

Highline Public Schools | Regular School Board Meeting - June 4, 2025

Good evening, everybody. Welcome to our regular school board meeting. Today is Wednesday, June 4, at 6:00 PM. Can we please stand up for the Pledge of Allegiance?

Pledge allegiance to the flag to the United States and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, liberty
[AUDIO OUT]

Thank you all. Roll call, please?

Director Alvarez?

Here.

Director Espinoza?

Here.

Director Tidholm?

Present.

Director Holien?

Present. Present.

President Van?

Here.

Thank you, everybody. Calls or changes to tonight's board meeting agenda?

I have a couple. I would motion to move 8.4, 8.5, 8.6 and 8.7 to consent agenda, if that is how I correctly state that.

Correct. Board directors, are there any questions or comments in regards to 8.4, 8.5, 8.6 and 8.7? being moved to consent agenda?

I will second that.

I have a second. All in favor?

Aye.

Aye?

Yes.

Aye.

Any opposed?

We're going to do a roll call vote for that.

OK. A roll call, please?

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

Director Espinoza?

Yes.

Director Holien?

Yes.

Director Alvarez?

Yea.

President Van?

Yea.

This motion passes five to none.

Thank you. So we're going to move 8.4, 8.5, 8.6 and 8.7 to the consent agenda. Thank you, directors. I also move that the school board adds staff recognition tonight as Section 2.1, and also move Clint Sallee's labor partner update from 4.1 to 2.2. Mr. Sallee needs to get back to Highline High School for an event, so would love for him to get back to his building. Do I have a second?

I'll second.

Roll call, please?

Director Holien?

Yea.

Director Alvarez?

Yea.

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

Director Espinoza?

Yes.

President Van?

Yea.

This motion passes five to none.

Thank you very much.

With that said, thank you very much, everybody. We're going to move on to our recognitions here. Dr. Duran, with your permission, I'd like to take a moment to recognize a couple of members of our Highline team who are going to be stepping into new leadership roles or continue their journey of growth beyond our district. Each of them has poured their heart into our students, staff and community, and always leading with vision and deep commitment to our shared promise. So do I have your permission?

Yes, you do.

Thank you. Some people are going to be called up to the principal's office here, so be ready. At this time, may I please invite Dr. Chris Larsen, Dr. Jana Parker, Dr. Jacqueline Downey and Daniel Calderon to join us at the podium, please?

Uh-oh.

I'm going to go ahead and get us started. So I'd like for Jacqueline Downey to please step up to the mic for a second.

Good?

[LAUGHTER]

It's been a few years since we've known each other. And I think, to be honest, the first time I met you, it wasn't on the best conditions. I remember my daughter being in your high school, and you were the assistant principal. And my daughter had been in a fight. And I remember things were being handled. And I remember being called, and I was working in Seattle and had to drive all the way down to come and meet you. And that was one of my very first interactions.

It was brief, but let me tell you, after that, I remember thinking, Was she a student or was she the assistant principal? Like, what had just happened here? But I have a few words I wanted to read. So you've been a powerful force in Highline for over a decade now. Though, if you knew her, you would know she does her work quietly, steadily and with deep integrity.

She started with us in 2013 as an assistant principal at Highline High School, then went on to lead AAA and Evergreen High. No matter the school, Jacqueline showed up with the same commitment to build trust, to center student voice and to push equity with courage and care. And I remember-- talking about equity, we also sat on Panasonic during that time, on that team around equity and building around looking at student voice and looking at data around suspensions.

And those were some hard conversations we were having, and you didn't shy away from those. And most recently, as our secondary instructional leader executive director, you've supported principals with thoughtfulness and honesty, helped them grow not only as leaders, but as people. You make space for hard conversations, always with an eye on what was best for our students.

You've headed-- now, you're headed to Issaquah, where you'll serve as the assistant superintendent. And while we're sad to see you go, we know you're bringing your passion, your wisdom and your fierce love for kids to the next chapter. So, Jacqueline, thank you for always choosing to do the hard work and for doing it with humility, grace and relentless focus on students in our community. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

So do we hold off? OK.

OK. So I'm going to be speaking about Dr. Jana Parker. Please come up. So Dr. Jana Parker, although you've only been with us since 2022, your impact has been deep and meaningful.

As the executive director of student learning, you came in with a clear vision and a collaborative spirit. You connected with educators quickly, not just because of your expertise, but because of how you showed up every day, authentic, approachable and all in. You helped build stronger systems, better supports for teachers and made sure our instructional work always pointed back to equity.

You have a gift for seeing both the big picture and the small details and for making people feel seen, valued and capable. I'm excited to hear that you're heading to Missouri to become the superintendent of the Webster Grove School District. And we couldn't be prouder of you and your achievements.

We know that you're ready for this, and they are so fortunate to have you. Jana, I want to thank you for stepping in to Highline and making it better, not just through your work, but through your kindness, thoughtfulness, and care. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Mr. Danny, soon to be, potentially, Dr. Calderon. Is that the correct pronunciation?

That's correct.

Awesome. Danny joined Highline in 2017 as principal of Cascade Middle School. From the start, it was clear that he brought something special, a steady hand, a thoughtful heart and an unwavering belief in our students. He led with humility and deep purpose, always looking for ways to bring people together and center what mattered most, the well-being of all of the students.

When he became one of our elementary instructional leadership executive directors-- that's a mouthful-- in 2022, Danny continued to lead with that same grace, helping uplift those around him, helping principals grow, guiding teams through transitions, helping principals grow in their leadership, supporting teams through multiple transitions, and always keeping equity front and center. He didn't just lead. You uplifted. Danny will be leaving Highline to pursue a doctorate in education at Harvard. Wow.

[APPLAUSE]

I'm not done. Sorry.

And while we are going to miss him deeply, we are incredibly proud of him. We know this next step is not just about his future, but it's about the future of every other student that you touch and every school that you impact. Danny, thanks a lot for all that you've done for Highline, and look forward to seeing everything that you can do down the line.

[APPLAUSE]

And last but certainly not least, Dr. Chris Larsen. First, just want to say, I'm from Yakima. So as sad as I am to see you go, I am very happy that you will now be there where my nieces and nephews are currently at school. I was just there yesterday for a talent show for my nephew, so hope I'll still be seeing you around. Good for them, sad for us. But congratulations.

So Chris, if anyone embodies what it means to give a lifetime to education and to truly live the promise, it is you. Chris started in Highline back in 1990. And never mind, I'm not going to age myself. But as a substitute teacher and over the next 35 years, did it all, teacher, education assistant, principal at two of our schools, and finally, our executive director of human resources.

But more than her titles, it's her presence that we will remember and miss. Chris is someone who leads with integrity, who listens with her whole heart and who lifts people up, quietly, consistently and without needing the spotlight. She has shaped school cultures, supported countless educators, and built systems that made Highline stronger and more human. She's been a steady hand through changes, challenges and big decisions, always rooted in what's best for our people and our babies.

Chris is headed to Yakima to serve as deputy superintendent. And while they're lucky to have her, we know that your heart will always carry a piece of Highline. Thank you for showing us what commitment looks like. And thank you for being a guide, a builder and a true servant leader.

[APPLAUSE]

Well--

Don't leave.

Don't leave.

[LAUGHTER]

Dr. Downey, Dr. Parker, Dr. Larsen, and Mr. Calderon, you each have left a huge mark in Highline that will last beyond your time here. Through your leadership, your commitment and your belief in what's possible, you've helped shape, not just systems, but lives.

You've led through change. You've pushed through challenges, and you've always done it with an unwavering belief that every child deserves to be known, seen and supported by name, strength and need. As you step into these next chapters, we all know that you'll carry the belief with you because this work doesn't stop at the edge of our school district. It lives in your voice, your decisions and the love of our students.

Tonight, we'd like to present each of you with Living the Promise pin. Please wear it proudly. Let it be a reminder that even your path is leading elsewhere, you'll always be part of the Highline family. And wherever you go, you'll always carry the torch. You are living the promise.

And we're so grateful that you've-- all that you've done and not all that you're going to continue on doing so. So once they get their pins, with the board and the superintendent, we would also like to invite Dr. Grubb and Dr. Reinig to come up here, take pictures with your team. So can we give them a round of applause?

[APPLAUSE]

You guys move this way a little bit? Yeah. I think you're good.

Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you, everybody, for that. Now we're going to ask Principal Sallee to come on up.

Good evening, everybody. Thanks for adjusting the schedule. It's an exciting evening at Highline High School. It's our annual alumni foundation scholarship reception and dinner. It's a great honor to be principal of Highline High School and also to be a principal of a school that has such an amazing alumni community supporting our students.

Every year, they give close to \$100,000 in scholarships to our graduating seniors. And this year is no different. And so it's very important that I attend, obviously, but it's also very exciting and fun to see our students, so many of them being celebrated as they go off to their post-secondary journeys in both two and four year colleges. So thanks for adjusting the schedule to see me or to-- for my remarks this evening.

As president of HAWSP, I took the recent staff panorama survey results with great interest because what I saw was very, very clear that I think is a moment of celebration, not just for our assistant principals and principals, but our district as a whole when it comes to what our staff, both in district staff, in terms of principals and assistant principals being counted as district staff in the survey, showing real progress in all the markers of well-being, belonging, trust in school leadership, relationship with leadership.

It's very clear that we made some real progress in district staff, as a district in our spring panorama data. And principals and assistant principals in most measures are even more positive than the average district employee in terms of commitment to the promise, feeling meaning in their work, feeling sort of committed to work in partnership with leadership. So it's really encouraging to see the progress that's coming through in our data, not just from fall to spring, because we know fall was a little funky with our tech outage. But even from previous years, we see real progress.

And then in our buildings, this is also-- maybe I'm stealing Jeb's lines, but it's been really nice to see some real progress with our teacher sense of belonging and efficacy, their relationships with their building leaders. I know principals and assistant principals have really taken the results of the panorama survey and the commitment to sense of belonging and supportive relationships with not just our students but our staff very, very seriously.

And so to see the progress that came out in the most recent survey results from last fall to spring, but from last year to this year is really encouraging sign that, as every year, if we can continue to make progress, we'll continue to build a positive investment and commitment with, not just our teachers and our students, but also with our principals and assistant principals. We have two markers that we want to prioritize. Well-being and stress is definitely a place where our principals and assistant principals lag behind. But we know that that is a challenge in this job regionally.

