

Highline Public Schools | School Board Regular Meeting - September 3, 2025

Good evening, everybody. Welcome to our regular school board meeting. Today is Wednesday, September 3, at 6:00 PM. Welcome back-- first day of school. Can will you please stand up for the Pledge of Allegiance? Thank you. Roll call, please.

Director Espinoza?

Here.

Director Tidholm?

Present.

Director Holien?

Present.

President Van?

Here. And Director Alvarez has an excused absence. And to my left is Dr. Duran, our superintendent. Any calls for changes or additions to tonight's board meeting agenda?

I would like to move 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, 8.8, 8.9 all to consent agenda.

Thank you. I just want to repeat this here and then ask any directors if they have any questions. Director Holien asked to move 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, 8.8, 8.9 to the consent agenda. Is that correct?

That is correct.

OK. Directors, are there any comments or questions to these that you have any concerns about? [INAUDIBLE]

I'll second.

Thank you.

And can we do a roll call vote, please?

Yeah, get a roll call, please.

Yes. Director Tidholm?

Yea.

Director Espinoza?

Yes.

Director Holien?

Yea.

President Van?

Yea.

This motion passes 4-0.

Thank you very much.

All right, we're going to move to our first day of school video. Today is our first day of school. Tonight we are starting our board meeting with a video from our superintendent. We are lucky to have a leader who is also a parent in our district. So let's go ahead and watch our video.

[VIDEO PLAYBACK]

I think I have a really unique perspective now, being the leader of Highline Public Schools and being a parent in Highline Public Schools. I get to drop my son off at school every day, interact with other students that he's around. These kids will come out and just call out, amigo! And so they don't see me as a superintendent, they don't see me as a parent, they see me as a friend. And I think that's a really great thing to be able to have here in Highline that I think is incredibly unique.

Being a parent has really helped me see the system from a different lens. We had one of our first parent-teacher conferences and I learned so much in that process. It made me think about how are we ensuring that our families are getting information that can really support their students-- know where they are, whether it's reading, writing, or math or language acquisition? It just gave me a really unique perspective on how I can support our system as a whole, ensuring that we're helping our families understand the work that we're doing to help their students be successful.

I think one of the hopes that I have for my son and for all of our students here in Highline is that they love learning. I am watching our son unlock the code of reading, and it has just been fabulous to watch. It's just bringing this whole new level of joy to him.

I got a notification that I had a message from our son's teacher with a picture of our son reading on the floor. And the message basically said that our son is taking every minute that he can to read a book. She is seeing the magical moment that reading is being unlocked for our son. It just made my heart sing.

That's what I want for all of our students. Find things that they're passionate about, things that they love. Learning environments matter for our students, and I want to ensure that every one of our students is in an environment that makes them feel welcomed, valued, and safe.

[END PLAYBACK]

That was great. Thank you so much, Dr. Anne, for sharing that with us. With that, I'm going to kick that off.

[CHUCKLING]

Yeah, I'll just say a couple of things. Yeah, brings a little emotion for me just to see that. Just knowing-- just really grateful to our educators and our teams at our schools that just do an amazing job.

Just really grateful because I know I only meet the needs of my own student. They're meeting the needs of other students in our school district. And I'm proud to have my student enrolled in Highline Public Schools.

And I would say today, my wife and I had the opportunity to drop off-- you know, Mateo, on the first day of school, our oldest son, he was going to be attending one of our schools. And he was nervous and not quite ready for first grade. However, he carried a stuffed animal with him named Foxy. Foxy was given to him last year by his kindergarten teacher to comfort and support him.

And he was in charge of taking care of Foxy over the summer. And so he held it close today. And when the time is right, he'll take it back to his kindergarten teacher to give comfort to another student.

And I just think that just speaks volumes to the care, support, and value that our educators place on creating a culture of belonging. Good to see and live this every day as a parent and as a leader here in Highline. And I'm truly grateful for our educators, our staff, our leaders, and all of our schools for creating these environments for my family, for all of our families.

What our educators do on a day-to-day basis makes the difference for our students today and far into their future. I'm also excited because we have some first-day photos I think we're going to be showing today. So let's go and roll those and we'll see the wonderful things that were happening out in schools today.

[VIDEO PLAYBACK]

[UPBEAT MUSIC]

Could you say your name for me?

Lucas.

Everybody say it.

Lucas!

OK, here we go.

[INAUDIBLE]

[END PLAYBACK]

All right, wonderful. Thank you, Communication Team, for putting those together. And now have the honor of doing an introduction of our new administrators. We did some at our last board meeting and split them up a little bit, so we have some others tonight.

So I am happy to have the privilege to continue to introduce our new administrators to Highline. Thank you for being here tonight. And for those that are new to the district, welcome to Highline. Thank you in advance for your work to ensure the Highline promise is true for each and every one of our students.

I will read a little bit about each new administrator, then ask them to stand to be recognized. So first I'm going to start off with someone who is not new to Highline, but has been here for a bit, Tamasha Emedi-Frye, who is a principal at Glacier Middle School. Tamasha is a new principal at Glacier Middle School.

Tamasha most recently served as assistant principal at Glacier Middle School and Hazel Valley Elementary. She began her career in Highline as a teacher at Bow lake Elementary School. Tamasha holds a Bachelor's degree in Political Science with a K-8 endorsement from Gonzaga University, as well as a Master's degree in Education and an administrative certificate from Washington State University. Tamasha, please stand so we can give you a big honor and recognize you for being here.

