, you can see the dark blue bar is very high here, meaning people are saying they strongly agree with this rather than just somewhat.

I talked a little bit about communication and reaching residents, how they hear about schools, what they hear about schools. So another thing we asked people is where they are getting their news about Highline Public schools. What are they-- is that from newspapers? Is it from TV? Is it from talking to people? There's no one dominant source for where the community is hearing about public schools. There are a lot of different sources where they're getting little bits and pieces of information.

The top sources overall are mailings from the district, that is, physical mailings that arrive in people's mailbox. Among parents, they're hearing a lot directly from the district and from schools, right. They get emails. They speak to teachers, principals, staff, they get e-newsletters. They go to district and school websites. Those who are not parents, not in the school community, are hearing a lot less, of course, from those sources. So they tend to get more of their news about schools from friends, neighbors, TV, radio, B-Town Blog, newspapers, so on and so forth.

I think the most notable data point in this survey was this one to me. And I know this is a lot of information on this slide, so I'll go through it. Again, we've talked about that gap in especially non-parents not hearing a lot about what the district is doing when it comes to CTE and career preparation. So we asked people, have you heard, read, or seen anything about Highline students having career connected work opportunities? We gave them a couple examples of things they might have seen. 62% of people said no, they had not heard anything about that. About 38% said yes. Some a lot, not too many said, I'd heard a lot. A few people have heard something, heard a little bit about it.

What's important is the part of the slide on the right. It talks about the impact of people, especially non-parents, people who are not in the school community, hearing this type of information. Again, they said what they want to see is Highline schools giving students these career connected opportunities. When the-- so the blue bar on the right, the non-parents who have heard about these career connected opportunities, they feel very positively about the district.

When that communication reaches them, when that information reaches them, they are overwhelmingly feel favorably towards the district and they're satisfied with the quality of education Highline schools provide. When they have not heard that information, when that information is not reaching them, they feel much less favorably towards the district and less satisfied with the educational quality. Again, not that they're dissatisfied, but more so that they're just, they say, I don't know. So this really shows to me the impact of the power of being able to communicate, being able to get that information to people. So I think that's it for me. But I'm happy to take questions. Yeah, please.

I'll just share one thing when we had our results come through a year ago. That's when we discovered this priority about career connected learning, and our team took it upon ourselves to do a major communication plan to make sure that our community heard about the wonderful career connected learning that's happening in Highline, because it's not a matter of that work isn't happening. It's just a matter of not everyone knows about it.

And so that's why we asked about this question, was to measure the progress and the work that we did to get the word out and to let our community know about it. And so this is really an exciting data point for us. And that's one of the ways that we have been using this survey from our community to better inform our work and our decision making.

Yeah, happy to take any questions of any board directors have any questions for presentation?

I don't have any questions, but just a comment. And thank you for this information and for differentiating the community members that have children, not only have children, but in our district versus the ones that don't. I think it's important to note and to spotlight that. It's a conversation that was had at our work session earlier this week, that there's a lot of loud voices about what is and what isn't happening and what is and isn't going well.

Like to note that a lot of our parents that actually have students in the district are very happy. And while obviously we care about everybody's voice, the loudest voices, and a huge majority of those that are not happy with what we're doing don't have children in the district and are not aware necessarily of what is going on. So thank you for the presentation, the information, for the time and for how you also presented in these graphs.

Thank you. Director Petrini.

Thank you. What we need to note, though, and the questions I have is that we don't see the favorability or satisfaction broken down by parents and then the community. It's just all looped, lumped together. So do you guys have that broken down? How actual parents responded favorably or unfavorably to each of these questions, and then non-residents? Because if we've got the majority of people in the community, as you've said right here, who are favorable towards it, then who are those other people? Are they the parents? Is that broken down at all, the differences of parent non parent and their answers to these questions?

Yeah, we didn't show all the data here just for time purposes. But I have offhand the numbers on satisfaction with the district. So those with parents in-- sorry parents of students in Highline Public Schools, 59% were are satisfied with the quality of education, 35% dissatisfied. So a net 24 point difference there. Among non parents, it's 38%, 31%, so a net 7, still more positive than negative. Interestingly, the most negative ratings of the district of satisfaction with the educational quality are parents of students who are not in Highline Public Schools, so parents of students who are in other types of schools, but not in the district.

Which I think that's really important information to know as well, because those are students that are not sitting in our classrooms and that affects our budget. It affects our classrooms that the kids in their neighborhoods. So knowing that information, how does it actually break down for our parents, it's great to know that the broader community, when they hear about it, they're like oh, that's great. And they want to support it. And that's wonderful.

But for our parents to have more disaggregated data of those populations, I think would be great to have. So are you able to provide that? Yeah, that third group I referenced, it becomes a fairly small sample size. So we typically don't include it because it's a small number of people, and we can't confidently conclude what they think.

But the 22% of actual parents of this group, it'd be great to know how all of these things land with them.

Sure.

Thank you.

Thank you so much, Director Hagos.

OK, bear with me. I think it's been a little bit long of a meeting today, but in general also, I don't remember doing this in the past. Have we done a community survey? I was like, when does this-- so it is a new thing? OK I was trying to remember because I tried to keep track of things that are annual things that are coming up and understand the trajectory of what we're doing and the history of what we're doing. It looks like someone wants to answer the question of this new thing that we're doing.

It's not a new survey. We've been-- I've been in Highline for almost 12 years now, and we've done it not every single year, but almost every single year.

OK, so I lived in the district for 17 years and never received one as a non-parent person or a parent of a student. So I'm curious. Never, 17 years and not once did I get a survey like this that asked me questions about Highline Public schools. So I guess for me, that's the newness or this is something that's I'm feeling like I don't really have a grasp upon, like, what is this meant to inform?

I'm not really getting-- I'm not really getting it. So give me a moment. Let me digest a little bit longer. There may be other questions, but I am curious. Is this meant to inform the board of what the community thinks of what we're doing? Is this meant to inform communications? And like you mentioned, the changes that you guys are doing with future-ready components because of the feedback you received from the community. I'm not really sure what is meant to inform and why are we doing it?

I can answer that question. It's all of the above. The communications department, this is the basis, the research basis of our strategic communication plan that we put together every year, and something that we turn to very regularly to help inform the work that we're doing. I also know that it's something that other departments that was shared at cabinet, Ben came and did a presentation earlier this year right before our cyber incident.

And this is something that we look to help inform our work and to make sure that we're on the right track and that we have community support. And I know Ben can talk about the methodology behind how they get responses from the survey, and why you have perhaps not been called.

I'm surprised you haven't been called. Actually that's-- so we're interviewing about 400 people each survey each year. We do that by a mix of interviews, via phone. We call people on both landlines and cell phones, live interviewers, as well as their text messages sent out sometimes these days to invite people to take the survey. You click a link on the survey, you take the survey. So we do a lot of study of the census data on again, the population parameters. And we make sure that the 400 people we speak to are representative in as many ways as we possibly can of the full district population.

For you, individually, I don't know. Perhaps there's a mistake in how your phone number is listed on the file or something like that. I'm frankly surprised that you haven't been called, but I'm sure there are people in this room that were part of it or have been part of it at some point.

Thank you. And thank you for sharing this. I think this is the first time you're sharing it with the board, at least in the time that I've been on the board. You people have probably done it before in my time on the board, but it is good to see the things that you guys are all seeing and to share this information in a comprehensive level. I do appreciate seeing the data. So thank you.

Thank you so much, Director Alvarez, do you have any questions?