And so the last thing I just want to say is we appreciate, as HAWSP, to be in a system that continues to be committed to investing in their school leadership. In a time of budget stress, we know that surrounding systems are turning to a reduction in force in terms of their assistant principals, most specifically. And we know that would be a grave mistake in terms of serving the mission of Highline Public Schools, to use that as a strategy to bridge budget gaps.

So as the association president, we just want to say, we so appreciate this district's commitment to supporting and cultivating dedicated school leadership, because we think it's so important to serve our students well. So thanks again and have a great rest of your evening.

Thank you so much, Clint.

[APPLAUSE]

So while we're not highlighting any particular recognitions tonight, I just want to name and recognize the following for the month of June. We invite you to visit our Facebook page to explore these recognitions. Caribbean American Heritage Month, Pride Month, June 8 is family and health and fitness day. June 14 is Flag Day, and June 19 is Juneteenth. So thank you very much.

That, we're going to head to our scheduled communications. On behalf of the board, we sincerely appreciate you taking the time to join us and to share your thoughts with us this evening. You'll notice that our norms and guidelines are displayed on the screens for your reference.

Please remember that you're addressing the board, and there may be students present or watching and/or 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 up is Joseph Lipp.

Board members, thank you for letting me speak.

I come here, first and foremost, as a father, grandfather, and coming up to be a great grandfather for three times. Seven of them are little girls. I know you're going to be talking about the [INAUDIBLE] tonight and funding for that.

And it says, as one of your tenets, that, in that, all students will be safe. But apparently, that's not true. Because we're going to take all the little girls that are in any kind of sports and throw them under the bus.

If we're going to allow young boys-- I don't care how you dress them up-- to participate in women's sports, it's a travesty. And for them to allow them to undress and make these little girls feel uncomfortable in bathrooms, again, a travesty.

I'm not here to put down transgender people. That's not my intent. God tells me to love everybody.

But you watch. Even women in the Olympics strive their whole life for four, sometimes eight, sometimes 12 years to be outdone by a man who's physically stronger, faster, whatever you want to call it. It's a travesty. And if you want to fund the WIAA, let's make sure that everybody's safe, not just a few. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you. Sarah Fox?

OK. Hi. I'm Sarah. I'm one of the district's physical therapists. I've been a PT for almost 22 years, and the last nine of those, I've worked here in Highline. As a part of only a four person physical therapy team here in Highline, I have the privilege of working in many buildings, teaming with staff across a number of roles, including occupational therapists, speech and language pathologists, school psychologists, nurses, general education teachers, special education teachers, counselors.

I could go on. We work with all the people. It's great. I'm very proud of what the district has been able to accomplish in the time that I've been here.

I have seen students with disabilities being included more and more in all of the buildings across the district, across more and more of their school day. Members of the OT and PT department meet regularly with Waskowitz Outdoor Education Center Director Meredith von Trapp to help improve and expand accessibility and inclusion in outdoor education experiences for all of our students.

And architects for our new school buildings are approaching these projects with an equity lens, beginning to understand that students' needs, in terms of equipment, materials and even physical space are not always the same. I'm proud to be part of a department and a district that is continuing to move inclusion forward. And I'm excited to continue to do the work that we've been doing to help move it all forward. Thank you very much.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you. Rick Wisen, our principal from Beverly Park.

[APPLAUSE]

School Board President Van, board directors, Superintendent Dr. Duran, thanks for the opportunity. We're going to celebrate a little bit of our i-Reading literacy growth with you today. And I'm going to yield my time to Keyaunna Johnson, my assistant principal, to talk about some of the things that we've been doing.

All right. Good evening. I'm honored to celebrate the literacy growth achieved by our students at Beverly Park Elementary, as measured by the i-Ready reading diagnostic. This accomplishment reflects the dedication and collaboration of our entire school community. Our overall median percent progress towards typical growth in reading is 100%. Even more impressively, our fourth and fifth grade students exceeded expectations, reaching 140% and 135% respectively.

This success is, in large part, due to the efforts of our teacher and reach team paraeducators, who maximize the support structures embedded in our master schedule. By strategically implementing double dosing of foundational literacy skills tailored to each student's level, using the early tool kits and targeted tier 1 and tier 2 and tier 3 materials, they ensured that our duly qualified students receive the instruction they needed to thrive.

Through ongoing collaboration with our instructional planning team, we reflected on how to make the most of i-Ready as a tool, not just for assessment, but for meaningful instructional insight. This led to the development of our i-Ready incentive program, launched in the second half of the year. While originally aimed at increasing engagement in math, it sparked a cultural shift. Students began taking more ownership of their learning, setting goals and striving to meet them with a new sense of purpose.

To support this, we hosted a pep rally ahead of our spring diagnostic. We equipped students with test taking strategies, highlighted common pitfalls, and most importantly, emphasized the power of doing their best and focusing on growth. Classrooms mirrored the seriousness and structure of state testing, ensuring students could show what they truly know in a supportive environment.

What we're most proud of is the intentional teamwork of our instructional teams. This year, our staff has strengthened professional learning communities, deepened instructional best practices and centered student voice and ownership, especially around setting--

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you very much. Salimah Osman?

Hi. Good evening. My name is Salimah Osman, and I'm here today as a concerned parent to urge you to continue to invest in and keep the Vietnamese dual language program or the VDL program at Cascade Middle School. I had a speech prepared but decided to change it up at the last minute.

Clear, timely and consistent communication is essential to fostering trust and collaboration, but this is where I think the school and district is lacking. Parents should be kept well informed about key decisions, policy changes and issues that may affect our children's education and well-being. How is it that I'm hearing of the discontinuation of the VDL program from my middle schooler weeks before an official announcement from the school district was made?

I have three children in the district. All of my three children have been in the VDL program since kindergarten. My oldest child is now seventh grader at Cascade Middle School, and she plans to continue the VDL program into eighth grade. My fifth grader is enrolled at Cascade for the next year because of the VDL program. Ending the program is detrimental to their progress and end of the achievement they've made so far learning Vietnamese.

In a district as diverse as ours, cutting a program that uplifts one of our largest linguistic communities runs counter to the values of inclusion and equity the district advocates for. I ask that you consider the long term value and impact this program brings. Dual language programs take time to grow. They require community outreach, transparent communication and consistent investment from the school, as well as the district.

With more intentional support and promotion, the Vietnamese [AUDIO OUT] just as others have. Do not let this be the moment where equity turns into exclusion. Keep the Vietnamese dual language program alive at Cascade Middle School. Thank you so much.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you. Yakeem Osman?

Hold on real quick. We'll get that adjusted.

Hello. My name is Yakeem, and I am a student in the Vietnamese dual language program at White Center Heights. I have been in the dual language program since I was in kindergarten, and didn't know any Vietnamese at all. I was very excited to continue the program at Cascade Middle School.

But when I heard that the program will be discontinued, I was very sad because I have spent so much time and effort learning and making friends in the VDL program. I've also made so much progress in speaking, reading and writing Vietnamese. I can even understand and start a conversation in Vietnamese.

I would like to see myself improve beyond White Center Heights and into middle and high school. I hope Highline School District continues the VDL program, not only for me, but for all the Vietnamese families in this area. Thank you for your time listening to me.

[APPLAUSE]

Hello, board members. My name is Luna Osman. I am a seventh grade student at Cascade Middle School and have been in the Vietnamese dual language program since kindergarten. When I learned that this program was to discontinue starting next year, I was sad. Being a part of this program has taught me so much. I was upset thinking of how many children might not receive the opportunities I had because they might not get the chance.

One example I recall is the summer I went to Vietnam when I was six. I had just finished my kindergarten year in the VDL program. I wasn't an expert, but I had a basic understanding, enough to be able to translate numbers for my dad, making the trip a memorable one. That was from just one year of the VDL program. Since then, I have improved so much.

This is just one example of how this program has benefited me. The other students and I would love for this program to continue, to allow us to keep on growing and learning Vietnamese next year and the years to come. Thank you for listening and taking this matter into consideration.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you very much. Next up is Mika Sundberg.

Hi. My name is Mika Sundberg. I'm a community member, a parent of two girls at Hazel Valley-- one is a rising sixth grader at Cascade-- a CFAC member, a member of the budget oversight committee, and a new incoming chair for Yes for Highline. We're a group of volunteers from across the district who support our schools by supporting bonds and levies.

I just wanted to say, I had the opportunity to go to the groundbreaking for Pacific Middle School yesterday. I live in North Highline and had never been, but the building is emblematic of many of the schools across the district. It's so exciting to see what's going to happen.

It was especially poignant to see the rendering of the new building against the backdrop of the existing building and imagining how much safer the students will be, how much more comfortable they'll be and how much they'll be able to learn in their new space. It's a privilege for me to be a part of this community that supports our students and our schools.

No bonds or levies are currently proposed at this time, but I'm excited to work on any future initiative and getting voters informed about the good work that our schools are doing to help our students inspire them, spark their curiosity and help them feel like they belong. I think that that last one is most important. We can't get our students to learn if they don't feel like they belong in their schools.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us at Yes for Highline. Yesforhighline.org is our website, and my email is on there. So thank you very much.

Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Stephanie Kiracofe?

Hello. My name is Stephanie Kiracofe, and I'm an occupational therapist at Sylvester Middle School. I wanted to share an example of our changing work that many educational staff, associates or ESAs are doing in response to our district's inclusion efforts, including a bright point about our tech outage earlier this year.

Sylvester is in our second year of growing our inclusive practices, bringing students with and without disabilities together to learn in the same classroom. At the start of the year, many of my students who previously spent most of their day in a special education classroom had schedules that looked the same or similar to their same grade peers. Although my caseload continued to look similar in terms of the needs I would support, my services needed to look different.

When we suddenly had no computer access at the start of the year and I didn't yet have a therapy schedule set, I used the resources we had available. I found the large binder with every student's schedule printed in the office, and I spent the next week in their various classes. Now, at the end of the year, you'll still find me in a classroom, not the therapy office, much of the time.

Students I support to learn assistive technology for writing I see in history, a course with a large amount of writing, including a full essay each year of middle school. The students I support for executive functioning skills I see in science, where they are expected to keep organized notebooks with daily entries, charts and handouts. My favorite part of today and every Wednesday was a visit to our co-taught intro to engineering, where I could support my student's social participation and the ability to make and follow a plan while he worked with a group to make a paper roller coaster.