[NO AUDIO]

Thank you for being here. All right, next up is Stephanie Mathias, who is assistant principal at Glacier Middle School. Stephanie has been selected as the new assistant principal at Glacier Middle School. She most recently served as the assistant principal at Woodridge Elementary School in the Bellevue School District.

Previously, she was an AP at Wilburton and Enatai elementary schools and taught at elementary schools in Bellevue. She began her career as a Peace Corps volunteer in North Macedonia, working as a teacher and an instructional coach. Ms. Mathias earned a Bachelor's degree in Integrated Studies and an Elementary Education certificate from Seattle Pacific University, and a Master's degree in Education with the Principal's Certificate from Seattle University. Welcome to Highline, Stephanie. Good to see you here.

[NO AUDIO]

All right, we're going to move on to [? Torin ?] [? Karsten. ?] [? Torin ?] is our Assistant Director of Digital Transformation. He is a proud graduate of our own Evergreen High School. By there today, I hope you get a chance to go see it.

He began his career in Highline nearly 30 years ago as a student technology intern. Since that time, Torin has held many roles in Highline including senior systems administrator, junior systems administrator, network engineer, engineering data technician, building computer support technician, and helpdesk team member. Torin, congratulations on your new role, and thank you for being here in Highline.

--has Elizabeth Paulo, who is a CT Assistant Director. Elizabeth most recently served as a CT Specialist in Highline. Her background includes teaching CT at Chinook Middle School and working as instructional technology specialist in both the Auburn School District and a district in Texas. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education and a Master's degree in Instructional Technology from the University of Texas at San Antonio, along with certifications in technology education, technology applications, and CT administration. Congratulations, Elizabeth, and thank you for being part of our team. Who is this, door C? There they are. Thank you.

All right, if any directors have any comments to share, I invite them to do so now. So our new administrators may leave before the board meeting continues.

Thank you so much, directors. Any questions or comments?

I want to say thank you everybody. Welcome to the team and congratulations on those that were promoted. Can't wait to do the work with you all.

Any other questions or comments? All right, thank you so much. Yes, I would love to have you guys come-- don't leave just yet.

[CHUCKLING]

Would have you-- welcome you come on up here for a photo, please.

While we're not highlighting any particular recognitions tonight, I want to name and recognize the following for the month of September. We invite you to visit our Facebook page and explore these recognitions. First one is Attendance Awareness Month. National Hispanic Heritage Month begins on September 15, and National Arts and Education Week is September 14th through the 20th. So please come visit our Facebook page.

Now moving to our superintendent's update, Dr. Duran.

All right, I'm ready to go this week. All right, well, welcome to '25-'26 school year. Happy first day of school. I had the opportunity to visit six schools today with Deputy Superintendent Reinig this morning and the afternoon. Our first day of school is always inspired, a wonderful reminder of why we do the work that we do.

I just want to share a few highlights from our visits today. At the elementary level, we had the opportunity to go over to Mount View Elementary School. And Principal Kaplan was outside working with the paraeducators, running a recess rodeo to ensure students knew the activities available and expectations during recess. We also had the opportunity to walk through a few classrooms and see teachers creating opportunities for students to get to know each other while establishing clear classroom expectations that will last throughout the year.

At the middle school level, we went over to Chinook Middle School. We observed a great activity related to identity as a way to build relationships and connections to one another. It was great to see our students learning about each other, including where they are from, what hobbies they enjoy, food who they like, and other ways that students choose to demonstrate their identity to their peers.

At the high school level, we had the wonderful opportunity-- there are two new high schools and they are just amazing. I appreciate the words from Principal Terry at Tyee when she told the students at the ribbon cutting, you matter, you belong, and you deserve this. One of our strategic plan goals is culture belonging, where every student feels welcomed, valued, and safe, and these buildings help us live that goal. Thank you to the voters who supported the bond that built these fantastic new schools.

I just want to share also that there is just a couple of memories that are just really etched in my mind. One was over at Tyee Middle School where a student, during some changes with the PSSE schedule, was sitting up at the top of the common area. And he was just in this place looking out upon that great space. And I wanted to get in his head and just like, what are you thinking right now? But seeing him look out around that amazing space was just really heartening to me.

And then over at Evergreen High School, there's a couple spaces in the classroom area, where if you go to the end of the hall, they're looking out into the courtyard. And it reminds me of a college campus.

There was a couple of our young female students hanging out there, and it was just good to interact with them. And they were just so grateful for the space, knowing that it's just making a huge difference for them. But those two memories are just etched in my mind, because that's exactly why we create these buildings, ensure that our students are in amazing learning environments.

And there's always systems learnings and things to improve upon the next day, but I'm proud to work alongside the amazing staff who support all of our students every day to ensure the Highline promise is true for each and every one of our students. I want to thank our staff for all the work that they do. And thank you to our students, families and community for coming together to make Highline such a special district.

Let's make sure that '25-'26 is an amazing school year-- a little bit calmer year. I'd now like to welcome Jeb Binns, our Highline Education President, to the podium to share a few remarks. Welcome, Jeb. Good to see you today.

[INAUDIBLE] mic is no longer on. Hello, let's start that again. Dr. Duran, President Van. Congratulations on a first day.