No questions for me. Just thank you for the survey, for the results. No questions. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

I have a additional question, if that's all right, or just more of an observation. When we talk about 400 individuals that are surveyed, we've got within our district over 70,000 voting population type people. So 400 of 70,000 is really like half of a half a percent. It's a really small sample group. And if we're talking about 88 parents included in this group of 17,000 students, it's a really small margin for us to be basing satisfaction, because there's 16,000 students of parents we did not survey.

So I think maybe we should either broaden our sample size to get a more general size, usually 5% or 10% gives you a better trajectory of what maybe the rest of the 90% think, but half of a half a percent, I don't feel like is a really good sample, if we've got such a large student body. Is there a way to broaden our pool of who we're asking?

It's a great question. And certainly there are trade offs. The more people we can speak to, the more confidence we can have in the results. It becomes a cost and budget issue of reaching more and more people. And statistically there are ways where if you're sure that the people that you're speaking to are representative of the larger pool, even speaking to 400 of 70,000, is going to be representative of that group. There's a margin of error, certainly, and I think we included that.

It's like 0.4.

Yeah, 4.0, so that means the results can be 4 to 5 points either way on anything. And that's entirely normal in any poll we do ever. If you think about surveys they do of the entire country, they're speaking to 800 or 1,000 people out of 300 million. And those are still representative. Certainly the more people you can speak to the better, the lower that margin of error becomes. But as long as the folks you interview are representative of the whole, then even 1/2 of 1/2 of a percent is going to speak for everyone.

Now, among some of the smaller groups, if you wanted to look at, left-handed women between the ages of 41 and 46, we certainly don't have enough people in the survey to answer questions like that. We also don't ask about left handedness. But so among some of the subgroups, certainly a larger sample will help us reduce that margin of error. But overall, and we try to include that margin of error in the way that we present the data.

Were these surveys offered in different languages, so that we had other parents of diverse languages that were able to participate? Or is this just in English?

I think it was. I think we did just English. And cognizant that limits the pool of who is able to participate. And there's certainly some people within the district who are not, it just sort of becomes a budget issue at that point. But it's certainly something we can consider for future years.

OK. Thank you.

Yeah. And just a follow-up question. I'm curious to know-- it's just a quick one really. I'm curious to know how do you know who the English family speaking families are, because I know that there may be something in my own files that says something about me having speaking a different language, and I'm curious if that removes folks from your list, if there's some sort of list that says, hey, no.

Everyone gets the opportunity to participate. And if they decline, obviously, then they.

Thank you. Perfect.

Wonderful Thank you both very much. Appreciate the conversation and interest. And I think a reminder that this is one of many ways that we gather information from our community. We have our thought exchanges that we do regularly with our community. We have the family engagement survey that we do. So it's another data point that we have that helps to give us information, both to think about for bond planning, levy planning, and I think especially some of the work that we're doing with our strategic plan and is opportunities for us to think about how we can improve and get better. So thank you both very much. Thank you, Ben, for being here.

Thank you guys for the opportunity tonight.

Thank you very much.

And now I would like to welcome Jeb Binns, President of Highline Education Association, to the podium to share a labor partner update. Welcome, Jeb. Good to see you.

Thank you. Good evening. I'd just like to start with thanking past President Alvarez for her leadership of the board, past President Van.

Congratulations, President Van, Vice President Tidholm. Thank you very much, appreciate your leadership here. Nice to be back. I was leading a team of educators with my vice president, Shawna Moore, to at the National Council of Urban Education Associations last week in-- or two weeks ago in Providence, Rhode Island, and so was not able to attend the meeting, but I did have a chance to watch it online.

I want to thank a few things. Just a few thank yous going out this week. Thanks to all the schools who are doing the learning and literacy walks that are out there. There's a lot of learning going on, lots of adults in classrooms, lots of kids being very, very engaged and learning and being very accepting of all these adults who aren't normally in their rooms, who all of a sudden they're like, hey, look at me, I'm here. So I appreciate that.

And for the ones that happened today, we're three days before break and our kids were still going strong. So that's also a testament to some great, some great learning going on, and some great teachers who are out there. I want to put a huge thank out to technology, our technology services for the amazing ability to print. So I just-- so it's amazing. I mean, and just for the emails that I have received saying, gosh, it's amazing to be able to print. I think it's great. I appreciate the fact that our superintendent can print as well. I think that's wonderful. And I did communicate that to my folks.

I want to thank Dr [? Renig ?] for convening a team to explore our newly negotiated planning [? parody. ?] It's been very exciting to get together a group of teachers and specialists and district leaders to go through and to try to figure out how can we create this additional hour of planning for teachers, which elementary school teachers who desperately need, and also weigh that with student learning opportunities, and also for planning and supportive of adult learning. So it's been great conversations. We've met now three times. We've got a few more meetings in February, so we're looking forward to that. So I appreciate your collaboration with that. You did not need to do that, but you did. So thank you.

Going forward, a quick shout out to girls flag football. That's pretty exciting, super awesome opportunity we've got out there. The Seahawks came to kick them off the season. Let's go. That's very exciting, lots of fun. I look forward to catching a game this season that's going on.

So also the progress. If you have not driven by the being rebuilt-- the being rebuilt Evergreen High School, the progress on these new sites is exciting. Every week you drive by, there's a new thing that's there. So exciting for the spaces. And so thankful for our community. And we talk about the survey data, about people being supportive of what we're doing in Highline Public Schools. Our overwhelming community support for our bonds and our levies is something that we should not take for granted, and we do not. But it also is a testament to the great support that we have.

And so we thank our community members for continuing to do this, to provide the learning spaces that our students so truly deserve as having been the benefit of the remodeled Highline High school. The feeling that students have that the community cares about them based on-- even just the thing of the facility that they walk into. When visiting teams arrive at the school, they look around, they're like, all right, Highline. So there's some good. So just positive support and it's just wonderful. So I think that.

Thing about the survey data, it was kind of interesting. So I've lived in the district for 24 years. I have never once been included in the survey, so there's that. And however, if I had been, I would have given two thumbs up. So you can change the graph a little bit and add a few more. But apparently my vice president, my right handed vice president, she received-- she has received the survey now six times over the 21 years she's lived in the district in the last 12 years that it's been offered. So it's an interesting thing of how that plays out and works. So a few things, a few things for that one.

And finally, have a wonderful and refreshing break. It is something that I think we all deserve. Every year is exciting. Every year is different. 2024 left us with quite a bang. So there we go and I look forward to seeing you all in 2025. So happy holidays. Thanks.

Awesome. Thank you, Jeff. Appreciate that. I think we're all probably looking a little forward to 2025 after the start of this year. I hope everyone also has an opportunity to rest and spend time with family and friends over the winter break, and just get some time to be away from the work that we do every day. This concludes my comments, Director Van, Thank you.

Thank you, Dr Duran. Moving to our school board reports. Legislative reports, Director Pietrini, Director Tidholm.

So this session is a long session, and it begins January 13. The governor's budget came out yesterday, and we were disappointed to not see the big three that were pointed out of [? MSocks, ?] special education and transportation. It does not seem that K through 12 needs were prioritized, which is, again, a big disappointment. But there's hopes that Governor-Elect Ferguson will hopefully prioritize those regarding education.

We are thrilled to see the editorial in the *Seattle Times* calling out in the legislature to finally approve funding levels that support the real needs that public school students need across the state. So we echo that.

Thank you. That concludes our legislative reports. We're going to move to our director's reports. Director Alvarez, I'm going to have you go first.