As we've brought a more diverse group of students into our general education classrooms, I'm glad to be providing occupational therapy services right there with them. Please continue to support and celebrate our district's inclusive practices and the ever-evolving roles of our OTs, PTs, SLPs and other ESAs. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you, Patricia Bailey?

Good evening. Teachers across the nation are quitting the career to which they believe they would be dedicated for life due to disruptive student behavior. Many school districts have policies in place that make it impossible for teachers to implement corrective measures for unsatisfactory student conduct.

When we walk into a local drug store, we see the results of Washington's permissive theft law, where one can steal up to \$750 worth of merchandise with little consequence. We can also imagine the extreme loss of life that would occur if speed limits were not enforced. Yet, a lenient mindset exists in our schools, as parents from Des Moines Elementary School testified a few weeks ago.

A lack of significant consequences for unacceptable student behavior has resulted in the disruption of learning and abusive behavior toward both students and teachers. Misbehaving students are actually being trained in school into antisocial behavior through the repetition of ineffective discipline. We are not preparing students for the future they choose, but rather, the penitentiary when we excuse students negligent and harmful actions because of trauma, poverty or oppression.

In addition, not all students are college bound. Steering youth toward college who might excel in a vocational career and earn excellent wages right out of high school could be doing more harm than good. They can always enroll in college later in life if desired.

I urge the board to examine closely the negative behaviors in our youth and seek solutions from a wide variety of experienced Highline teachers who are your most valuable resources for real solutions. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you. Burnley Danner?

All right. Hi there. Greetings to the member of the board. Thank you for your time. My name is Burnley Danner, and I'm an occupational therapist or OT at Highline. I started school this year, not as an employee, but instead as a parent to a new kindergartner. From the first day of kindergarten jump start, I was blown away by the kindness, professionalism and individualization shown by the kindergarten team at my daughter's school.

Within a few weeks, I was already noticing how much the staff at her school seemed to really know her as an individual, her personality, her strengths, her needs. The whole staff, not just the kindergarten staff, already seemed to know her name. When I found out there was a job opportunity for me to work with that team, I jumped at the chance, leaving behind a job I loved for a chance to be a part of the Highline community, and in particular, serve students with disabilities with occupational therapy needs.

I joined the district as an OT in January and have been thrilled to find the OTP team to be filled with top quality providers who share creative ideas, resources, best practices, as well as collaborate with an incredible team of other specialists and special educators and general educators who are constantly individualizing their teaching strategies, materials, supports and schedules to best serve their individual students.

I continue to be impressed by how much the staff at Highline knows each student, not just my daughter, by their individual-- as individuals and work tirelessly to provide what that student needs. Thank you so much for your time and for your continued support of special education and inclusion at Highline Public Schools.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you very much. Michael Gudor?

Good evening, Superintendent Duran and President Van and the directors. My name is Michael Gudor, and I'm a proud parent of a student at RHS who has been accepted into the constructions program at Puget Sound Skills Center. I also happen to be a teacher in the district, spending my first three years at Chinook, then 18 at AHS, and now in my second year at Mount.

I'm here tonight because my son and other RHS families are being told they must leave RHS in order to attend PSSC. And I respectfully ask the board to prevent this from happening. It is my understanding that we at Highline pride ourselves on diversity, equity, inclusion and access to opportunities for all students.

Let me be clear. Puget Sound Skills Center offers programs that RHS does not. Denying RHS students access when other students in the district can participate without changing schools is not only inequitable, it's inconsistent with the district's mission to ensure every student is known by name, strength and need and graduates prepared for the future of their choosing.

This goes against precedence as well. Students from RHS have attended PSCC for such opportunities, and the RHS student handbook currently states, "for students considering Running Start or PSSC, we strongly recommend attending your home school." That means the current rules don't require my son to leave.

Let me be clear. My son's home school is RHS. More importantly, this is about students, not programs. My son is known at RHS, known by name, known by strength and known by need. He has spent two years building relationships with teachers and peers. Forcing him to switch schools mid-journey would strip away his sense of belonging and violate the very spirit of our district's values.

It's also unfair in practice. Running Start students who miss more RHS class time than PSCC students are allowed to stay. Yet, my son, who will still be at RHS half the day next year and likely full time as a senior, is being told he has to leave. This makes it not only cruel and inequitable, but also totally unnecessary.

My son made a four year commitment to RHS, and we're simply asking RHS to honor the same commitment to him and future students. Let's lead with equity, consistency and care. I'm asking that the board ensure that all students in Highline, including RHS students, have access to all programs. Thank you for your time.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you.

Maggie Heater, our principal from Marvista.

Good evening. I'm Maggie Heater, the proud principal of Marvista Elementary. And I'm here to share some exciting news, just like my colleagues from Beverly Park. So we have students making incredible progress in the area of literacy. This spring, our students completed the i-Ready literacy benchmark assessment, a tool that gives us invaluable insight into student growth at every level.

From individuals to classroom, to the entire school, this data helps us set meaningful goals, track progress and plan instruction that meets each learner where they're at. I want to start by telling you a little bit about one student. I can't give her name, but she's a fourth grader. She started the year reading below grade level. She's served with special education services and general education services.

And with consistent support and a lot of personal effort on her part, she achieved 200% of her typical growth in i-Ready reading and 111% of her stretch growth target. Her progress is inspiring, and it reflects the determination we are seeing across our school. In fact, as a whole school, our students achieved a median of 102% progress towards typical growth in literacy, surpassing the gains for this year.

This kind of success does not happen by chance. We've intentionally strengthened our PLCs, prioritizing weekly collaboration focused on the four essential PLC questions. What do we want kids to know and be able to do? How do we know if they're going to learn it? What are we going to do when they don't? And what are we going to do when they have?

This work is making a huge difference. I'm incredibly proud to be a Marvista Orca. Our students show resilience and determination, and our staff bring unwavering dedication to helping them succeed. Together, we're building a school where every student can grow, thrive and reach their full potential. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you very much. Carrie Stankee?

Good evening. Thank you. My name is Carrie. I am also an occupational therapist in the Highline School District. I've been an OT for many years and had mainly been working with adults. I always knew I wanted to work in schools but just kind of ended up going down a different path for most of my career. But I always dreamed of switching and working in the schools.

And more specifically, I always wanted to work in the Highline Schools. I've heard really great things about it. And when an opportunity to work here opened up, I pounced on it. This is my second year working for the district. When I started, I wasn't sure how I would fit in or be supported due to working in multiple schools. What I found was that, while each school has its own culture, there are many common positive threads.

I've been surrounded by educators, staff and leaders who believe in every child's potential and who believe in me. At each of the schools, I feel like an important member of the community and feel supported, valued and empowered to make a difference. As an OT, I have the privilege of working with students across a wide range of settings and abilities, helping them build the skills they need to thrive both in and out of the classroom. But what truly makes this work meaningful is the community I get to do it in.

Highline has given me the space to innovate, the trust to lead and the encouragement to keep learning. It's helped me become, not just a better therapist, but a better advocate, teammate and person. Most importantly, I've seen firsthand how our collaboration and shared commitment to inclusion, and specifically within the special education department, has led to student success in the lives of the community we served.

When we come together with compassion and purpose, we can create a world where every student feels seen, supported and capable of greatness. And that's something I carry with me every day with pride and purpose. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you very much. Next up is An Nguyen.

Hey, good evening, guys. Thank you for your time. I am here today as a very proud parent of that little girl over there in the Vietnamese dual language program. I have a little speech here written, timed myself a few times. And somehow, my wife got me to get into my first board meeting with about 24 hour notice, and ChatGPT this, and I'm sure it's going to read very well. But I'm just going to speak directly from my personal experience.

This program is so important. It is, it is so important. It's amazing for me to be able to see, as a kid growing up in the 90s in the ESL program. I can tell you that most of us that that's been growing up as an immigrant in the ESL program were kind of forced to assimilate as fast as we can. Right?

It's not socially acceptable for us to speak our language in the schoolyard and something like that. Bringing a Vietnamese dish for school lunch was-- you're either going to be made fun of or anything like that. So how we grew up is we were forced to-- not forced, I don't want to say that. We measured our success on how quickly we became American. And her ability-- she speaks Vietnamese better than me now. Right? And she's only seven.

So I am amazingly proud of her. I'm amazingly proud of all the educators that we have behind this program. To be able to give our children a sense of belonging-- and I think that's one of your pillars for success or something like that. I'm sorry, I'm kind of shaking here, but I just want to let you guys know that this program is super important.

It's something I'm very proud of. And you can see the successes in the kids that are in this program right now. And I know there are challenges for you guys. Of course. But I don't think just defunding something is the answer. Maybe it's an outreach thing. Yeah. Thank you for your time.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you. Robert Ribaud? Robert Ribaud?

OK. We're going to move on. Next is Kaitlyn Rettinger.

Hi. My name is Kaitlyn, and I'm here today to express my concern about the future of the Vietnamese dual language program. I joined the VDL program in second grade, and from the very beginning, I felt like I belonged to a supportive community. The program's teachers helped me grow and feel welcomed.

This is my final year in elementary school, and I've grown so much in both the Vietnamese language and culture. This year, I can read books in Vietnamese at a fifth grade level, which is a big deal considering I made four grade levels' growth within a year. My growth has made me more confident in my learning, and I know that many kids in this program have also made a vast amount of progress.

Here are some ways my class represented our culture. My classmates and I joined a competition and performance to show off our knowledge about our culture in Tet in Seattle this year. I also was the emcee who spoke Vietnamese at our school's Lunar New Year event. I speak Vietnamese with my mom most of the time, and I always talk to my grandparents in Vietnamese. I will even read the Vietnamese Bible at my church this Sunday.

I didn't realize how much this program would mean to me and my family when I first joined. But after four years, I know this community is part of me. Next year, most of my class, 22 students, will go to Cascade Middle School. We are very excited because we hope to keep learning Vietnamese there.

My mom told me that Highline's vision is very special. It allows students in the dual language program to continue learning Vietnamese in middle and high school. She also told me that Highline is the first district in the state to offer a Vietnamese dual language program, and it has been around for 12 years. My hope for this program is for it to stay around for many more years and for it to grow stronger than ever.

Cascade will not-- there will not be-- said, there will not be VDL literacy classes anymore next year. And that worries me because I don't want the program to stop growing and helping our community. Thank you for listening to my concern.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you. Thank you so much for speaking. Next up, Alex Myrick.

Good evening, directors. You have a big job, but with over \$21,000 per student per year, you have the resources to do what is necessary. You don't, however, have enough money to fund every feel good project that looks good. We don't need DEI. We need common sense.