And actually, I want to start with this, by saying congratulations to the transportation team who pulled off a minor miracle today to get everybody there. When the system-- not our system, somebody else's system went-- [IMITATES EXPLOSION] and they had to reschedule everything by hand. So that was pretty amazing. So props to the folks who spent a significant amount of time over there today making sure that our students' needs were met. So hats off to folks just redeploying and getting it done. So that was pretty amazing.

You know, this is a great time of year-- the excitement of students in class. My daughter, it's her first day of her last day in Highline Public Schools. So she was out for her first day of school picture in her brand new senior jeans that she and her friends have painted over the last couple of weeks. And they look rather amazing, just senior class of '26 and all of her activity. They were really cool.

And so just to see the excitement of going through this. She's part of the Link Crew, helping welcome the freshmen yesterday and doing those things. But these things that we do to help our students fit in and belong is rather special. So I appreciate that.

I also want to just mention last week, in between the school board meetings, one of our [? ILADs ?] reached out to me-- this is Dr. King-- and said, hey, let's connect. This is a first-- first person in that role who said, let's work together, let's connect, and let's have a meeting and see how things operate. And I just really appreciated the time that we spent to talk about experiences and build relationship because our work is so relational. So I just wanted to thank Kevin for the time that he spent, so thank you. And those investments of time pay off down the road when you need to solve a challenging problem, so I appreciate that.

In terms of the school year, let's get going. We got lots of kindergarten students out here in the South End, so got some challenges that we're going to have to face to try to figure that out. But I also get really excited when there's lots of kindergarten students in the South End, because that's lots of kids in the district, and that makes me happy.

We'll continue our positive enrollment numbers, which I think is great. And it's great faith in public schools, and so let's get to it. So have a great year. Have a good meeting. Thanks a lot, appreciate it.

All right, thank you, Jeb. Appreciate that. And that concludes the superintendent's comments tonight. Thank you.

Thank you so much, Dr. Duran. We're going to move to our directors' reports. I'm going to start with you, Director Holien.

Thank you, President Van. Happy first-- well, for parents and students and community members, it is the first week of school. Having a wife as a teacher, it's been sort of nerve wracking the last two weeks, helped setting up a classroom while two children are running around.

I have a different perspective of educators and the administrators of how much work goes into the start of a school year. One of the principals that I ran into today, she was like, I'm just grateful that there's not a cyber attack. Everything's smooth. So really, hats off to everyone.

But also, hats off to the parents. This is a big, big stepping stone in their lives, especially if you have a senior or if you have someone going into middle school or kindergarten. So hats off to them as well.

A quick reminder, it's-- [CLEARS THROAT] excuse me-- Attendance Awareness Month. A reminder that showing up every day helps students feel connected and ready to learn. Strong attendance builds lasting habits, keeps students on track, and builds confidence.

We really want what's best for kids, and Highline staff are here to support attendance in every way possible. Whether it's with transportation, health care, or other needs, schools are here to connect families to resources. In Highline, we're committed to working together so every student is supported and ready to learn. Thanks.

Thank you so much. Dr. Espinoza.

Hi, everyone. Yeah, it's the first day of school. I have officially now a fifth grader and a second grader. I have a five-year-old who will start in Highline next year. We're very proud of our children. Thank you, everyone who made the first day possible-- to all their teachers and staff.

Let's see, I attended a couple of the back-to-school events at several schools. And also importantly, yesterday I attended the Tyee ribbon cutting ceremony. It was a special event because there were so many families there, students, and community members.

And it was also special because I attended with my fifth grader. I wanted him to see what's possible in his future as he moves through the grades. But it was really important to see all those families seeing themselves be involved in the process and being there and taking pictures and everything like that. So hats off to everyone who was able to participate and who made it possible-- the grand opening at Tyee on time and on budget. Thank you.

Thank you so much. Vice President Tidholm.

Yes, I had the pleasure yesterday of attending Evergreen High School's ribbon cutting, which is super exciting. My mother graduated from there. My babies will be there.

And our babies deserve it. Like our very own [? Aaron ?] Garcia said, our babies deserve nice things. Our babies deserve all of the things, but they definitely deserve nice things. And the school is amazing.

Just seeing the babies walking through the hallways and so excited about all of the things, including the multiple charging stations they have everywhere. Which I'm sure is supposed to be for their laptops, but we'll also keep those cell phones charged, which they will hopefully not be using during class. I know it sounds good in theory, huh? But yeah, super excited for that.

It was just a beautiful event. And the design of it-- it really just honors the evergreen forest roots and just creating a learning environment connected to nature. If you look outside a lot of the windows, it's just woods. It's great. It makes me feel all warm and fuzzy inside.

Really grateful for the voters for approving the bonds in 2022 to get that done-- by almost 70%, if I'm not mistaken. Yeah, just beautiful-- the community showing up to bring this vision to life. And super proud and happy that it was done on time and in budget, despite some hiccups that we had throughout the year. Very grateful for Ellie and her team, Jackie and her team, and everybody else that made this happen.

The Family Action Committee is also looking for applications for the 2025-2027 term. Some of you know, I actually was on the Family Action Committee before I was here. And I can say from personal experience that that committee, it really strengthens the partnership between families and Highline. It gives you the opportunity to provide feedback. It guides engagement, helps us stay accountable for our goals.