Thank you, Director Van. So first of all, I just want to say thank you to everyone. And thank you for-- and congratulations on the elections. And my report states we have a 12 Day of of Reading event. On Monday, Hazel Valley Elementary welcomed the Seattle Seahawks and Pemco Insurance for the 12 Days of Reading event. Seahawks legend Gary Gilman, [INAUDIBLE] made reading fun and exciting by sharing stories with students.

Students went home with special Seahawks swag, including books, flags, pencils and water bottles. A big thank you to the Seattle Seahawks, Pemco Insurance, and Hazel Valley staff for making this event such a success. And again, I just want to take the time to thank everyone for always supporting our schools when they have these events. I love when everyone just comes together. So thank you, and that concludes my report. Back to you, President Van.

Thank you. Director Petrini.

Thank you, President Van. To start off, I was able to attend the South Sound Chamber of Commerce legislative Coalition the other day where they talked about some of their priorities. This comes from small businesses within our area. Some of those were talking about transportation, the funding needs for public safety, things about K-12 and the emphasis about CTE courses, different regulatory requirements that they support or don't support around small businesses and taxes, housing attainability and child care.

So among many things, it's just great to see a lot of the businesses, especially small businesses, which is the lifeblood of our communities to come together and put out their voice of also what they find really important. And some of those K through 12 education funding that they talked about also was around special needs, about filling the funding gaps that are needed for general education and around providing appropriate secondary transition instruction and planning and development for disabled individuals and education pathways that facilitate economic growth when it comes to higher education. So it was great to be a part of that. They had a panel that spoke to all of those reasons and loved doing that.

We had a board retreat this last Saturday where we were able to again, continue to collaborate and to work together as a board. We learned through some training a while back that our students do best when we have cohesive, strong board governance, and that is something that I'm personally committed to. And one of the things that we had talked about in creating some board goals was talking about a shared purpose, and that I know that is something that we're going to be working on this year. Finding a thread that connects all of us, the reasons that we're here, I think is really important.

I have some strong disappointment today. Lots of questions that are usually asked behind the scenes, I feel like have not been answered. And in my request to have an executive session in order for some of those questions to be answered, has been now reneged. I feel compelled to ask these publicly because I don't know how else to get them answered.

And some of those questions are surrounding an individual within our district who had violated FERPA, which are federal protections for educational privacy. That's for students. That's for parents. And when you have an individual that violates that against parents and teachers even, I find that egregious. And I find that disappointing. And as a board member, my job is to hold our district accountable when we do not take these things seriously. I have asked these questions privately.

I've tried to bring dignity to the individual in question and have sought these questions on behalf of other parents and teachers who had their information breached and shared improperly outside of the district. And so I opened-- I opened this back up that we go back to executive, open it, back up to executive session, so those questions can be answered behind the scenes. Otherwise, being that I was personally affected by this, some might say, would cloud my judgment, but I would say that I have sought no retribution.

I have not sought any retaliation. I've asked questions on behalf of other people who have been affected, so I still open that for conversation. I'm disappointed in a board that does not seem curious about these things, and making sure we hold individuals accountable, that we hold these things very seriously when it comes to federal violations. So being that that's on the table, I would like to make a motion to put the executive session back on the platform.

I feel like it's the right thing to do to understand what were the outcomes for the other parents and teachers affected. So had student information in those emails. We had IEPs talked about. We had teachers disrespected. We've had students called names. I don't find that acceptable, so I'd like to put that motion back on the table.

I think this motion is going to need a second. And before I second, I do want to say this is information that seriously does need to happen in an executive session, so we at least debrief and have these conversations to protect this information. And that was asked. It was asked for that. And I understand where Director Petrini is coming from to be compelled to do this at this point. And it's painful. It's very painful. This is really uncomfortable. And again, executive sessions are meant to discuss sensitive information. And I'm seconding this because I would like that debrief to happen. And we can handle this, and find a way to have this debrief happen. So I'm seconding the motion.

And I will note that as you noted, Director Petrini, you had personal investment in this issue. I think it would be most appropriate that you recuse yourself from the conversation. Your personal interest aside, our role as board directors is not to supervise or oversee staff directly. It is to trust the superintendent to oversee these things. And we are all aware that there was an investigation done by a third party to avoid any kind of bias. There was a conclusion. There was disciplinary actions. So to continue to try to have the conversation and to bring it up is not only inappropriate, given your personal interest. Our position as board directors, I just worry about the liability and that it's really teetering on an abuse of power.

I hear you, I understand that perspective, but being that this wasn't about just me, we have other people involved, and being a board director and a parent does put me in a precarious situation that I understand. Recusing myself from any decision making would have been appropriate, but that doesn't, I don't have to recuse myself from being able to ask those questions and to be able to hear the answers. I'm not asking for any differing outcomes. I'm asking for the process. And how did it happen and what were the protections put in place?

My understanding was did have some specific requests do regarding the outcomes, but we're entitled to our own thoughts and opinions on whether the legalities are that we can have that executive session or not, whether it's appropriate and whether it puts the district in a position of liability. And you personally in a position of potentially being accused of abuse of power is a whole other question. So happy to take it to vote again if that's the motion that's on the table.

I just want to have a point of privilege here. OK Thank you, Director Petrini, for sharing that with us. And what you stated here just recently is the request to look at the process, not so much the performance of the employee, but the process of which the investigation was completed. Correct?

Well, it's hard because there are more things involved with the performance of this employee. But the investigation was part of that process with that employee. So that is what I'm asking. Executive session is around the performance of an employee. That would be a contributing factor.

President Van can I get a point of privilege when you have an opportunity.

Point of privilege, go ahead, Director Alvarez.

I'm going back to HR. HR had a third party investigation. It was outside the agency, outside the district. It wasn't just conducting an evaluation of the process and employee and actions. So it is, again, I'm going back to this trust. They did their due diligence. They presented with us. One thing is, if you're dissatisfied with the outcome or how things were handled or what you're saying-- you're not looking for an outcome or others are not looking for a different outcome, but yet you're stating that you want to now, what I'm hearing is even changing that there are other performance that you want to evaluate and not just that. So it just keeps changing. And I also am worried about our liability because this can conclude an abuse of your power, so just to be aware of that. OK.

Thank you, Director Van. Thank you. So the motion is to have an exec session. Can I please have a second?

Can we clarify the purpose, please? I think if especially regards to OPMA. This is either going to fall under F or G.

Director Petrini, can you please state your motion and then follow up with the second. If there's a director.

The motion is to have an executive session to evaluate the performance of an employee.

Motion is to have an exec session to evaluate a performance of a public employee. Can I please have a second?

I think I see people coming up to the podium.

I just want to clarify, under the OPMA subsection G is to review the performance, review the performance of a public employee. There is another section around receiving and evaluating complaints or charges brought against an employee. Those are two distinct sections, and the specific section needs to be named in the motion so that the right executive session is noticed, and so that the employee in question has the right rights established for them, because they are different under the two sections of the OPMA.

OK, I make a motion that we have go to executive session to receive and evaluate contract complaints or charges against an employee.

I'll second that. We need to have a discussion in executive session.

That section allows the employee to choose to request that the meeting be held in public.

OK OK.

So we have a motion. We have a second.

Roll call, please.

Director Tidholm.

Nay.

Director. Alvarez.

Nay.

Director Petrini.

Yes.

Director. Hagos.

This sucks. Yes. Yay.

President Van.

Nay.

This motion does not pass with a vote of 2 to 3.

Director Petrini. Does that conclude your director's reports?

Yes, it does.

Thank you, Director Hagos.