Diversity itself is great. Guess what? We already have it. We don't need expensive diversity consultants. School districts have given DEI consulting groups over \$123 million in taxpayer funds since 2021. It's time for Highline to stop funding the scam. The lid is now being blown off, so the labels are changing, but the scam will continue.

We are hearing more and more about empathy and belonging. These are nice concepts but hard to measure, and we can't buy them, even if we spend millions of dollars. Let's take those millions and improve literacy and academics. Equality of opportunity is vital, and it's one of America's greatest contributions. Equity in outcomes, however, is not only unreasonable but absolutely unobtainable.

If you insist on making biological males who claim to be females feel welcome in girls' bathrooms, locker rooms and girls sports, you make the girls feel unsafe and deprive them of fair competition and their deserved victories. This is the opposite of inclusion.

State standards are not met in English, science and math by at least 2/3 of Highline students. We need to invest in staff and curricula to help our children catch up academically. Over half of Highline students are three years or more behind academically. Improvement in this area is vital and will be measurable and should be prioritized over expensive, trendy programs that are vague and have never delivered positive results. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you. Next up is Aimee Nguyen.

Good evening, board members. My name is Aimee Nguyen, and I am a proud graduate of Highline School District. I attended Cascade Middle School, and I graduated from Evergreen High School. The foundation I received helped shape who I am today.

Now, as a parent, I get to see the same impact through my daughter, who is currently in the first grade Vietnamese dual language program. This program has given her so much in just two years, not only in language skills, but in confidence. She was the youngest student to compete in the Tet in Seattle Vietnamese spelling bee. And just last week, she performed at the talent show, singing Vietnamese. And she was the only one who did that.

Seeing her excitement, pride and sense of identity grow over the years has been truly moving for our whole family. According to the 2023 census, there are 3,400 Asian residents in White Center. Asians are the second largest ethnic group in our area. This shows that many families like mine are looking for opportunities where their children can both succeed academically and stay connected to their culture.

The VDL program does exactly just that. It helps students become bilingual and biliterate, and just as importantly, it helps them feel like they belong. It supports the Highline's promise by building strong, inclusive learning environments and prepare students for the future of opportunity. So I am here today to ask you to continue to support and grow this program. It's more than just a classroom. It's a bridge between cultures, generations and futures.

My name is Mimi, and I love our Vietnamese program.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you. Next up is Hiep Pham.

I'm Mr. Hiep Pham, and this is Mrs. Noel [INAUDIBLE]. And anyways, good evening, board members and parents and everybody here.

I couldn't agree more. We have our students in the Vietnamese program, one getting ready to go in. Couldn't agree more about the continuing of the Vietnamese program, but I don't want to say the same things that everybody's so eloquently said much better than I. I can only second it.

But what I want to do is bring up maybe some ideas. With all of our inclusion and everything, I can't believe that this stems from anything but a budget matter. So that's kind of what I want to think about and talk about is we seem to have this excellent, excellent language program. Some of them are growing, and some of them are being cut.

OK. Now, have we examined what kind of funding we might be able to get from the federal government because of our excellence, because of what we have that nobody else seems to be producing? Anytime you're thinking about going to war, you should first use diplomacy. What you're going to need is speakers of foreign languages and culturally immersed individuals that we're actually producing.

And when the student comes to you, our three-year-old already speaks Vietnamese. She's already culturally immersed in two cultures. And now, all we have to do is bring her up and graduate her and she will be great for business and government and everything you can think of.

[APPLAUSE]

And we have Hoa Quach.

Good morning, everyone. My name is Hoa. As a parent, as a educator, I am here to grateful for our district because we have the empowering the program. Why I say that? Because when I have a friend or even I know a parent, just in a moment there, they don't care about the mileage. 30 miles every day, they can ride a case, come to our school to get a kid, get a program.

And even they're not up [INAUDIBLE]. Doesn't matter. Just powering program in that have. And the Vietnamese student, we have leave the language behind in order to be successful. And I remember when I taught in the kindergarten, and grandparent would come to me, and they're with the cheering, and I, oh, thank you, thank you. [SPEAKING VIETNAMESE]

And I am unbelievable when are my grandchildren can sing a song in Vietnamese. Before in [INAUDIBLE] he cannot spoke in the-- even with one word. Yes. And that's it. I feel it's-- wow, we did something. Yeah. We make the connecting with the culture and family. And when I am in the [INAUDIBLE] I touching everything in the language Mr. Downey, I get a support and how I get support by myself.

But for the student, the parent was come in and say, oh, the student would say with me, I don't talk with my grandparents because I don't understand what they are saying. And I feel, oh, we're missing something and not connecting. And when we, step by step, we learn about culture, we have the event and we participate, and the kids, they know who they are, in their family and in their community. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you so much.

Point of order?

Just a point of order, I have to--

Yes, President Alvarez?

I have to leave.

OK. So point of order is that Director Alvarez is excusing herself from the meeting. Thank you. With that said, next up is our superintendent's update. Dr. Duran?

Yeah, thank you, President Van. I just want to thank the Cascade family and community for coming out tonight. Earlier in the week, when we found out and started seeing some people sign up for public comments, I started asking questions about what was happening at Cascade. So I do want to share a little bit about what I've learned up to this point.

But I really just want to thank you for being here tonight. I want to start by just sharing that, over the past few years, enrollment in the program has declined significantly. And that has been one of the big issues with the program over at Cascade. Detailed information went out to the families at White Center Heights and Cascade this afternoon. But I really want to acknowledge that some families may have already heard about a change through other channels.

I apologize for not communicating more clearly and earlier in the process. It's always our goal to ensure our families receive important information directly from us with clear and timely information. So we really missed the mark on this one, and I apologize for that.

Students will still have meaningful opportunities to grow their Vietnamese language skills and culture knowledge at Cascade-- at White Center Heights and Cascade Middle School. Students will continue to engage in Vietnamese through math classes taught in Vietnamese, a Vietnamese advisory programming class, the math cooking Vietnamese club, cultural celebrations, including Tet, the Lunar New Year celebration, multicultural event and end of year celebrations.

I know this is a change. And we are committed to continue to build programs that honor students' identities, reflect their interests, and support their success. I also will be asking some of our staff to dig into this a little bit more. Because I think there is a really important opportunity for us to talk to our students and to find out why they are not choosing to continue in the program when they start in sixth grade and then seeing significant decline by eighth grade.

So I think we have some information to learn about why our students are not choosing to stay in those classes and in their programs. So we will learn as much as we can about that and ask our principal over at Cascade, Principal Feldtmose, to do some more exploration in this area. So thank you again. Thank you all for being here tonight.

Tonight, you're also going to be receiving an update on Highline's literacy work during the introduction item for the American Reading Company. Literacy remains a central priority in Highline, and we continue to invest deeply in the systems, professional learning and supports needed to ensure every student becomes a strong reader and a strong communicator. At the state level, Highline's literacy work was supported by our 2025 legislative agenda.

For the first time in my seven years as superintendent in Washington, there were statewide alignment around a focused set of legislative priorities known as the big three. School districts across Washington came together to advocate with support from the state associations and other key partners. The big three legislative agenda called for full and equitable funding of special education, transportation and materials, supplies and operating costs. These areas remain severely underfunded across the state and will continue to be our legislative platform.

Here at Highline, we stood with our peers and supported this unified advocacy effort. The big three priorities are not separate from our literacy priority. They make our literacy work possible. Adequate funding ensures schools have what they need to fully implement effective literacy practices.

Our focused commitment to literacy remains strong. It is foundational to student success across every subject area and central to future readiness. We are already engaged in several literacy initiatives that align with research based practices and are showing promising results that we are excited to share with our community in the coming months. We will continue to advocate for policies that support local innovation, equity, and student centered learning.

I appreciate our educators, our families, our leaders and our partners for championing a literacy system rooted in equity and rooted in excellence. Together, we are building strong readers and cultivating a love for reading that will last a lifetime. I am excited to hear more-- I'm excited for you to hear more about our literacy work this evening from Deputy Superintendent Dr. Reinig, as well as through updates to the '25 and '26 school year.

I would now like to invite Jeb Binns, the president of the Highline Education Association, to the podium to share a few remarks. Welcome, Jeb. Good to see you.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you. Good evening, President Van, superintendent, and directors, just brief things. Tis the season of graduations Tis the season of endings and new beginnings. I had the opportunity, last Saturday, to spend just about my entire day around prom.

From the going down to the venue downtown where Highline held their prom and getting to do the setup, because as the parent of the junior class president who planned prom, that was duties as assigned. I laugh at Shawna, right? To running home to watch the kids get ready, to run to my mom's house for photographs, to run down-- to run back home, to change, to chaperone prom and then spend till midnight cleaning up after prom. It was sort of a prom-ish sort of a thing.

And there's so many folks, so many faculty members who spend and dedicate their evenings to chaperoning and watching the kids-- the celebration. And our students are so amazing. From the way that they interact with each other, it's so much fun to see them get all dressed up and gussied up for a big life event.

And so I just wanted to, one, thank the kids for being amazing and also all of our folks who dedicate an evening in celebration of their kids in a different way from all of the other time that they dedicate celebrating our kids. So it's great. Speaking of which, I also wanted to express my gratitude for being able to participate in graduations coming up.

I am thrilled to share the joy of the success of our students and their hard work and the hard work of my colleagues in the classrooms to help kids achieve their goals. And so to be able to share in that sort of culminating moment, I just appreciate that deeply. And the association thanks you for that.

You said goodbye to four great folks tonight. And I, of course, chimed in from the back that Chris wasn't allowed to leave. And I just want to take this moment-- and I'm not going to look over there-- to thank Chris for helping to build something that we call the Highline way. And it's something that we've developed over years and years and years of-- I guess there's no blood-- just sweat and tears and some words about a new way to bargain and a new way to set things up.

And having been involved in that process for 12, 14, 16 years, just to watch that and the guidance and leadership has been just truly helpful and wonderful. So I just want to take this time to publicly thank you for being a partner and a mentor and my friendly foil as we go through and do this work.

And that does not mean to say-- not saying things about others doesn't mean I-- just, I spend so many hours a week and so many hours in the last two years of my presidency with Chris in her corner office and the downstairs. With fighting all the fights and doing all the things, I just wanted to-- I would be remiss if I didn't take this opportunity.