Looking for about 40 family members with the goal of having a representative for each school to really just reflect the diversity within our school. Yeah, please encourage your families and communities to apply. Apply yourself if you have babies in the district. You can find more information on our website, highlineschools.org.

And again, personal experience-- just great opportunity to understand all the things and the intricacies that go into a school district and how it works and to actually have a voice and all the things. And they feed you, which is a nice little incentive. And if-- there was childcare. Is there still-- and there is childcare. So bring your babies.

The only other thing that I have is, coming up, we have the WSSDA General Assembly on the 20th of September. Super excited for that. And that is--

Well, thank you so much, Vice President Tidholm. Quick question on regards to the WSSDA, the General Assembly-- have you had the chance to review the WSSDA platform? I just want to make sure that if there are any questions or items related to our policies and procedures.

I have had a chance to review it. It seems pretty similar from the platform WSSDA had last year. Especially interested in the platforms talking about academic rigor and equity, as those are directly aligned to our policies in the work of our strategic plan. Don't have any questions about how the different items might align with our work or the position that we've already established, but I do look forward to reporting back on how the assembly went at our board meeting come October 1.

Greatly appreciate that. Thank you very much. It's my turn. So I don't-- it feels weird.

The last 16 years, I've had kids in the district. And not having any pictures at the front door-- but I had the pleasure this past week to send my daughter off as she's a first year teacher-- first year teaching at a neighboring district. To see her excited going out that door, it brings joy.

She also came back and said, Mom, Dad, are you going to volunteer for these field trips? And my wife looks at-- [AUDIO OUT] back into the PTA again. So we're looking forward to that, and just super excited to see the kids at Tyee yesterday, but also in the video today-- their smiles and just ready for the year. So I'm really excited. And thank you for all the teachers, administrators, and staff for everything that they do.

I also had the chance to speak at the All Staff Equity Symposium last week, sharing how the board stands behind the work that's happening within our schools. Highlighted the resolution we passed last year, reaffirming our commitment to protect every student, staff member, and family, no matter their background. As a board, we are united in this work, living our values and keeping our promise to every student.

So thank you for all the Highline staff for engaging in this symposium, so appreciate that. And that concludes our directors' reports. I apologize. Next up is our scheduled communications.

On behalf of the board, we sincerely appreciate you taking the time to join us and share your thoughts this evening. You'll notice that our norms and guidelines are displayed on the screens for your reference. Please remember that you are addressing the board, and there may be students present or watching who are listening carefully to what you are saying.

Please note that while the board is unable to respond directly to your testimony during the meeting, we value your input. So thank you again for being here and speaking with us. First up is Meg Alley.

Hello. My name's Meg Alley. I'm the Communications and Development Director at Team Read. I'm also a proud parent of a student here in the district.

On behalf of Team Read, I want to thank all of you, as well as the Partnerships Office, for considering Team Read as a ready-to-learn partner this year. Team Read is both a literacy tutoring program for elementary school students and a job opportunity for high school students. We recruit and train high school students to work as reading coaches at a nearby elementary school twice a week after school.

Our curriculum is designed to support what students are learning in the classroom. So younger students improve their reading skills while teens get valuable work experience. Because high school students are paid for the time they spend tutoring, Team Read is a direct investment back into the Highline community.

We often hear from our team reading coaches that Team Read is more than a job. These teens take pride in being a role model to a younger student and building positive change in their community. Because our tutoring program has a strong social-emotional learning component, the bond between a reader and their coach is strong and often transformational.

If you're interested in learning more or visiting one of our program sites later this fall, I would love to set that up for you. So please feel free to reach out to me anytime. And again, thank you to all of you and the Partnerships Office for considering us as a ready-to-learn partner.

Thank you very much. Deborah Lipp.

Hello, yes, it was a good first day of school, I heard. Since we only have two minutes, I'd love to praise the board, praise everybody. But I'm going to give you your discrimination-- your record on it. Because a lot of you have not been here-- the new members.

And I haven't been allowed to talk for eight months because I almost got fired last December. In case anybody remembers discrimination 5000-- now, this 3210, whatever. You've lost two board members because they were bullied. I've almost been fired. Mr. Grubbs probably has record of it because I was called in his office after that.

So--

I was screamed by-- OK, I won't remember names.

Thank you.

OK. Then I was screamed at by a board member that's here tonight in my face. And no man in this place got up and nobody said a word. Let's just name names. No-- no names.

Nobody came to my defense. Is this on? Because I don't-- here we go.

So it's really sad when you talk about discrimination because you have a really bad track record and you're adding all this other stuff. And I don't see that getting better because you don't treat your employees with respect. You don't treat parents, and the kids are being bullied. We've talked about this discrimination. It's against certain people, but not all people.

And this really needs to change. And I know it will because I hold on to this verse. "Protect us that we don't want your agenda and follow the rules. Praise the Lord.

Blessed are those who fear the Lord, who find a great delight in his commands. Their children will be mighty in the land. The generation of the upright will be blessed." I hold on to that.

Thank you. Next up is Angela Nguyen.

Hi, my name-- to introduce myself, my name is Angela Nguyen. I go to Highline High School and I am a full time Running Start student at South Seattle College. I'm here this evening to share my experience on how working as a Team Read coach impacted me as a person, and also the children I got the pleasure to work with.