I think it was our HAA president, Jeb Binns who has said this year is ending in a bang. And it did, and it is. Originally, my comment around that was going to be and it still is going to be involving tragedy, including school violence. My heart aches for the community out in Wisconsin.

All of this is-- this is a hard night. So sometimes I don't even recognize the toll of grief I personally experience as someone who works directly in a school building until much later, as the long delayed response to the weight of these events. Specifically, right now I'm talking about violence-related events. These tragedies remind me of the critical need to ensure the safety and well-being of our students.

Any act of violence and every act of violence is it's unnecessary everywhere is very difficult to witness and to hear about. And so I know that this past summer, in my capacity as a school board director, I participated in a full day summit on holistic school safety through the class project. It's a project partnership between the University of Washington, King County Office of Executive, King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office and the PSESD.

The outcome of this summit and the involvement included tools for comprehensive self-evaluation, safety, self-evaluation inventory, the benefit prioritization grid that I was able to witness, and implementation guides are providing districts, as well as individual school buildings with actionable steps to enhance safety through a whole school, whole child, and whole community lens.

We have an opportunity to engage further if it matches our needs. I am encouraged that our district has multiple violence prevention and intervention initiatives in place, showing a clear commitment to student safety. I also believe programs like alternatives to violence are additional programs that can address school-wide safety while supporting individual student plans and reentry efforts, and other areas of deeper engagement are possible with that.

Furthermore, I am encouraged by recent legislative changes with emergency discipline regulations should class and school disruption occur. And I look forward to seeing what changes we will be making as a district to support our classroom, teachers, schools and students. While we may not be able to stop all the acts of violence, we must remain diligent in our efforts to prevent and intervene.

Earlier today, I did not know we were going to have a student until later that was going to be speaking on mental health. But one of the things that I recall reading just I can't remember if it was this week or last week at this point, but the city of Seattle recent has a recent initiative to provide free mental health services to youth, and it's ages 13 to 24. And I think it's a commendable step to addressing the mental health challenges faced by youth.

People today remind me of the same approach taken by the city of New York that I read about literally in January, I believe, to close access gaps earlier this calendar year. So by partnering with Talkspace, Seattle's approach is removing barriers and ensuring that teens and young adults have access to confidential, high quality mental health support through a secure digital platform.

And I bring this up today, not only because I commend what they're doing, but also, historically, students from the white center area with Seattle addresses have access to various Seattle resources. And given this precedent that they provide those resources to students in the unincorporated King County area, I started to wonder if teens in the White Center area with Seattle addresses could access this resource, and think it'd be worth looking to see, or taking a look to see if that's an option for our teens. In general, though, folks are looking for precise eligibility criteria, it would be advisable to consult that program. It's Talkspace through Seattle, City of Seattle and their official guidelines.

OK, so I also think further incorporating tools like the Healthy Youth survey can be instrumental in advocating for student centered needs. For multi-city districts, like Highline, analyzing such data can offer insights into specific needs of our student population. And it enables us to be able to better advocate and tailor interventions to support student well-being with some of that community support or community resources for each of our cities. Perhaps they can band together if they have the right data information to say, here's what we'd like to do, and here's how we'll apply for these things for our cities as well. So that was a thought of mine as I was reading that newsletter article.

Girls flag football, I know that Highline High school recently hosted a girls flag football event at the newly upgraded Highline Memorial Stadium. The stadium now features new synthetic turf with permanent lines for girls flag football, thanks to a \$250,000 grant from the Seattle Seahawks and the NFL Foundation's grassroots program.

This initiative has supported the launch of girls flag football teams across three Highline High schools, marking a successful, and I thought-- when I think Vice President Tidholm and I had been there together, and we had witnessed, and I saw some very enthusiastic inaugural season activities. So the Seahawks also provided grants for uniforms and equipment for their expanding athletic opportunities. The event celebrated the sport and highlighted our district's dedication to equity and athletics. So I know that my family and I enjoyed it, and I hope that those who were there also enjoyed it. It's always good to be in community with our people.

Community events, there's the Highline Heritage Museum is hosting a special Hanukkah event, and the Berean community and cultural center recently held its first annual gingerbread contest, which is still on display until December 20th. I know that my family and I and others in my neighborhood participated in the contest, and it was really a joy to see a lot of that creativity that the kids came up with. It's still on display, so if you have time and you want to go check out what the kids did in our neighborhoods, it's there.

I've been sharing all kinds of these types of joyful and cheerful events around our community. And I believe that to me, these celebrations really do remind me of the holidays around the world material. Our younger kids, I don't know if they still have access to it, but they it used to be something that they used to do. It's activities that's often used in classrooms to teach social studies, learning standards on topics like civics and geography and history. I think that these lessons play an important role in helping our students bond over shared traditions, while also respecting and creating connections across their differences, and incorporating these.

I still see these as culturally responsive teaching and learning opportunities that directly reflect the kids and celebrate the tradition of the kids in our schools and directly in our neighborhoods, our neighborhood communities. It's a joy to witness, and it really does help to foster a strong sense of belonging in our school communities.

And then lastly, I'd like to share my appreciation to everyone spreading cheer in our staff lounges. I get to hear about them out in the neighborhood, so and so did this for the staff lounge. Or so and so did this for the neighborhood school in this season. And so it's happening. At least I'm most familiar with it obviously in District V, but I hear about it happening in other places too. People are donating treats. There's organized spirit weeks. Those are always fun to see, and the wellness activities and generous donations of time and resources to brighten a very, very busy week before winter break that's often also combated by coughs and sneezes that I'm hearing now that come with the season.

Even the local Des Moines Public Library spent time just today at Midway Elementary to connect with our students. So I know these efforts make a huge difference and are deeply valued. I think that's about it for me. I didn't think I was going to get through that today, I'll be honest. But that's where I'm at. Thank you.

Thank you. Director Hagos.

Director Tidholm.

Yes, a huge Thank you to Nordstrom and the Highline Schools Foundation for bringing extra warmth and joy this holiday season. Every student in Mount View Elementary received a jacket, winter gloves, and zipper pull charms as part of Nordstrom's Operation Warm. The Highline Schools Foundation delivered to about 700 students across the district as part of this year's annual winter coat drive. And just a huge thank you to these partners for making this season brighter for our students.

The only other thing that I have is the last meeting, there were some things that were said at the end regarding just some comments that I had made, as well as my superintendent alleging that-- I mean, ultimately calling for an apology from me, noting that they had grandchildren darker than my children. First of all, I would ask that my children's names be kept out of anybody's mouth. That's not appropriate, especially hearing the public comment today regarding the comfortability of our students.

And regarding the apology that was asked for. I make no apology for my words. I said what I said, I stand on what I said, and I meant what I said. I also stand by my superintendent and what he said. And the only apology that I will make is to our students, who had to be subjected to the things that they heard in this space, that we are here for them. This space is for them, for them to not feel safe or to feel comfortable in this space. That's the apology that I make and that's all that I have.

Thank you. Director Tidholm.

And my director's reports. I just want to thank the board, Superintendent and cabinet for the time to being with us this Saturday at our retreat. I truly appreciate the openness and collaboration that we did share. It is clear that we are making progress as a board, and I'm excited about the direction we're moving in together this year.

Earlier this week, I had the pleasure of attending the South Sound Chamber of Commerce holiday meeting, where I was inspired by the tremendous support shown by both of by our students and the business community. It was heartwarming to see such strong partnerships that benefit our students and the broader community.