I want to thank our OTs and PTs who showed up tonight to talk about the work we're doing with inclusion. It is tremendous, and it's not easy. And as we move forward, and I think that, as we show what can be done and we see and bring out the gifts that all of our students have, I think we're also going to realize that the need is even greater than we know. And we are also, now, a destination district.

What we are providing is going above and beyond our colleagues. We have people moving here for our support, which is fabulous and wonderful and a hallmark to our great work. And also, I don't know if we can continue to do this in a revenue neutral manner. It's one of those things that we are putting more and more demands on folks, and we're going to have to think about how we continue to work on that. And it's the right work as we go through.

And then just for tonight, just thinking about our families who came out, I just appreciate our families who came to spoke about a wonderful experience that they have been able to be a part of in the district. And I just appreciate our families and our teachers, and especially our students for coming into talking about something that's so powerful and important to them. It shows that the commitment and the passion is there. And so for that, I just greatly appreciate them to go through.

And finally, we have three weeks to go. I think, every day, you kind of wake up and you tick one more off and you think, OK, let's keep it together as we go through. And some days we're successful in that, and some days we're not. And some days we throw rocks. Threw a few rocks today, that's OK. But there are rocks with a purpose and were designed to move our system forward as we go through. So I thank you very much. Have a good night.

[APPLAUSE]

Wonderful. Thank you, Jeb, and I don't think anyone's counting. So saw what you're talking about there. I just want to quickly add, you reminded me, Director Alvarez and I had the opportunity to attend the Highline College open doors graduation over at Highline college, and I was just really blown away. That program serves our students as well as Federal Way.

And one of the speakers that was there reminded the students that they were not broken. And she clearly demonstrated that because she will be graduating with her diploma with 68 college credits, her associate's degree in biology and on her way to University of Washington to become a doctor. And so that's just a great example around, sometimes, in our schools-- and all of our schools don't necessarily meet the needs of all of our students. But we have opportunities for our students, so that promise can be true for them, no matter what their learning environment is.

So I'm grateful that we have those types of situations for our students to go. But what an amazing story and what a great message to remind people that we are not broken. We have a lot of capability, and we've demonstrated it by showing up and graduating today. So I look forward to the season of graduations and hearing more wonderful stories about our students. That's all I have tonight. Thank you, President Van.

Thank you so much, Dr. Duran. And now we're going to move on to our school board reports. Any legislative updates, Vice President Tidholm?

We do not have any legislative updates at this time.

Thank you so much. Let's check that off there. We're going to move on to our directors reports. Director Holien, I'm going to start with you this evening.

Thank you, President Van. Thank you for coming out, for everyone that spoke. Some come here very frequently, some not. It takes a lot of courage to come up to speak. And I just want to publicly acknowledge that. It does take a lot of effort.

There was a pretty cool thing-- unfortunately, I was unable to attend the Pacific groundbreaking yesterday. But it marked a pretty large milestone for the 2022 school bond projects. And as we finish the construction of Evergreen and Tyee this summer, it's time to begin demolition of Pacific and start the construction of the new facility slated to open in September of 2027.

Community members, staff, students and alumni turned out to celebrate, walk through the old school, look at the big rocks, which what's going to happen to those? I don't know. Thank you, Dr. Duran. But we'll see. Maybe we can save them. Maybe we cannot. We shall see.

But Director Alvarez had to run out, but she went there in my place. I want to bring up a visit that Director Alvarez and Dr. Duran did at SeaTac. That was a pretty remarkable experience. A couple of days-- was that last week? And they're a massive partner within our district that we need to try to support.

They bring in a lot of dollars to the surrounding areas. So there's going to be some growing pains, but it's all-- I believe what they were referring to is short term pains for long term gains. So be patient with them. It'll be OK, but just got to get through it. They're doing some really remarkable things at the airport.

As we are approaching-- yeah, three weeks to go, keep it up, parents. Keep it up, teachers. You all are doing such a great job. From the people that are in the lunchrooms, to driving buses, to the administration here, you all have had a pretty challenging year, especially to start off. So keep it up. You all have done a very good job. So thank you.

Thank you so much. Dr. Espinoza, you're up.

Great. Thank you. So as of Monday, I have completed the first round of school visits, and I have been able to visit all 11 schools in my district, which was a major goal of mine. I saw firsthand and learned so much about how much the students care about their learning and their relationships with teachers and staff.

I also saw the deep care and commitment that teachers and staff have for students and families. I also heard from staff and teachers about opportunities for growth at their school. I want to highlight three events that were incredibly enriching to me from these visits.

First, I was asked to speak at the second annual Floricanto celebration at Highline High School. And this was a student led event that highlighted the importance of belonging and being rooted in positive representation of cultural identity. There were musical performances, speeches, dances and dedicated effort to build community and allyship.

The second event was I was warmly invited by Principal Maggie Heater to attend a weekly MTSS meeting at Marvista. And I learned so much about their comprehensive approach to supporting the whole student, focusing on academic growth and cultivating a sense of belonging and building strong partnerships with families.

And the third highlight is the powerful work that is being done at Bow Lake Elementary. So there was a great story from Bow Lake that was shared in the Highline community-- to the Highline community in May. And it's available on our website if you would like to see it. It talks about co-teaching, and it amplifies an example about how co-teaching for fifth graders helped them grow in reading and writing.

Co-teaching is when two teachers, a special education teacher, team up in one classroom to reach students in all abilities in one classroom. The results are strong, and it's a great example of how inclusion is making a real impact for all of our students. Thank you so much.

Thank you so much for that. Vice President Tidholm, you're up.

Evergreen High School has been named the 2000-- well, "a." I'm sorry, not the 2025-- it's the for me-- 2025 silver school of distinction. This national recognition from Jostens honors the work to improve school culture and climate.

Led by ASB staff and-- ASB students and staff, Evergreen has focused on building belonging for every student. And we're super proud of the Wolverine community. Congratulations to Evergreen. That's all that I have this evening.

Thank you so much. A couple of things here that we've been talking a lot about construction this evening. So I just want to share with you. Construction is underway for the new modular transportation building, and that's set to open in September. I'm super excited for our bus staff to get a new site, a new facility.

It will serve as a new hub for bus drivers and dispatch operations. This will be replacing our aging building L. It's funded by the voter approved 2022 school bond. This is a critical site improvement recommended by our community-led capitals facility advisory committee. So really great to see that. We'll get to grand opening for Evergreen, Tyee, and the new L building this fall.

I just want to thank you, Vice President Tidholm, for facilitating the last meeting. I was out of town for work, couldn't make it. I watched it. It was great. Thank you so much for doing that.

Right after our last board meeting, that Friday, we had an exit interview with our state auditor's office. I just want to really thank Jackie and Andrew for supporting that audit. It was a long audit. It had three parts, one part still remaining. But we passed.

The SEO gave us a clean with no modification, what I call our gold star on the refrigerator. So thank you so much for ensuring that our funds are right and we're doing good by our community and taking care of them that way. With that, that concludes my director's report.

All right. We're going to move to our consent agenda. Do we have any questions or concerns and comments to that? Hear and seeing none, can I please have a motion to approve the consent agenda?

I move that the Highline School Board approves the consent agenda.

Can I please have a second?

I second.

All in favor, say aye.

Aye

Yes.

Aye.

Any opposed? Hear and seeing none, thank you. Consent agenda approved. No items were removed, and we're going to move on to our action item. We're first-- first one, 8.1, we're going to have a presentation.

This is resolution 05-25, approval to convey property for right of way improvement along Military Road to the City of SeaTac for the Valley View Early Learning Center Modular Building Replacement Project. I know that we have removed this a few times from our action items and introductions, would love to have you come on up and share with us what's going on.

Thank you. And I will be speaking to both this and the intro item for Tyee in one presentation, but happy to answer questions about both at either time. So officials, I just want to share that Holly and I had the opportunity to meet with the officials from the City of SeaTac and clarify some of this dedication requirements that we're presenting to you tonight. Unfortunately, they had offered, initially, to come and speak at the meeting and then, unfortunately, declined the meeting when we forwarded it to them. So hopefully, Holly and I can convey what we heard from them during this presentation.

And Jackie, I'm sorry to interrupt. Just for the record, you're talking about 10.13 as well, which is motion to approve resolution 10-25, Tyee High School Replacement Project grant conveyance of property of right of way street improvements along 188th Street to the City of SeaTac.

Correct.

Just for the record.

Yes. Thank you. So both of these projects, as you know, have been in the works for quite a while. We are wrapping up Tyee right now. We are due to open it for our students in September. We're on time and on budget, which is fantastic news. And then our Valley View project has also been in the works for quite some time and continues, and we would-- hopefully we'll be opening that in September to some of our earliest learners.

So with both of these projects, early on in the conversations with the City of SeaTac, the city indicated that we would need to convey land using a right of way. And these are for right of way improvements, mainly in the buildings that are connected, the sidewalks. So as we do improvements to Valley View and as we rebuild Tyee, they required us to do frontage improvements.

And that requires this conveyance of property is how they phrase it. But basically, it is a transfer of property between Highline and the city. Both of these projects, I will say, moved forward with gaining permits, but without the approval-- the specific approval of the board. And as you know, only the board can convey property, which is why we're here tonight.

But early on in the projects, there was some permitting that was done by our staff. And there were agreements made to convey this land that were not presented to the board in a timely manner. And I apologize for that, and that is definitely something that we are looking into and refining our processes. So moving forward, we are definitely going to be looking at language much more specifically around conveyance and deeds.

One of the things I really learned during this whole process is we are really unique, in that we work with five different municipalities with five different rules around the right of ways. And so all of the cities and municipalities handle this differently. And SeaTac is one that requires us to convey the land to them in order to maintain it afterwards.

So as I mentioned before, at Valley View, this is the sidewalk that is on-- adjacent to Military Road. For Tyee, it is convey the sidewalk along 188th in front of the school. So the Tyee permit also included some future work for undergrounding utilities along that property. And if we do any additional work to Chinook, we'll have to also do some right of way work there.

So we are now in a situation where our permits are now dependent on this conveyance of land. And so if we do not move forward with the conveyance tonight, we will not receive our occupancy permit for Tyee, which means we would not be able to move in on time. And we will not be able to continue construction or begin construction, really, with Valley View. And so we would not be able to open that new modular in September for our students.

I'm happy to answer any questions. I don't know if I answered-- unfortunately, the city is not here to answer the questions that I'm sure we all have for them. But I'm happy to try and answer any that you may have.

Thank you so much, Jackie. I'm going to give our directors an opportunity to speak, but I do have a few questions to ask.