--as a program extends out as a resource for children in elementary schools, who may have fallen behind on their grade level for reading. With one on one sessions, I was able to aid my reader's progression throughout their time in the program. And this sense of community benefits student readers as much as parents and teachers, not only by supporting the student in their reading skill, but as such a way that uses their community as a base of support. This can mean so much for families and educators alike.

As a Team Read coach of three years, I strongly believe that I have made a contribution to my community. I have gained a few insights about myself as a person. And to name a few, I felt I had an abundance of patience to work with elementary school kids, as rough as it can be. Some days are tough, but we work through it. And I feel like my creativity shined in this kind of environment where I had to often improvise to, once again, help engage my reader with the curriculum.

These types of qualities can lend themselves to future opportunities. I know for myself, especially when I go out to the workforce and try to get a new job, these are skills that I can apply to my day to day life. Thank you so much.

Thank you, Angela. Lauren Schmidt.

Hi, My name is Lauren Schmidt, and I am a parent of a first grader. I am here to share a formal complaint that I filed today regarding our district's English Language Arts program. For families whose child has struggled to read, you are not alone. Less than 30% of our third graders are at grade level for reading in ELA.

My complaint asserts that our K-5 ELA program, ARC Core, is not aligned to evidence-based practices. I have requested an official review by the Instructional Materials Committee. The complaint has seven sub-points, including kindergarten materials that encourage three-cueing, red flags in the ERLA assessment, and a lack of knowledge-building topics. Crucially, multiple state departments of education have reviewed ARC Core, finding it, and I quote, "not recommended and should not be used."

The topic of reading and literacy instruction is a difficult one, and it feels a bit like the emperor has no clothes. If you are a parent or an educator who is aware of this issue, then I urge you to speak up. We must speak truth to power if we want to see the change our kids deserve.

I would like to remind our school board, you are the accountability structure in this system. We, the families in this community, rely on you to hold our district accountable. All children deserve to learn to read. And with proper instruction, almost all children can read. We should be asking and expecting for 80% to 90% or more of our kids to be reading at grade level.

By sharing this publicly, I want to make parents, teachers, and district leaders aware that this is a broad, systemic issue, and addressing it properly will require open discussion, more transparency, and specific, actionable solutions. I would like to close with these words from Ida B. Wells. "The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them." For anyone wanting more information, this full complaint is being shared online. And if you are not familiar with the topic of reading instruction and early literacy, I recommend Emily Hanford's *Hard Words*. Thank you.

Thank you very much. Next up is Denay Stell.

How you doing? I'm Denay Stell. I'm a Recreation Coordinator for the city of Burien. In the past, we've been considered for our after-school programs. Through those programs, we've been able to provide opportunities for kids at Cedarhurst and Hazel Valley Elementary.

These are free enrichment programs that range from sports to academic enrichment like karate, speed and agility, Spanish club, things of that nature. Through these programs, these kids-- I think 60% of them had new experiences. It's completely free for all kids and all parents. Just like you guys with the city, we are committed to providing opportunities without barriers for our families and our communities. And I empathize with the work that you guys have to do serving a community with such diverse needs.

Through these programs, we also get to hire high school students. They come in for an internship and go through that program. And part of the programming hours that they get, they get to spend time in these elementary schools. And that usually leads to job opportunities.

And they get experience to all of what the city has to offer-- all the different sectors and things of that nature. So they get to understand how the city around them works and how they can actually impact them. That's part of the internship as well. So through this programming, we really appreciate the opportunities that we are able to provide for our community and kids that you guys all serve as well. So thank you.

Thank you very much. Alex Myrick.

Evening, directors. Our schools are headed down the same road as Seattle's notorious Third Avenue. A local high school student told me recently he cannot enter the lavatory without seeing active drug use. The lavatories are locked except for passing periods.

When the administration knows exactly where and when drug use takes place on campus but does not intervene, that indicates the school has given up. When the school has scores of responsible, professional adults on campus, why can they not arrange for monitoring of the lavatories during passing periods? Each staff member could be on duty for two five-minute periods each week.

In May, three parents came to this podium and told you of their children suffering severe chronic bullying. Out of control students throw chairs and other objects and assault both teachers and classmates. Parents told of their children repeatedly coming home bruised and bleeding. There are no meaningful consequences.

One mother and father told me of their child being physically assaulted on a regular basis. They met with the vice principal, who claimed it was not his job to discipline children. The school has given up.

You do not respond, but we know your rationale. When students are suspended, in detention, or sitting in the vice principal's office, they are not learning. What you are ignoring is that one or two students are allowed to be out of control in their classrooms. They are not learning, nor are the other 20-some students in the room.

When students are subjected to violent bullying at school, their learning is drastically hampered. This is evident by the abysmal scores of Highline students on standardized tests. Half of Highline students are three years or more behind academically. When our district spends \$25,000 per student per year, the community has a right to expect better. It's time for a change.

Very much. And Patricia Bailey.

I have listened to scores of interviews of very capable teachers who sadly quit teaching. Those interviews reveal that student misbehavior, along with the de-professionalization of teaching, are the two primary reasons for poor academic outcomes and teacher burnout. I have testified about the need for teachers to have full control of the methods and practices in their classrooms. Similarly, teachers, along with their building administrators, must be central in devising the rules and procedures that are essential for good classroom order where academic excellence can flourish.