Director Petrini, thank you for sharing your thoughts. I just want to take a moment to clarify a few important points here. We do have one employee in question, and that is Dr Duran. It is clearly outlined in his contract that he is responsible for the management, including the hiring and termination of employees within the district. Additionally, we have a strong HR business partner who conducts thorough and do their due diligence to ensure that both our employees and the district are protected.

I do trust their judgment and perspective on these matters. When we as a board begin to get involved in the decision making process in regards to employees, it opens potentially a troubling situation where employees may perceive that the board now has a role in such decisions. This can create a lot of confusion and can undermine the proper chain of authority. So I share your frustration. I look at the opportunity for us to look at it differently and look at the process. And what do we need to do to make it better? And that concludes my director's reports.

Oh, one other thing. I apologize, Director Hagos. I wanted to bring up the robotics situation, or not situation, but the discussion. Had a great meeting with Trevor Gardner this past week on Sunday. And then we met with our lawyers. We had WSU Director Petrini was with us. We are working closely to finalize a lease with agreement with WSU to ensure a regional robotics program can have a space for their work here. I know that the reveal is happening in about two weeks. So I know our lawyers and their lawyers and the program director there are working in collaboration for that. So now that concludes the director's reports.

Moving on to our consent agenda. Can I please have a motion to approve the consent agenda minus 6.5,

I'll make a motion to approve our consent agenda, omitting 6.5.

I will second that.

All in favor.

Aye,

Aye.

Any opposed.

Aye.

I was going to say I abstain, so I don't know if that's an option in this situation, but I abstain.

The motion to approve the consent agenda passes with a vote of 3 to 1. x

3, 1 and 1. So we're going to now talk to item 6.5 that was removed from the consent agenda. This was to approve the McKinney-Vento transportation costs with Seattle Public Schools. Director Hagos, you had some questions in regards to that.

Yeah, I have one question. So we did have a question come up, and it was addressed in a variety of different ways, and I didn't know about some of the things that you had mentioned, Vice President Tidholm, but I did have a question to address the specific concern about whether these funds are used for undocumented immigrants. And I wanted to clarify whether these funds, I wanted to clarify that McKinney-Vento is a federal program, and there are some federal qualifications that need to be met for this program to be accessed.

And so for me, I think that the point is that it's supposed to ensure educational stability and support for all students experiencing homelessness as defined under that federal law. So to me, my understanding is it applies to any student meeting the federal criteria, and it does not matter if their immigration status is not taken into any kind of account, ensuring that every child has equal access to educational opportunities. So that's my clarifying question. Is that how the way that I understand it to be in terms of immigration status is not an area that is taken into consideration when determining if a kid needs some support?

That is correct. And it would be a mistake to conflate the immigration status with access to McKinney-Vento services. Thank you. I just wanted to make sure that I understood that correctly in terms of the way that we are applying it, and in hopes to also answer the question that was asked at the podium. I do have a couple of comments. We talk a lot about lived experience in our communities, and those that word comes up often. As someone who was once homeless, walking with my mother and my sisters through the snow to get to school here, right here, in King County, I understand the fear and the hesitations families may feel about engaging with programs like McKinney-Vento.

My mother, who's a documented immigrant and again, it does not matter for this situation, but she is also illiterate and could not read the documents that were provided to her. When she finally learned that we would not have to walk through the snow. And again, when I say walk through the snow, I'm talking about walking from an emergency shelter to get to school. She did not sign the papers. She was afraid. She didn't understand what was being offered. She didn't understand the transportation options. She didn't know if this was going to harm us or hurt us in any capacity. She refused.

So we ended up doing that through snow, through the winter, and then through the spring, and through the rain. That happens in the spring, all the way into June, from January to June. Finally, we were able to find someone else to transport us, but we never took up the opportunities for the McKinney-Vento services that were available because of the fear that she had. So I want to just say really quickly on this point, it is critical that we create an environment where no family fears accessing resources that are their right and that can help their children succeed. That is really, really important that we have no space for that.

That being said, I also wanted to mention another thing. I did not hear in that comment, I did not hear any direct quote until Vice President Tidholm mentioned what had happened after, but nothing in that comment that said there was ill intent towards our students. I heard a question. I heard some language I didn't necessarily like, but I did not hear any ill intent towards our schools.

And I know that there was some conversation around policy 5,000 That came up a few times. And I would like to unpack that policy. From my understanding now, there is a fear or a suggested consequence for community members and staff speaking before the board, depending on their language. And these actions can run counter to our values of humanizing everyone's experience. We've got to separate the questions that are being asked and the issues being raised from the individuals raising them.

We talk about going hard on ideas, you guys, and not on people. It is one of our norms. And we had the time to reflect and come together and determine how we would be able to address the situation, I think that we could have addressed it differently. We do need to move away from terms like illegal immigrants. It is a dehumanizing term. It is a trigger term. Undocumented immigrants is a more accurate and respectful term.

And then to bridge these gaps, these gaps, I remember-- at the National School Counselor. No, sorry, wrong person, wrong hat, the National School Board Association, there was a conference session. And in that workshop session it talked about implementing something called District University. I'm not saying we have to do this. I'm just giving this as an example.

That district university is where-- it was workshops that were popped up and community members were able to engage in our values. And there were some co-created book clubs. And the initiatives of that district university, it brought the communities together to explore and truly define our shared values and help model school communities, including ourselves as board directors, engaging in constructive dialogue, empathy, and pragmatic problem solving in the spaces that we live in. We live here, you guys. This is not what I want to see for myself, nor for my children, nor for my family, nor for any kid in our 17,000 plus population. I hear it's growing by 38 people.

Thank you. Any other comments or questions in regards to 6.5? Here and seeing none.

President, can I make a comment?

Go ahead, Director Alvarez.

I just want to say that although it is for interpretation about no ill harm, and we're talking about the McKinney-Vento transportation, because anybody, freedom of speech can come and say whatever they want. But when it comes to really and maybe using better terms, even then, because here we are not-- if we're going to pick and choose who we let on our own buses just based on their color of their skin, or how they look, I think that causes more harm.

And for us to be questioned about how we're using the money, I totally understand that piece. But when it comes to providing transportation to our students, it is not OK for us to be stereotyping. And so I just wanted to make sure that I don't care what for me, wording is important, but the fact that you've been thinking about which kids should be on the bus, and what do McKinney-Vento kids look like, that is not OK. That's just my comment. Thank you, President Van.

And I wanted to note that the comment was alleging that we are illegally using funds for undocumented immigrants and referred to them as illegals. And I stand by what I said. The concern that our children are being stereotyped and are not in a safe environment. We are entitled to our First Amendment rights, but we also have standards for our meetings and expectations for our meetings and expectations and policies for our staff.

And the safety of our children is paramount. And the comments that I heard did not make me feel like our students are safe in the care of this individual. And I'll reiterate what I said in my director's report. I said, what I said, I meant what I said, I stand on what I said, and I make no apologies for what I said.

Thank you directors. Now I want to have a motion to approve this. McKinney-Vento transportation. Can I please have a motion?

I'll make a motion to approve, 8.3, I'm sorry.

6.5

6.5 the McKinney-Vento transportation costs with Seattle Public Schools for \$304 million.

[INAUDIBLE]

I'm sorry.

I'll second that.

It's \$304,000.

Yeah, I was going to correct myself on that. Give me just one second, please, \$304,219.09 I would like a second now, [INAUDIBLE] thank you.

I don't think she heard you. I'll second that.

Thank you.

Roll call.

Second that.

There she goes.

Roll call please.

Director Tidholm.

Yay.

Director. Petrini.

Yay.

Director Alvarez.

Yay.