Yes. So just a quick question. So we've heard a little bit about the importance of getting this done, being able to the open doors at Tyee September, that modular building at Valley View. What are some of the challenges that we might face with doing this? Like, I understand the positives, but what are some of the challenges?

By conveying the land?

Mhm.

So we give up ownership of the land. And you'll see, in both of the BARs, the board action reports, there is an estimate for the amount of property, the fiscal implication of moving forward with this. I will say, there's both benefits-- like you said, there's positive and negatives. We are being asked to convey the land with no fiscal impact for them.

So they will not be paying us for the land. We just convey it in a deed over to them. Once we do that, the land that we're conveying is then maintained by the city. And so we then do not have any liability for that land. We do not have any maintenance. It is then the city's land to maintain, and they then accept all liability for that property.

OK. Thank you.

Thank you. Directors, any other follow up questions?

From a public standpoint, what is the size of the land? It's pretty much just the sidewalk, ultimately. Right?

Correct. There's about 5 feet-- the specifics are included in the board action report, but it's about 5 feet on either side, in case there is right of way improvements later on.

Great. I just wanted to make sure that people were aware that it's a very small amount of property.

Yes. And both were well under-- so there is a RCW that, if it's anything over \$50,000, we have to have a public hearing. Both of the estimates were well under \$50,000. I think one was under 10, and one was around 20.

Thank you.

Vice President Tidholm?

No questions.

OK. Jackie, thank you so much. And I know this was prior to you. A couple of things.

This is actually towards Dr. Duran. So I'm not looking at you, Jackie or Holly. OK? So I really am surprised that staff agreed to convey land to another entity, which only the board can do, without board approval. The other thing is that we have great working relationships with the City of Des Moines, City of Normandy Park, SeaTac, Burien, White Center. So I'm not knocking any of that.

I mean, we built Glacier, Bow Lake, McMicken in SeaTac, and this really never came up. We are both entities of the state, taxpayers and the whole bit. So I urge us to really look at our processes and make sure that this doesn't happen again. The board oversees the conveyance of land.

This is our taxpayers' dollars, regardless if it's under \$50,000 or not. One foot is still a foot owned by our taxpayers. And I want to make sure of that. This concerns me. One is that we did ask the city to come and speak to us about this and their ordinance. They didn't do that.

It just-- the working relationship, it doesn't feel like it's two way right now. And I want to make sure that our community knows that we're here to support whatever we can do. And I know that we would have supported the city if they would have asked us 5, 10 years down the road, this is the plan.

I know that they're getting ready to come out with some kind of a sidewalk plan, safety that we're going to be asked to be a part of. But it just kind of leaves a bad taste in our mouth in regards to that. So not so much a question, that was more of a statement around what's going on this evening. So that concludes my questions or my statement.

I do have just a comment, just to reiterate what President Van said and the sentiment that we're in a situation, now, that the school is built. We cannot utilize the school unless we approve this, which has already been agreed upon by whomever that didn't have the authority to approve it.

And just the sentiment, just the disappointment of the lack of collaboration and communication when we tried to have the city come out and have a conversation about it. I mean, our permits are being held hostage, and we're here now. So we're in the situation. But yeah, hopefully, we can take a look at what happens and our policies to ensure that this doesn't happen again.

Thank you very much.

Yep, and I do have to say, we hear that, acknowledge that, and we will do better.

Appreciate that, Dr. Duran. Thank you very much.

Thank you.

With that said, can I please have a motion to approve 8.1 resolution 05-25? This is approval to convey property for right of way improvement along Military Road to the City of SeaTac for the Valley View Early Learning Center Modular Building Replacement Project. This is not about the Tyee portion. This is just Valley View. We want to reiterate that.

I move that the Highline School Board grant the dedication of the City of SeaTac by adopting resolution number 05-25 for the Valley View Early Learning Center Modular Building Replacement Project and authorize the superintendent to execute the associated deed.

Can I please have a second?

I second.

Roll call, please.

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

Director Espinoza?

Yes.

Director Holien?

Yea.

President Van?

Nay.

This motion passes three to one.

Thank you. 8.2, motion to approve revisions to board policy 0050, the parent and family engagement. Any questions or comments on this one?

I do have a comment. I just want to thank our FAC community, as well as you, Lita and Keisa, for supporting and helping us draft this. I know it's been since 2016 since we've revised it, but now, it's more in depth and it just grabs everything. So thank you for helping us rewrite this and moving it forward. Appreciate that.

With that, can I please have a motion to approve 8.2?

I move to approve motion 8.2, to approve the revisions to board policy 0050, parent and family engagement. Yeah.

Thank you. Can I have a second, please?

I'll second.

Roll call.

Director Holien?

Yea.

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

Director Espinoza?

Yes.

President Van?

Yea.

This Motion passes four to none.

Thank you very much. 8.3, this is motion to approve resolution 03-25, Municipal Research Services Center roster. Any questions or comments to this?

I just have a comment. I asked the question a couple of weeks ago. It was not millions of dollars. It was only a couple thousand of-- thousands of dollars that we'll actually save the district and the community some money. So I do move that the Highline School Board adopt resolution 03-25 to utilize the Municipal Research Services Center small work roster.

Thank you for that clarification. When I was watching that, I was like, well, hold on. So can I please have a second?

I'll second.

Roll call, please?

Director Espinoza?

Yes.

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

Director Holien?

Yea.

President Van?

Yea.

This motion passes four to none.

Thank you very much. 8.4, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7 were moved to the consent agenda. That puts us at our last action item, 8.8. This is motion to approve the final acceptance of the closeout for McKinstry HVAC Improvements Project, ESSER II and III funded PO number P22044. Any questions or comments in regards to that?

Hear and seeing none, can I please have a motion?

I move that the Highline School Board accept as complete the McKinstry HVAC Improvements Project under purchase order P220444 and authorize staff to release retention and close the purchase order. Do I have a second?

Yea.

So it sounds like--

Second it.

[LAUGHTER]

That's better. We'll get to that point. Roll call, please?

Director Holien?

Yea.

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

Director Espinoza?

Yeah.

President Van?

Yea.

This motion passes four to none.

Thank you very much. Well, that concludes our action items for this evening. Moving on to our intro, we have, it looks like, 15 introduction items this evening. 10.1, this is motion to approve revisions to board policy 2110, transitional bilingual instruction. Any questions or comments?

It's great. We'll move that. I hear and see none. 10.2, we have a presentation from Holly. This is motion to approve revisions to board policy 3520, student fees, fines and charges. You didn't get to speak earlier, so it's your turn.

Thank you. I needed that tonight.

So I'm super excited to be here for this. This is a long standing policy, 3520, around student fees and fines. And it's been adjusted by the legislature over the last few years, primarily to tell school districts, you need to waive fines for extracurricular activities for students who qualify for free or reduced lunch or students who are involved in either McKinney-Vento or foster care programs.

We have done that. We did that when it became law, and we are planning to continue to do that. But Dr. Duran really challenged us to look at, where are there-- where might there be other places where schools are charging fines to students? So we started to look into it, and we found schools that were charging for parking, for printing, for technology, fees for certain classes, such as lab fees, or fees for consumables in like an arts class or a ceramics class.

And at the end of the day, we are a public school district, and our job is to provide a free public education for all students who live in this school district. So we're proposing to eliminate the ability to charge fee-- for schools to charge fees to students. We believe that's incongruent with our mission as a public school district. And because we also believe it can place an undue financial burden on our families, it's unacceptable as a public school district.

We will, of course, continue the waiver of extracurricular fees as required by law. But the idea that we would remove the ability to charge fees for these other things, some of which we actually pay for, such as paper, for the printing charges. So I just want to name that fundraising will still be allowed. Donations are always accepted for any of our schools. And schools and staff can still continue to use DonorsChoose to solicit donations.

Also, current ticketing practices remain in place, and students still would need to pay for things such as a yearbook, school spirit wear or that kind of stuff. I do want to also name that, prior to making this recommendation, we solicited input from schools twice. In general, their viewpoints were, yes, we should do this.

There were a few concerns about implementation. There were a few concerns about how schools will make up this money. I will say, it's about \$40,000 a year that gets collected from schools, primarily from secondary. We have looked at budgets, and we believe that there is money within the budgets to continue to pay for these things.

So we believe that this recommendation supports a strong free public education, as we're obliged to provide. And we also believe that it supports our equity policy by making sure that no student is excluded from an activity because of a financial burden. I'm happy to answer any questions that you might have.

Thank you so much, Holly. Directors, any follow up questions for Holly?

I do. So and it might be premature, but how will we ensure a consistent implementation of this, follow through?

So all monies-- and I'm going to look to my friends Jackie and Andrew. All monies that come into a school are-- I don't know the word-- cataloged? We know what funding comes in. So we'll be able to look at that and see if something starts to look like a new fee is popping up over time.

OK. And then I guess, along with that is, how will we communicate that effectively? We heard, today, about being able to grow in our communication to families. So how will we effectively communicate this change, and therefore, increase accessibility?

Absolutely. So if the board approves this at the next school board meeting, we would go through and-- well, let me back up. Schools already know-- already expect that this is coming. Again, anticipating whether or not the board approves it, but they know that this is on the agenda. And so they have already been planning for this change.

And we proposed this change to schools before they did their resource allocation meetings, so that they would know this was potentially in the works before they had their budget meetings and did their budget planning. That's one piece that the schools are aware. If the board approves this, we will then go ahead and use our normal communications out to schools to reiterate this was approved and reminder, here's what you can and can't do. And here's the support that we have here in central office to help you problem solve if you're running into something or you have a question.

The team, you can see from the BAR, it's not just me who worked on this. Tova, Jackie, Andrew also worked on this together, as well as cabinet, and again, all school leaders. In terms of communicating with families, I think, in general, that will be a school thing. But we can certainly take that up on advisement and think about what our back to school communications look like, in terms of including something like this in school communication. Absolutely.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Directors, any other follow up questions?

I do have one. I was looking a little closer at it. And caps and gowns are excluded from this, including yearbooks, school spirit wear. From an inclusionary standpoint, what if someone is unable to purchase a cap and gown for their graduation, when it should be a celebratory occasion?

All of our schools have access to Impact Ed fees-- or excuse me, Impact Ed funds-- that they can access to help offset costs or completely eliminate costs for things like that if they need to. Thank you.

Thank you.