Unfortunately, faulty permissive philosophies have been the rule, as we learned when two Highline parents testified last spring regarding the injury of their children. When a student is sent to the office, a reversal of poor behavior needs to always be the expectation. The "no negative consequences" philosophy does not prepare students for life. If someone is habitually late for work, they will be fired. And if someone speeds while driving, they will get a ticket.

Lack of appropriate learning and discipline in school is the school-to-prison pipeline. All students suffer academically when the lack of enforcement of sound behavioral expectations. The students who want to learn are prevented, while misbehaving students get undue attention for their aberrant behavior.

A priority of the Highline School Board needs to be the full engagement of teachers in devising a no-nonsense discipline protocols. Solutions should not be directed by those not involved in the day-to-day functioning of the school. Teachers know what does and does not work, and discipline protocols must always empower the teachers to do their jobs. Thank you.

Thank you very much. And that concludes our scheduled communications this evening. I'm going to move to our consent agenda. Can I please have a motion to approve our consent agenda?

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

I will second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Yes.

Any opposed? Hear and see none. Thank you very much. We're going to move to our action items.

8.1-- this is motion to approve Pacific Middle School replacement project, approval of the interlocal agreement with the city of Des Moines. Any questions or comments? I know that this was postponed from the 8/20 board meeting. Hear and seeing none, can I please have a motion?

I motion to move the Highline School Board approve the interlocal agreement between the Highline School District number 401 and the city of Des Moines for 24th Avenue South Street improvements fronting Highline School District property known as Pacific Middle School. Can I get a second?

Second.

Roll call, please.

Director Holien?

Aye.

Is that a yes or a no?

Yes.

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

Director Espinoza?

Yes.

President Van?

Yea.

This motion passes 4-0.

Thank you. Thought he was a Highline pirate.

[CHUCKLING]

OK, 8.2, motion to approve revisions to Board Policy 1111, Oath of Office. Any questions or comments? Hear and seeing none, can I please have a motion, please?

I motion to approve the revisions to Board Policy 1111, Oath of Office.

May I have a second, please?

I'll second.

Roll call.

Director Espinoza?

Yes.

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

Director Holien?

Yea.

President Van?

Yea.

This motion passes 4-0.

Thank you very much. 8.3-- this is motion to approve revisions to Board Policy 3232, Parent and Student Rights in Administration of Surveys, Analysis, or Evaluations. Any questions or comments on this?

I do have a question.

OK.

Holly, can I have you? Thank you. So I understand that this is a compliance update. Can you give me some clarification around this update?

Absolutely, thanks for the question.

Thank you.

So this policy relates to the Federal Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment Act, also called the PPRA. It's related to FERPA, which a lot of people know about-- the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. What the PPRA does is sets out specific rules relating to federally funded surveys, evaluations, or analyses that address eight specific topics.

These revisions-- the law has changed over time. Our policy language did not keep up, but our actions have always followed the law. The revisions that we're proposing today are simply updating our policy wording to match the current law. And the same wording that matches the federal law was included in House Bill 1296 during the 2025 legislative session that just ended back in June.

As an example of the changes that are happening here, the current policy uses the line, "opting out of potentially embarrassing mental or psychological problems." The updated policy and the updated law says simply-- changes this to, "opting out from mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family." So the language is a little bit less incendiary than the old language was, from the '70s. I do want to stress that no rights are being added, removed, or changed, and other opt-outs are not impacted.

I also want to add that, while opt-outs are not changing, increasing transparency on some of these controversial topics is a high priority for us. Our first district-wide leader professional development session this year focused on being transparent about what is taught and what activities are happening in schools. The goal really is to strengthen the dialogue between classrooms and home, so families know what students are learning and schools can better understand what's most important to families.

We believe that these topics are best addressed at the classroom level. That allows those who are directly involved in these activities-- for example, those who are reading a certain book-- to explain the purpose and hear directly from parents about what their concerns may be. We do not believe that a broad, universal opt-out of inclusive lessons would benefit students or support the fundamental purpose of public education, which is defined by the state as providing every student the opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills needed to meet graduation requirements and earn a meaningful diploma.

So the purpose, again, of these changes are to be in alignment with federal law and with state law. And our goal is to continue to have transparency around all of these topics with our families. Happy to answer any other questions.

So just to put it simply, it's an updated language to be in compliance with federal legislation.

In a word, yeah.

Thank you.

Directors, any followup questions?

Yes. So is participation in the surveys or fidelity to the data attached to federal funding?

Not sure I understand that question.

If we don't complete the surveys--

Oh.

Broadly, do we risk--

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

--not that I've ever seen anything about. It's certainly not contemplated in the law. It's simply an opportunity for parents to opt out.

OK.

I have a question. How are parents notified of being able to opt out of these surveys?

I would have to probably do a little more research on that. I know for some of the surveys, this is a very, very small amount of work. When I think about some of the other surveys that we do opt-outs on, like Panorama that isn't related to the PPRA-- it's not federally funded.

Families are given an opportunity in advance. They're notified of it, and then they have an opportunity to opt out. Similar with-- that's just a common practice. But it's done at a school level.

Great, thank you.

Thank you.

Any other questions or comments? Thank you so much, Holly, for that. That said, can I please have a motion?

I'll move that the Highline School Board approve revisions to Board Policy 3232, Parent and Student Rights in the Administration of Surveys, Analysis or Evaluations.

May I have a second, please?

I will second that.

Roll call.

Mr. Holien?

Here. Yea.