Director Hagos.

Yay.

President Van.

Yay. This motion passes 5 to none.

Thank you. Now, moving on to our action items is 8.3. This is motion to approve the technology access foundation leader transformation grant. Any questions or comments? No, Director Petrini, you had asked about this one, so I'm going to start off with you.

Just my only question was if these funds will be tied to any student academic outcomes in any way?

We have Executive Director Sarah Baker coming to the podium. Welcome.

Thank you. It's a yes and a no. So it's a seven-year grant. So the funds going to the bigger grantor, yes, over time would like to identify academic outcomes. The money that's coming to us is to establish a teaching academy. So at the point that you're building a program and establishing, it's hard to tie an academic outcome to a program that doesn't exist yet.

I would like to say that Yes, over the life of the grant, we will want to identify what those would be and what success of the teaching Academy will be measured by.

And I just that some of the terms seemed pretty vague. So it's-- if that's In the future, the question is how-- in what way would that affect students and their academic outcomes?

Well, I think right now what-- like I said last time, there is a theoretical element to this that students are saying that they want access to other career options. We have a lot of support through the policies that I've named that outline the type of academic experience that we need to give to students. There's a lot of research going into Teaching Academy as places where students can really engage in the work of critical thinking and the other skill-level elements to further engage their core instruction.

So Teaching Academy as a potential elective under the CTE umbrella will have to have a framework that names very specific curriculum, that name specific academic achievement goals, measures, and how we would get there and plan that out. But at this point in the grant, we haven't even been able to accept the money. So we can't outline what that will be. And we'd really like this grant to be utilized in a way that centers the students and the staff in the design process. So we're trying to not be prescriptive of what they need to design outside of the policy.

OK. Thank you.

Yeah, you're welcome.

Any other further questions or comments? Hearing, seeing none. Thank you. Sarah. Can I please have a motion?

I think we're all a little tired of conversations at this point, but I move that the Highline School Board approve the acceptance of the Technology Access Foundation Leader Transformation grant in the amount of \$435,000.

I'll second.

Roll call please.

Director Hagos.

Yay.

Director. Alvarez.

Yay.

Director Petrini.

Yay.

Director Tidholm.

Yay.

President Van.

Yay.

This motion passes 5 to none.

Thank you.

We have no intro and action items tonight. We're going to move to our introduction items. This is 10.1, motion to approve security video placement, phase one project closeout of purchase order CP 220013. Any questions or comments on this one?

OK. Hearing, seeing none. 10.2, motion to approve revision to board policy 2020. And I believe there's a presentation on this evening.

And it will be coupled with 10.3 also, Director Van, motion to approve instructional materials, committee members.

Thank you. 10.2, 10.3, both presentations.

Good evening. So I'm Bernard Kuntz, Executive Director and student learning. And I've also been had the pleasure of leading work with the instructional materials committee for the last six years. I did the math on that earlier today, and it's been more than once up here telling you about our materials adoptions that we've been through over the last several years.

So I wanted to walk you through the bar a little bit to explain how this revision came about and why we believe it's necessary at this point. So there's been some recent legislation that's outlined in the bar and in reviewing that legislation and really going through all the WACS and RCS. There was several places where we realized that our current language that's in our policy and procedure doesn't match what's there.

So a lot of it is doing that alignment to make sure that the policy is reflecting that as well as what our current practice has been in a few process improvements that we've learned along the way, in some ways, that we've shifted our practice to make sure that we have an inclusive practice that's really getting our students, at the end of the day, the best materials, and also listening to voices to make sure we're getting there.

So a couple of key highlights and changes in the policy to highlight is a shift to have parents participate directly in the IMC. And so that's a major shift in the policy that's new. And what's laid out there in the related bar regarding membership of the AMC, we want to have a really thoughtful process that engages community members in a similar way that we have with some of the other district wide committees, and that's why we're not jumping to do that part right away. But we're absolutely committed to make that happen-- over the course of the next few months, and that we anticipate coming back with some additional members to support this work, certainly by the spring, if not later in the winter.

So the other piece is approval of IMC appointees and making that more formal. So IMC members have not been a secret who is on that. You've seen us up here with the various adoptions. You've seen that that's been presented on the web, on the website. But we want to make that-- we want to make those appointments more formalized. And so that's why that piece is added in, also again, matches what's in current RCL and [INAUDIBLE] and wanting to really have that be fully transparent.

There's also some definitions that were kind of laid out in the procedure, that are now in the policy regarding the materials complaints process. And again, that's in alignment with RCW and WAC. That one doesn't necessarily reflect any significant change in practice. In fact, what's laid out there really is what the current practice has been that supported that work.

And then the last piece that's laid out in the bar is just kind of an update of what IMC has been up to and what's been going on with the materials adoption. Last spring, you recall that we had a health adoption where we were able to make a recommendation and move forward with an elementary curriculum. But the secondary one, we weren't able to complete the process, and that's the one that we want to move forward with.

So this will set us up in a good place to move forward with that and to be able to proceed with that. So we make sure that those materials are there for our students to work with. And one thing just to note about that is a piece that the IMC has taken very seriously and will continue to take very seriously, is ensuring that student and parent voice is loud in the process.

And one of the things that IMC comes together to talk about on a regular basis is asking the adoption committee, how is information gone out? Let's talk to comms. Let's make sure that that's happening in a very effective way. And staff will work together to troubleshoot how to get information out in different languages, in different venues.

And what's on the docket right now and what's sketched out is moving forward with secondary health, is doing a pretty robust pilot process that will engage a lot of middle schools as well as high school, where those materials will be used, and making sure that we're hearing feedback from those families that are engaged with that, as well as more open forums where people can come and check out the materials and provide feedback on that.

And then part of what IMC does is, as that adoption process moves forward to a recommendation, is making sure that those voices are recognized and heard in that final recommendation. So that's a bit of an overview of some of the changes that are there. You'll notice that if you look through the old version and the new version that's being recommended, you'll notice that there's a lot of languages have been simplified. And the goal there really is to have a clearer and more concise policy, as well as a procedure to match that.

Regarding the approval of instructional materials members, which is the other item that's in front of you tonight, regarding this, it really reflects-- what you see in front of you right now, really reflects what the current practice has been. We have a partnership with the Association to be able to identify teachers that help to represent a full range of programs. And then likewise, other staff that are on that committee help to represent a full range of not only instructional areas like special education in elementary and secondary, but also some of the operational areas that we need to think about in terms of purchasing materials and making sure that the materials will fully be available online.

So that's a little bit about where about where we are with both of these, and what we have prepared for you tonight. So happy to take any questions.

Directors.

Director Petrini.

I do. I have a couple here. Thank you for answering a lot of those questions. Some of the things that I found discouraging was how we took out having community representatives be part of this committee. You have it says no more than half of enrolled parents, of students. But nowhere do we say community representatives anymore.

In all our committees, we have asked our community to be part of those committees to get feedback, how things are working for them, what their feedback is. In fact, we had our survey tonight to hear how our community sees Highline. And yet in our instructional committees of curriculum, we don't want them to have any feedback. We don't want to hear what they have to say about the formation of the students in our population that they help support. I find that a little discouraging or not discouraging, disturbing, that we would even not include them and just keep it to parents.

But not just parents, but only enrolled parents. So what you're saying is now parents of students at charters, homeschool or private school don't get to have a say, meaning that, I myself, would not have been allowed to be on a committee last year when I was but I was investigating back into the district, do I want to put my child back in Highline. And this was my way of finding out for myself are the curriculum being taught to what I hear, because I'd rather know for myself.