Holly, I do have a couple questions, one statement. Thank you, Dr. Duran, for challenging our staff to really look at this, to make it equitable across the space. I know students that have-- I mean, some can't pay for parking but they can drive and stuff there. So thank you for that.

But also thank you for sharing the cost. The overall cost is \$40,000 across all of our secondary. That's eight of our schools that, from choice schools, the whole bit. So \$40,000? We could find that somewhere to ensure that all of our students have the access and not have to pay for printing fees and the technology, things that have already been provided by our taxpayers.

Correct.

So thank you for that, the challenge and making it work. So that is my statement. No questions.

All right. Thank you all very much.

Thank you. We're going to move to 10.3. This is motion to approve instructional materials committee members. Any questions or comments on this one?

I do have one comment. Dr. Duran, thank you for providing this list here. This list has key stakeholders across the board, from our central office to our building to HEA to families and people of our fact committee. So I'm going through this list, and it's a great list. So I'm looking forward to supporting this and looking for improvements on that.

[SNEEZE]

Bless you.

We're going to move to 10.4. We have a presentation from Dr. Reinig. This is motion to approve purchase of additional units and digital access to updated resources from American Reading Company.

Thank you. Hello, President Van, directors, Superintendent [AUDIO OUT]. The Highline School Board approved American Reading Company core, or ARC core, as our adopted curriculum for elementary language arts back in 2021. Thank you for the chance to briefly share some of the highlights of our literacy related efforts since that time, and with the continued support of the board, where we plan to go next.

Teachers have been working incredibly hard over the last four years to gain expertise with ARC resources, as they would need to do with any new curriculum. Centrally, we've supported their efforts through summer professional learning for all elementary teachers to support the use of ARC, school based training directly from ARC consultants, modeling of the use of formative assessments within ARC to support understanding of individual students' strengths and learning goals as a reader, equipping school administrators and teacher leaders with background and expertise to support ongoing adult learning within each school site and collaborative engagement and observation of literacy instruction through ARC core in alignment with school identified priorities and instructional guidance, informing additional system-wide supports.

As a result of ARC implementation and these efforts over the last four years, we have felt the authentic excitement of our young readers as they take on the role of researchers, investigating fascinating topics like animals, ecosystems and entomology through their reading and then sharing their findings with their peers and teachers through their written work. We've heard our students express confidence in their identity as readers, and increasingly, name clear goals that they have for their continued reading development that have been identified in partnership with their teachers.

We've observed reading instruction that is joyful and more regularly aligned to the full complexity of grade level standards. We've seen increased use of formative reading assessments in classrooms, in both English and Spanish, and corresponding gains in student reading. Annual improvements in student reading growth as measured by i-Ready have also been observed.

A few examples, in 2020-2021, 35% of students tested in Highline Public Schools on i-Ready met typical growth targets. 35%. That has increased each year since, to 48% in '23-'24. In the 2021 school year, the median progress towards typical growth, district-wide, was 50%. That has also increased each year to 93% district wide in '23-'24.

And while our current testing window has not yet completed for this year, you have heard some individual school celebrations tonight representing the hard work of our school communities. While this progress provides encouragement that we are moving in the right direction, we are not yet satisfied with our results. We know our students deserve and are capable of so much more.

With board approval of the additional ARC investments as outlined in agenda item 10.4, we will be maximizing valuable literacy instructional time in both dual language and non-dual language elementary classrooms. We will also be providing all teachers with access to current and future curricular updates, including a highly sought after improved scope and sequence for foundational literacy instruction in our early grades, as supported through the body of research known as the science of reading.

And knowing, of course, that any curriculum is merely a tool, we will be prioritizing existing resources, both our time and our dollars, to continue to support teachers and their development of practice and use of these materials, including plans for a year-long foundational reading skills series for teachers in the '25-'26 school year. We greatly appreciate the board's direction and your continued support of literacy and language development as a central priority in Highline. And I invite any questions to inform the request for approval being introduced tonight.

Thank you so much. Directors, any follow up questions on this? We still have two weeks prior to, but if you have questions, you can ask them now.

I do have a question. And again, it might be premature, and we could talk about it in the next meeting or so. But you spoke of the time and effort dedicated to strengthen the capacity of teachers to adopt this new sort of upgrade.

So in terms of the dual language program, am I understanding correctly that, now, science and other topics will be taught in Spanish?

That is correct. So science, across the district, will be-- at elementary, will be moving to a specialist model. So similar to what we might think of as students going to another teacher for courses like PE or music, science will also be taught by an individualized teacher for the most part.

Classroom teachers in both dual language and non-dual language schools will still have at least one unit of science that they are teaching. And we are prioritizing those units to most closely align with the ARC content areas, so that there is an integration between reading and science. In our dual language schools, that integrated approach will be taught in both English and the target language. So it will occur in Spanish in our Spanish DL schools.

OK. So will this require teachers who are not a native speaker of the language being taught to also build their language capacity?

We will be-- the same practices we have. We have requirements for teachers in dual language settings that they meet minimum language proficiency skills, and that will be true in this case as well. That won't change.

OK. Thank you.

I do have one question, or more of a comment, I guess. We had a lot of members of the community from the Vietnamese dual language program. How does this play into that?

Yeah. Good question.

To answer a lot of their questions and concerns.

Yeah. So this is related to elementary school. So Vietnamese dual language is part of the programming at White Center Heights Elementary. And it's always a complex one.

We do not have-- our curricular providers do not yet have the amount of readily available materials in Vietnamese as we do-- as we're seeing more and more of in Spanish. But we also offer translations. We do more of that work in making sure that we translate the materials to those languages, and it would operate similarly as it does in Spanish DL settings.

Wonderful. Thank you.

No questions for me. I think we're good. Thank you so much for the presentation.

Absolutely.

We have another presentation from Dr. Grubb. This is on 10.5 motion to approve amendment to contract between Special Ed department and Sunburst Work Advisors in the '24-'25 school year. Dr. Grubb?

Good evening. President Van, members of the board, Dr. Duran, I appreciate the opportunity to provide some additional context around this BAR introduction item 10.5. I can understand and appreciate why the board may have concerns about the rationale behind this action, especially given that we provided assurances that our initial budget estimate would be adequate for this year's costs.

While we begin each year aligned to projected enrollment, the intensity of the student needs was beyond what we had planned for. In September of 2025, the school year began, and we had 24 agency paraeducators. And when I refer to paraeducators in these comments, I'm referring to paraeducator 2s who provide, typically, the more intense one on one services to students.

As you know, the cyber incident then occurred, and HR lost access to its electronic hiring systems. While we shifted to an analog and paper hiring process, the need for paraeducators grew. We turned to Sunburst to assist in filling these needs. By the end of September, we relied on Sunburst for 45 paraeducators.

Then, by June of 2025, this month, we had 64 such agency staff. In a nutshell, the cyber incident channeled us into an increased reliance on agency paraeducators, and that continued throughout the year. My mistake was to underestimate the complexity of this issue, naively imagining that we could simply hire our way out of this.

From my perspective, we are perfectly organized and calibrated, as an organization, to achieve the results we experience. And that happened in this case. My understanding has evolved to frame the root cause of this issue as an interaction between three elements.

One, the authority of the MDT and IEP teams to allocate and commit district resources, such as one paraeducator assignments and service of student need. These could be done by Highline MDTs and IEP teams, or it could be students transferring in with those needs identified in their IEPs. These are legally binding commitments.

The second point is labor supply. Wages are a critical part of the ability of the district to recruit and retain these staff. And I applaud and thank this board's action to raise salaries and provide HR with a critical tool to recruit and retain these hard-to-fill positions. Despite these efforts, 67 paraeducators exited the district over the course of the year. This speaks to the need for greater training and support to retain these staff members.

Three-- and this is perhaps the most complex point of this triangle-- incentive structures. Principals, to their credit, have hired 93 para two positions over the course of this year, and they should be commended for this. At the same time, principals will candidly express a lack of urgency to prioritize replacing experienced agency staff with less experienced staff.

This speaks to the incentives operating within the organization to promote fiscal efficiency. The solution to Highline's reduction in dependence on agency staff will involve a cross-departmental effort across human resources, business services, special education and school leadership. I welcome this challenge and commit to working collaboratively with my colleagues to find the set of solutions that best serve our students and promote fiscal responsibility.

Maybe just a quick note on costs. While the hourly rate of an agency paraeducator versus a Highline hired paraeducator is nearly double, once employee costs such as full benefits and vacation pay are included, that annual cost is about \$13,000 more for the agency para over the cost of the Highline employee. I just felt that was important to note.

Thank you. Thank you so much, Dr. Grubb. Board directors, any follow up questions that you would like to ask?

Thank you, Dr. Grubb. I do have a couple of things. What, if you could potentially generalize what the when a principal or an AP comes to the HR department and says, we have someone departing as a paraeducator, when is that position then posted? When is it interviewed? And when is it technically or ultimately hired? What is a general timeframe?

It's much more efficient and quick when we have access to our electronic systems. That was part of the issue with the cyber event. I think any principal would say, it's not fast enough. I think my HR staff would say, we do it as quickly as we can. It varies depending on the efficiency within which the requisition is put into the system.

Position control requirements necessitate that the budget office ensure that the position is adequately budgeted. That takes some time. And then the actual process of posting it to the website is largely just constrained by the volume with which those come in. But that happens fairly quickly.

There is another way-- and I mentioned 93 paraeducators were hired in that process, and that is to centrally hire through pools. And throughout that process, HR staff did, realizing the urgency around this, simply generate pools and then hire directly into those pools and place folks. That happened-- that happens quickly.

Great. Thank you for that. I think, I've heard from a lot of teachers, APs, paras, that once there is a need, it's not filled quick enough, and it puts a strain on the system. And we're putting teachers at a disadvantage to take care of a lot of the students. So any way that we can streamline that would be very beneficial to the teachers.

I really appreciate them. We hear that frequently as well. I think of one just anecdote here of a principal who did everything that we would ask. He had two such positions. He went through the requisition, the hiring process, hired those folks, placed them, started them. One resigned after two days on the job, the other after three days on the job.

And that's in tension with our agency staff, who, by and large, know what they're getting into, have some training, have experience. And so part of this incentive structure that we have right now is a principal would wonder, with all the things we have to do, I have an agency staff member in place. Why would I disrupt that? You can see how complicated it gets. Yeah.

Thank you for that.

Directors?

OK. Hi, Dr. Grubb. Thank you, first of all, for just sort of walking us through your reflection process as to your mistake or your learning and your team's. So I think I have 1.5 questions.