[CHUCKLING]

Director Espinoza?

Yea.

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

President Van?

Aye! Yea. Yea.

This motion passes 4-0.

[CHUCKLING]

Yeah. 8.4, Motion to approve revisions to Board Policy 3250, Student Records. Any questions or comments?

I do. I do have a question. Let me find-- [INAUDIBLE]. So the data that we collect, part of student records, how are we being mindful to collect-- I'm sorry. How are we making sure that the data is protected? I received questions from community members. I think it was related to the cyber attack last year, and they just wanted to know if there was any connection there.

So this information is student information-- so enrollment, immunizations, things like that. It's in our student information system. I'd have to look to my technology friends to talk about how that's protected.

OK.

But we can get an answer back to you, absolutely.

OK, thank you.

Thank you.

Any other followup questions on that?

No, I just-- I have a comment. I think the first paragraph of the policy is, except by permitted by law, parent, guardian, or adult student consent will be required before the district releases student records. I think that's something important to point out, because there's been a lot of conversation regarding if it can just be put out. So I think that's a better way to put it into policy. So thank you.

Thank you very much. Any other comments or questions? Hear and see none. Can I please have a motion?

I move the Highline School Board approve the revisions to Board Policy 3250, Student Records. May I get a second?

I'll second.

Roll call please.

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

Director Holien?

Yea.

Director Espinoza?

Yes.

President Van?

Yea.

This motion passes 4-0.

Thank you very much. 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, 8.8, and 8.9 have been moved to consent. We're going to move to 8.10. This is motion to approve Learning Assistance Program-- LAP-- readiness to learn partnerships. Any questions or comments on this? Hear and see none. Can I please have a motion?

I'm sorry. Clearly, we're all ready for bed. I move that the Highline School Board approve the Learning Assistance Program readiness to learn partnerships in the amount of \$250,000 for community partnerships. And do I have a second?

I will second.

Roll call please.

Director Espinoza?

Yes.

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

Director Holien?

Yes.

President Van?

Yea.

This motion passes 4-0.

Thank you very much. 8.11, this is motion to approve revisions to salary schedules between Highline School District and central office administrators, executive assistants, Highline Education Association professional technical non-represented, Teamsters I, Teamsters II, Teamsters III, and Teamsters IV staff. Any questions or comments? Hear and see none. Can I please have a motion?

I motion the Highline School Board approve the proposed salary schedule changes for represented and non-represented staff for the 2025-2026 academic year. May I get a second?

I will second.

Roll call please.

Director Espinoza?

Yes.

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

Director Holien?

Yes.

President Van?

Yea.

This motion passes 4-0.

Thank you very much. Moving to 8.12, motion to approve the '25-'26 annual contracts with Everdriven and Hop Skip Drive for the McKinney-Vento Qualified Students Transportation Services. Any questions or comments? Hear and see none. Can I please have a motion?

I move that the Highline School Board approve the 2025-2026 contract with Everdriven, LLC in the amount of \$1 million and Hop Skip Drive Inc. in the amount of \$3 million, for a total of \$4 million, for McKinney-Vento Qualified Student Transportation Services, with minor modifications or adjustments as approved by the superintendent.

I'll second.

Roll call please.

Director Holien?

Yes.

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

Director Espinoza?

Yes.

President Van?

Yea.

This motion passes 4-0.

Thank you very much. 8.13, this is motion to approve the 2025-'26 annual contract with First Student for supplemental student transportation services. Any questions or comments? Hear and seeing none, can I please have a motion?

I move that the Highline School Board approve the 2025-2026 school year contract with First Student Incorporated in the amount of \$250,000 to provide supplemental student transportation services. Minor modifications or adjustments may be made as approved by the superintendent. And do I have a second?

I second.

Roll call please.

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

Director Espinoza?

Yes.

Director Holien?

Yes.

President Van?

Yea.

This motion passes 4-0.

Thank you. 8.14, motion to approve the acceptance of the Air Quality Clean Diesel Electric Bus grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology, and authorize payment for two electric school buses from Schetky Northwest Sales Incorporated. Any questions or comments? Seeing none, can I please have a motion, please?

I move the Highline School Board approve the acceptance of \$696,970.22 in rebate grant funds from the Washington State Department of Ecology as part of the Air Quality Clean Diesel Electric School Bus program. I further move that the Highline School Board authorize the payment for two Thomas Built Jouley electric school buses from Schetky Northwest Sales, Inc. In the total amount of \$834,249.

Can I please have a second?

I will second.

Roll call please.

Director Holien?

Yes.

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

Director Espinoza?

Yes.

President Van?

Yea.

This motion passes 4-0.

Thank you. 8.15, this is motion to approve the Tyee High School replacement project, grant of easement with Highline Water District. Any questions or comments since the revision from the introduction? Hearing and seeing none.

Oh, I did have a question. So the \$1 fee, is that what we're getting paid or what we're paying? I didn't get that clarification.

Have Jackie, our chief financial officer, answer that. Come on up.

So we're actually receiving the dollar. We installed the infrastructure during the project, during the Tyee construction, and we are now transferring ownership over to the Highline Water District so they can maintain all the infrastructure.

OK, thank you.

Thank you. Any other questions? Hear and see none. Can I please have a motion?

I move the Highline School Board approve granting an easement and execute a bill of sale with Highline Water District for the Tyee High School replacement project. May I get a second?