And that's why I have my son partly still in Highline and not fully. But we need to listen to those voices, because that is why people leave, when they don't have the right information and they're not part of those processes, then they're left to hearing things in their own echo chambers. They're left to hearing whatever people are saying. So I feel that to cut out community representatives, community input is disastrous, especially since we seem to want to congratulate ourselves when they say yeah, you're doing so great, but they don't really actually know what's going on because they're not part of the process of actually reviewing the curriculum that we're teaching.

So that's my comment on that one that I feel like needs to be back included back, not to mention within our own standards for school districts, for district board members, we have standards that ask us, are we including a range, a diverse range of interests and perspectives of our community service organizations, local governing bodies?

Do we carefully consider the input from all segments of our staffing community in our decision making/ So being that we're putting our name on this curriculum, and we're asking a selected group to provide us feedback and their recommendation, but that recommendation is not including all of our stakeholders. And so we need to still have them included, whether we like what they say or we don't like what they say, they still have a voice. They still have a right to say, here's our input, here's our recommendation. That's my first point.

The second one I find most egregious, which I think is the most actually disgusting part of this whole thing is when it comes to addressing material complaints, it is essentially puts our statutory rights as a board who has to put our name on this, then not to have any say if there is a complaint or if there's a hearing at some point that the IMC would then become the voting board, essentially on what is decided around a complaint that comes to them. And we would be completely bypassed.

There's no language in here stating that we would even be notified that the curriculum that we're asked to adopt and to approve, then we never get to hear the feedback of how that's actually working for our families. That's kept far away from us. So being that within our RCW28A 150.230 states in the school district responsibilities, this is one of our main things. It says here evaluate teaching materials, including textbooks, teaching aids, handouts, or other printed materials in public hearing upon complaint by parents, guardians or custodians of students who consider dissemination of such materials to students objectionable.

Whatever that objectionable thing is, we have a right. And it is our duty to be able to review those. So to then to not even have us listed in here that the superintendent will create his IMC. He will hand select what enrolled parents are part of that, being that we don't even know who what pool he's pulling that from. And then the board is completely bypassed in the fact that we would even know or be able to hear.

And as it says in here, sorry, you're getting a mouthful from me tonight. If things are not resolved at the school level, then it would be the IMC to provide a written decision on the matter, not the board. It's not even in here. And that if that decision-- if it's not accepted, decision will be made by majority vote of the IMC and appealing decisions to the IMC. So why are we being bypassed? But we have to put our names on it legally. If something goes wrong, we're the ones liable for it. Why would we not have a say? Long question. All right.

So I'm going to address the first point. And then I'm going to ask my colleague to address the second point. So with the first point, I've worked with IMC through multiple adoption committees. And what we have found is that the practice of having community members coming on to the adoption committees has not had a lot of the intended results that we want to have of really hearing student voice and hearing community voice in the selection process.

The process is fairly lengthy and involves a lot of work that educational professionals dive into to really understand the full depth of materials, matching with student need and matching with standards. And for several of the adoption committees, one of the things I've had to come up and tell you in the process is that our adoption committee lost the committee members because of the length of the process.

And then where the effort has gone into is trying to figure out how to get families more engaged with providing feedback during the pilot phase, during the initial phase, where we're gathering input. And that's where we're putting our emphasis is we want our emphasis to be on the adoption teams, hearing from community throughout the process. The shift, one of the other big shifts, though, that I really want to highlight is right now, our IMC doesn't include family members. That's not part of our current IMC.

With this revision, that becomes part of what we do. And I think the IMCs awareness and urgency and expectation about hearing that direct community input will be heightened because of that throughout that process. So in practice, I think that having the parents on-- having the parent voice directly as part of the IMC that has to review and approve before it comes to you to look at and make a decision about is actually going to further strengthen parent voice throughout the process. That's my opinion based on an understanding based on six years of having worked these adoptions that I think family voice will actually become stronger because of that parent voice being on the IMC.

But if those parents are appointed and not self-selected because they want, they have an interest in it. I know at the end of the process that I went through over several months, I came to learn on the last day, I don't know why it never occurred to me, everyone in that room, because I was the only parent in that room. They all got paid for their time, but I didn't. Not that I need that, but maybe that would have been a changing factor for a parent to hey, my input and maybe I'll be compensated in some way, so I can get childcare. So I can be part of that process.

There are so many opportunities that we missed out on hearing from more parents and to be able to get a wide perspective, but that didn't happen because you're right, the process is long. It is several hours over several months, but we could do more to include more parents to make that more inclusive.

And we do believe that we're going to be-- part of how we think we're going to get a lot more participation from families and students is through much more active engagement with kids that are engaged with the pilot and hearing from those families throughout the process.

I think that would be a good move as well.

All right. I'll let Holly address the second concern.

Absolutely Thank you. So, Director Petrini, you were right to cite 28A 150.230 But I think it's important to recognize that the clause that you read follows the language about. It's the responsibility of each common school district board of directors to adopt policies ceasefire to evaluate teaching materials, et cetera upon complaint by parents. So the RCW is not actually saying that the school board is going to be the one hearing or deciding a complaint. It's rather that you need to be adopting a policy.

And so this policy that we're bringing forward today not only puts the complaint process into the policy itself, which is great and was exactly as the law was designed, but also reflects House Bill 2331 from the 2024 session, which made fairly substantial changes to how materials adoptions work. And one of the substantial changes that it made is for both core and supplemental materials.

The legislation iterated the specific process that appeals, that, excuse me, that complaints need to go through if a parent has a complaint about a particular material. And so if you look at, technically page 5 of this bill-- this is Section 3, is a new section that says to resolve complaints, et cetera, et cetera, process for appealing decisions of the instructional materials committee. Excuse me. I shouldn't be to the superintendent or designee.

The legislation does not include the school board in an appeal at any level of a supplemental or core instructional material. So that is why the board is not included in the appeal. At this point, I did double check, was model policy, and they also reflect the language of the legislation because again, that's what we adhere to. And then just to go back to an earlier question that you had about parents of enrolled students, that's actually language specifically in this bill as well, that the IMC would include a parent of an enrolled student. And that is the definition of a parent, parent or legal guardian of a student who is enrolled in the school or school district. So that's why those specific language was used.

So under the OSPI, talking about-- I was just having to look up, would a homeschool parent be considered an enrolled student? And the answer was that the language in our policy acts as if it would exclude those parents. But by definition, OSPI says that families of homeschoolers who are using any kind of service, they could be in sports, they could be whatever, are considered by definition a part-time student, which would be constituted as an enrolled student, whether they're actually registered or not. I don't know, but I'm afraid that our policy might make someone feel like they're not included.

So I think you're talking about the pink book, and I pulled that up again today. It's actually a document that I referenced frequently. And question one on page 13 specifically says that districts, public school districts shall permit the enrollment of and provide ancillary services for part-time students who would otherwise be eligible for full-time enrollment in the school district. And if folks don't know, the pink book is OSPI's manual for home based instruction. I have no idea why it's called the pink book.

So yes, absolutely, a home school student who is part-time enrolled in Highline school district for the purposes of courses or ancillary services would absolutely be considered a parent under this legislation and under our policy, and would be entitled to participate. So is there a way for us to make that language more inclusive so that someone wouldn't misinterpret that, oh, my student isn't enrolled, but they don't understand what that means.

A student would be and have to be enrolled in order to participate in sports or ancillary activities or courses, so they would be enrolled and therefore they would be entitled to participate.

OK. I'll probably have some follow up questions, but I'll send that via email.