[LAUGHTER]

The first question is you outlined those three root causes. What's underneath those? What's at the foundation? What's allowing those root causes to happen? And then I hear about the IT issue at the beginning of the year. But that's just this year. And I'm assuming these things were present before. So that might be connected to that first question.

I might have an answer and a half for the question and a half. Some of these issues are kind of endemic. I do think, in part, this year, it increased. And I think the cyber incident was part of the increase in reliance on specifically paraeducator 2s. I love your root cause question. My best answer to that is that it's the interaction among all three of those elements.

There are, unlike many administrative decisions, the decision to provide a student one on one paraeducator, the authority for that decision really exists within the MDT and the IEP team. And it creates a legally binding commitment for the district to provide that level of service. And that is not something that the business office can then substitute its judgment for. It's not something that the HR department can substitute its judgment for. It's something that we are required to provide.

And I think there is a lot going on around the identification of an adult one on one support as the way to provide specially designed instruction that can be maybe explored a little bit further. And then I also think that there can be more done, and this is mentioned in the BAR, around fading strategies, to ensure that students aren't becoming dependent upon the one on one paraeducator for that. So that's a constellation of need.

One reason I'm kind of just so fascinated by this, it kind of mirrors my own professional life. I started as one of these one on one paraeducators. I think the other piece that is in play here is the labor market. We've talked before about retention being the new recruitment. There are some issues that can be resolved by increasing salary. We're very competitive in that space.

But if people aren't trained, feeling efficacious in their role, don't have adequate orientation, those are all root causes for retention issues. And I think that's playing out here. And then third, just the incentive structure for hiring and retaining the agency para versus the new hire.

I think there are a lot of incentives in place that the system defaults to, to retain the agency paraeducator, especially if the opening occurs mid-year. And it's interacting with principal workload, and probably from the point of view of parents and teachers, principals, a case can be made of what's in the student's best interest, particularly if we have a more skilled, more experienced agency paraeducator in place, and it's going to take time to build that skill set of the new hire.

OK. Thank you.

Thank you so much, Dr. Grubb. Some probably 2.5 statement or comments here. In regards to you shared about working with our labor partners with the solution, but our goal is to be making sure it's a permanent solution. And going out to Sunburst is fairly expensive. It's very, very expensive.

You're asking for another \$970,000 where our budget was already at \$4 million. For that price, what quality of paras do we get from Sunburst? And how do we ensure that the outcomes are there? Right? Do we have the authority to let somebody go and say, this person is not the right fit for our school, blah, blah, blah, the whole bit? So I just want to make sure, for that price, that we're getting the best quality for our staff and our students there.

Right. No, great question. And just in terms of the dollars and cents, and maybe I can answer the question from, both a business lens, but also an educational value lens. From a business lens, the cost of the agency para is about \$13,000 more. So what you see in this board action item, these costs would otherwise be appearing before you in the personnel report in the form of a paraeducator hire.

And the advantages, if you will, of the agency hire is the convenience and flexibility. We can relatively quickly contact the agency, have someone with experience in place in very short order. And the cost for that convenience and expertise is about \$13,000 a year.

From an educational standpoint, they're not our employees. They don't have the same connection to the school, the vision, the mission that especially a long term employee of our own choosing and our own development would have. And so we have a strong interest in having the Highline hired, both economically and educationally.

The other piece I'd just say is that all of these positions are represented by Teamsters IV. And we have an obligation, under the collective bargaining agreement, to hire our own employees that would then be, in all likelihood, dues paying members of Teamsters IV.

And for those reasons, this is not a sustainable way to continue going forward with this reliance on agency paras. The agency is intended to be a temporary, not a permanent, solution.

Thank you so much. Just one more comment here is just want to thank you for coming up with some different initiatives as far as the central hiring and just making sure that you're able to place the paras where the immediate need's at. So just being able to think more from top level down and supporting all of our schools versus at the site level, so thank you for that.

And then just a quick shout out to Gaye and Darren. I know that they grapple-- and I talked to Gaye a lot about this over the years, going, Gaye, what's going on? How can we support? And just making sure that we talk about dollars and cents a lot and supporting our students. They just got to make sure that we're taking care of our fiscal responsibility. So thank you for that.

Thank you for that comment. And, at the end of the day, I think when we think about any of this, we are centering the image in our mind of that student with whom we worked. For me, his name was Adam and it was over 30 years ago, who is depending on and relying on that adult relationship to ensure that he receives the education he needs. I think that centering of students at the core of all this is what I know we're all about.

Thank you very much. Directors, any other questions? Hear and seeing none, thank you, Dr. Grubb.

Thank you.

It doesn't look like we have any other presentations tonight. So we're moving to 10.6. This is motion to approve resolution 07-25, Washington Interscholastic Activities Association, WIAA, for the '25-'26 school year. Any questions or comments?

I have a question.

Yes.

So what happens with our sports if we don't approve this?

That's a great question.

Thank you.

You're welcome, Phil.

[LAUGHTER]

Good evening, Dr. Duran, President Van and our directors, especially to our new directors. Thank you. It's my first time in front of you. The question, I believe, was, What happens if this is not approved?

Correct.

There are no other options for our high school and middle school teams to participate.

So what does that mean, for our high school and our middle school teams?

We would then-- I haven't heard of this happening across the state in my years as athletic director. It would then turn into, in essence, strictly a club type of a format within each school, to the extent that a school wanted to sponsor a club without anybody to play.

So essentially, the school would then be tasked with sponsoring a club for the kids to practice with themselves, but they wouldn't be able to compete in any sports within the state or whatever districts that we generally compete against? Is that what I'm hearing?

That's exactly correct.

OK. Thank you, Phil, for the clarification.

Yes, you're welcome.

No other questions for me.

That was a great question. Thank you for asking that. Any other follow up questions?

Thank you.

Thank you very much. 10.7, motion to approve-- motion to add girls flag football as a WIAA sport offering in Highline Public Schools. Any questions or comments?

I just have a comment. I've heard a lot about girls flag football. And I think it sort of embodies the inclusionary standpoint of Highline of we have boys, men that are playing football, but then we don't have anything for females? I don't think that's the Highline promise. I just want to make it public that I'm in full support of women's flag football.

Thank you very much. 10.8, this is motion to approve the 2025 Running Start expenditures. Any questions or comments?

President Van, just for the record, it's 2025-2026.

I apolo-- the '25-'26. Motion to approve the '25-'26 Running Start expenditures. Thanks for pointing that out.

10.9, this is motion to approve utilizing USDA Commodity Foods in the '25-'26 school year. Any questions or comments? Hear and seeing none, 10.10 motion to approve purchases from Triple B Corporation, formerly AKA Charlie's Produce, in the '25-'26 school year. Any questions or comments?

Hear and seeing none, 10.11, motion to approve purchases from US Foods Inc in the '25-'26 school year. Any questions or comments? All of this talking about food is making me hungry.

10.12, this is motion to approve dairy purchases and Intergovernmental Cooperative Purchasing Agreement with South Kitsap School District for dairy products bid contract B002-2425 for the '25-'26 school year. Any questions or comments?

I would just quickly like to interrupt and just make sure our new directors know Lisa Johnson, the director of nutrition services, is back here ready to answer questions. But thank you for being here, Lisa. Stand up real quick, so everyone sees you. There you go. Get you going, get your brain going again.

Lisa did help serve lunch with me a couple weeks back. It was-- I believe I've brought it up before, but listening to her talk about how the funding for nutritional services is dependent upon mostly grants, and maybe Lisa, you could come up and just do a little spiel of where the funding comes from. Going to pull you up there.

There you go. Got put on the spot.

Since you're here.

[LAUGHTER]

So thank you. So thank you for having me speak on funding. So primarily, federal funding for our programs, we are a government program that operates within a school district. And so we have to follow all of the rules and regulations of the USDA programs. And so we are dependent on meal reimbursement.

And what people don't understand is we do not get funding up front. We actually get reimbursed for the meals that we serve. So a healthy food service department, nutrition department, is good for a district. And so we really do all we can to promote strong and healthy participation. And so next year, again, meals are available at no cost, and that is a relief to a lot of our families. And so we're really happy about that. Any other questions?

Directors, any other?

Thanks, Lisa.

Thank you very much.

Thank you.

Thank you, Lisa.

Thank you all for your support. And yes, everyone thought he was a chef. So they were so excited.

[LAUGHTER]

It was good.

10.13, this is motion to approve resolution 10-25, Tyee High School Replacement Project, grant conveyance of property for right of way street improvements along 188th Street to the City of SeaTac. Any questions or comments? And Jackie had shared this presentation earlier, so.

I know that the city was not able to come out today to speak. Is it possible that somebody might be available before we vote on this?

I can answer that, and I can follow up. The city manager just sent me an email and did apologize for not being here. They did offer to come out to the school board. I'm not sure if they'll be able to be before the vote, but we definitely will ask them.

I think before the vote-- I'm sorry-- if possible, if you would relay that, that it would be great to be able to have the conversation prior to voting on it. I think that would be most helpful. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you for that. Any other questions or comments on 10.13? Hear and seeing none, thank you. Vice President, Tidholm. 10.14, this is motion to approve builder's risk insurance for Pacific Middle School Replacement Project.

Any questions or comments? Hear and seeing none, and our last intro is 10.15. This is motion to approve district-wide intercom systems upgrade to the Telecenter Universe Solutions. Questions or comments on this?

I do have a question. Looking through the reason why we want to upgrade the intercom systems, it specifically said that it would go-- the calls would go to the certain entities that you're requesting, whether it be the principal or other entities. What would that look like? Who would be managing that? Where does it end up going, at the end of the day?

So I'm not sure if Dr. Grubb has the answer to that. I'm assuming it would be our safety and security, our community safety department. But we will find that out and respond prior to our next meeting.

Thank you.

Thank you very much. Well, that concludes all of our introduction items. Would you-- directors, would you like to add any items to the consent agenda?

Hear and seeing none, I do have one, though. I would like to move 10.2-- this is motion to approve the revisions to board policy 3520, student fees, fines and charges-- I would like to move that to consent agenda.

I'll second.

Roll call, please?

Director Holien?

Yea.

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

Director Espinoza?

Yes.

President Van?

Yea.

This motion passes, four to none.

Thank you. So, 10.2 has been moved to consent. With that, can I please have a motion to adjourn?

I'll make a motion to adjourn.

I will second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Yes.