Great happy to have those.

Any other questions or comments in regards to 10.2 or 10.3?

[INAUDIBLE] bed today, could I have a comment.

Yes, Director Alvarez.

I'm just-- as I'm hearing, I feel really sad to see that we want to have so much control over superintendent. We hired him for a reason. We hired him to really lead this district in a way, we saw all his potential. We saw everything he could do, had done and will do, and now we want to micromanage him as to who to pick for a committee. This is getting so much in the weeds, it feels like some people want to be superintendents. Maybe they should go and be superintendents.

But if we're not giving our superintendent the ability to do his job, and we want to micromanage him to even who he's going to select, we have a problem here, because then he's not able to do his job. And then we want to hold him accountable. I just want to state that. Thank you, President Van.

Thank you.

I think my main concern here is the removal of board authority that we do have, and that's a state statute of oversight, of holding our district accountable. And we are the bridge between our constituents and the district. So if we are not able to speak to what our constituents are sharing with us, and we're not able to be objective and to be able to see things from both sides, then I don't believe in blind allegiance. I don't believe in blind trust. I think trust is something that is built and should not be assumed for anyone. I think as new directors, come on, that is something that has to be shown and that has to be built.

Just for the record, can you clarify again, what the law says that was passed recently?

So this is our--

Holly, can I just stop you real quick. I need to call Angelica back, we dropped.

Sure. One second.

[RINGING]

Director Alvarez, are you there?

Yes, I'm back. I'm sorry. Thank you.

Thank you.

We have Holly at the podium.

Holly, would you state why you're at the podium.

Thank you. I was asked to approach the podium to respond to the question about the board's responsibilities vis a vis materials complaints. So again, RCW 28A 150.230 states, "In conformance with the provisions of this title, as now or hereafter amended, it shall be the responsibility of each common school district board of Directors to adopt policies to evaluate teaching materials, including textbooks, teaching aids, handouts, or other printed material upon complaint by parents, guardians or custodians who consider dissemination of such materials to students objectionable."

So the legal obligation for the school board is to adopt a policy that addresses how a parent, guardian, or that's old language, parent or guardian would be able to appeal, file a complaint and have that heard. And the language that's in the policy that's been proposed is directly in line with substitute House Bill 2331 from the 2024 session that specifically iterates the steps that need to be followed in a complaint.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you very much. We'll move to 10.4, this motion.

I have a--

Go ahead.

I have a question. Well, a comment too, just I do realize that this policy revision has the-- it's come about by legislative changes. I forget the House Bill number because I'm all out of space to memorize things at the moment, but I do appreciate that it is meant to remove bias in instructional materials and ensure that our policies reflect the diversity, identities and experiences of our students.

So this alignment really will support protected classes in equity legislation that's already been passed. So that's an important step forward. So I do want to acknowledge that piece. And then with that, it's still-- as I was also looking or listening to the conversation, I was looking up some things. And I realized, I think perhaps you may have meant to speak to our RCW 28A.320.230. "It is the board's statutory authority to approve and adopt curriculum," that it's clear we must be a part of the oversight role, ensuring that we remain final decision makers for instructional material adoption.

So that was there. And unless there's some clarification on my understanding, this is not my area of expertise, so I do appreciate understanding these pieces. And again, it's to make it so that we make informed decisions as we are approving policies, we know what we're doing. We've got to know what we're doing before we approve a policy.

And so for me, the question goes, I have a couple of questions now that I've heard some conversations, I was jotting some things along. I'm curious, how does this policy ensure that the board retains ultimate authority over the adoption of all instructional materials, as mandated by RCW 28A..320.230.

So that part-- and to me, as we talk about some of the pieces that I've heard today, the role of the board is addressing and addressing unresolved community concerns, even in situations like this limiting appeal decisions to the superintendent risks alienating our stakeholders who rely on the board for accountability. And we're accountable to all of our stakeholders within our communities here. So that's one piece.

And so I'm curious, it doesn't have to be answered tonight because this is really coming as I'm listening to the discussion. I have other thoughts as well, but that's the first question I have. And I don't know if you're able to answer it, great, and if not, that's OK. I can wait for another day. Anyways, that's my first question.

So just so I'm understanding the question, the question is, how does this policy revision ensure that the board continues to have oversight of the adoption?

So we don't lose our statutory authority. We're not stripped of our authority here.

Yeah so the process for-- the process for the IMC to work with an adoption committee to bring forward any materials for core adoption remains in place, nothing changes with that process. The language is cleaned up. So it's shorter. But anything that would be adopted as a core curriculum still has an adoption committee, IMC reviews that, supports that. IMC comes and tells you, we're making this recommendation. And you retain authority as the board for any adoption of those materials. There's nothing in this that changes any of that. So if you're seeing that someplace, we should clarify that language if there's any place where that's unclear.

And the language that I read from the bill, which is House Bill 2331, is found in subsection D of 28A. 320.230 because 2331 amended this law when it amended the complaint process. So it's all congruent together. The specific question I was answering, obviously, was one that you had raised, but that bill amended this law to talk about the complaint process, not the adoption process, and that's the difference.

So why would we, within this language, not at least include at the very end, if there's a decision is not agreed upon or some outcome of whoever is the complainant, why would it not say they have the right to appeal to the board, being that we'd be the one that adopted it, we should be hearing about it? Whereas, I mean, what would be the purpose of us not? I mean, we have open hearing right here, so people can tell us what they think about the things that we're doing and the things that we're adopting.

But this process tells them they have to write it, put it in writing, and therefore we would never even see that feedback. We would never know what's happening with a decision that we made. That's important for us to know as we go, to say, hey, maybe we should have looked closer at this curriculum that was passed. It's having a negative outcome or unintended consequence. We would never even hear about that. How would we ever be able to remedy that?

I cannot speak to why the legislature did not include the school board in the complaint process. What I can tell you is that this was new language in 2024. That was added to the section. You can see it in subsection D, and it does not include the board.

Can you email that to me, your resource?

Yeah, happy to. I'm happy to-- I can [INAUDIBLE] the statute.

Thank you. Any other questions or comments?

OK, we're going to move to 10.4. This is motion to approve the acceptance of the University of Washington Gear Up Boundless Grant. Any questions or comments on this?

Hearing seeing. 10.5. This is motion to approve the acceptance of the Gates Foundation PSESD Horizon Grant. Questions or comments?

OK. Thank you. Well, that concludes our intro items. Any items that you'd like to be added to the consent agenda? Hear and see none. So I just--

So I wanted to move 10.5, motion to approve the acceptance of the Gates Foundation, the Gates Foundation PSESD Horizon Grant. I think it's phenomenal. If you have a chance to read it and you have questions, I'll pause. But I think I would love to move this to the consent agenda.

Thank you. So that motion is to move 10.5 to the consent agenda. Can I please have a second?

I'll second.

Roll call, please.

Sorry, this is a voice vote.

OK.

All in favor.

Aye.

Any opposed?

I did get my eye on the first one, I apologize.

Director Alvarez, are you in favor?

I am in favor, but I'm abstaining. I work for the ESD.

Oh, got it, thank you.

Thank you. So we'll move 10.5 to the consent agenda. OK. And that concludes our meeting. So I just want to thank everybody for being here tonight as we wrap up the year. Just want to take a moment to thank you for the continued support. We won't see you again until January 8. So we wish you all a wonderful and safe holiday season. And we look forward to seeing you in a new year. So can I please have a motion.

I'll make a motion to adjourn.

I'll second that.

All in favor.

Aye.

Aye.

Thank you all.