Can I please get a second?

I second.

Roll call please.

Director Espinoza?

Yes.

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

Director Holien?

Yea.

President Van?

Yea.

This motion passes 4-0.

Thank you. And this last one is 8.16, motion to approve a contract for bid number 24-25-3, central admin building south improvement phase III. This is revised since introduction. Any questions or comments? Hear and see none. Can I please have a motion?

I'll move that the Highline School Board authorize the superintendent or his designee to approve a contract with KDK Construction, LLC for \$2,485,000 and-- I'm sorry, \$2,485,010, which includes the alternate \$264,500 and 230-- wait, let me say those numbers again. \$264,000-- I mean 100-- oh my goodness. You guys gotta forgive us. It's the first day of school and it's wearing on us parents, too, clearly.

\$264,500 and \$230,010-- oh, my goodness. Plus-- is it 10.2% Washington State sales tax? Whew! Can I get a second?

Vice President Tidholm, would you just restate the contract-- the name of the company, please?

Just the name of the company? KDK Construction L--

CDK.

Oh, CDK Construction LLC. I'm sorry.

Thank you.

Thank you. Can I please get a second?

I second.

Roll call please.

Director Holien?

Yes.

Director Espinoza?

Yes.

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

President Van?

Yea.

This motion passes 4-0.

Thank you very much. That concludes our action items. But I just want to thank our staff that was here at the last meeting that presented.

That was a really lengthy presentation and just, it answered a lot of questions. I had to go back and listen to it again and just to follow up. So thank you for the presentation and just sharing with the community the information.

With that, we're going to move into our introduction and action items. 9.1, this is motion to approve the '25-'26 superintendent eval focused themes. And I just want to share with the community, per our board policy and procedure number 1630 and 1630P, the superintendent shall be evaluated using the Washington Standards Based Superintendents Framework.

This motion would approve four evaluation focus themes from framework for the '25-'26 superintendent evaluation. The four focus themes are tied to the district's priorities and build upon the '24-25 superintendent evaluation. So any questions or comments from the directors? And then I'm going to ask Dr. Duran if he has any questions, but directors first.

I just want to highlight some of what these themes are. We sat down and we went over it as a board. And I think it's all about collaboration and making sure that we're looking at the district as a whole and trying to make sure that we're incorporating some of these themes for Dr. Duran to work on.

But theme E is, develops explicit strategies and processes to study and improve the district's capacity to improve. Theme C-- works to reduce opportunity and achievement gaps. Theme B-- effectively manages fiscal resources in accord with board priorities and in structural improvement. And theme E-- provides necessary support for effective board decision making. I think that some people won't actually read that, so I just wanted to bring that out.

Thank you very much for that. Directors, any other followup questions or comments?

Oh, I was just going to echo the point about collaboration. And as board directors, one of our main responsibilities is the evaluation of the superintendent, which is an important task, an important responsibility and commitment that we have to all of you. So I appreciate all of my fellow board members and the superintendent for working on this process very collaboratively and landing on those four themes that are really important and relevant and informed by your voice.

Thank you very much.

And I would just echo my appreciation with the collaboration, not just among the board, but with Dr. Duran and the accountability. I mean, not having to necessarily always bring things to your attention, but just being proactive and recognizing what's going well and what's not and really bringing it to us with the focus themes and things that you want to look at as opposed to just micromanaging and beating people over the head for mistakes. Just really recognizing what's going well and what you could do better. And yeah, I look forward to another great year. The best is yet to come.

Thank you so much. I'm just going to ditto what you guys all said. So thank you. Dr. Duran, any followup? All right. With that said, can I please have a motion?

I move the Highline School Board approve the 2025-2026 superintendent evaluation focus themes.

Can I have a second, please?

I'll second.

Roll call.

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

Director Holien?

Yea.

Director Espinoza?

Yes.

President Van?

Yea.

This motion passes 4-0.

Thank you very much. And our second action item, intro and action-- this is motion to approve resolution 12-25 in support of the Puget Sound Skills Center Aeronautics program in partnership with the Museum of Flight. Holly, can-- come on up. We're going to have a presentation on this.

And Juan, come on up.

Hello. Good evening. Holly is here to make sure all the policies are in place, but I'm here to ask for action item and approval tonight. Because obviously, school year started. We need to get the program running.

But it's a program that we've had for 15 years with the Museum of Flight through the Puget Sound Skill Center. We serve about approximately 56 kids a year in a third session program, from 3:00 to 6:00 PM at the Museum of Flight. In addition, we have a summer school program that we run about 140 kids at the Museum of Flight as well.

Over the last 10 years, we've had over 1,100 students served by the program. It's run through the Skill Center as a way to alleviate some of the stress on Raisbeck Aviation. It was originally built by Reba Gilman back in the day after she left Raisbeck Aviation. So we're just hoping to continue the program.

We have addressed a few issues about access. Obviously we don't have buses that go down there, so a lot of our students don't get the readily accessible access down to that area. It's not very bus-friendly in the evening. So we are working on trying to build a daytime program at the Skill Center during the day as well. So with this, I think it will give us that leverage point to pivot and build a more accessible program for Highline Public School kids and also the consortium partner.

Thank you very much. I do have followup questions. Curriculum's been set and nothing is changing. It's just some legal verbiage that is in the resolution.

So the Skill Center has been around for almost 60 years. We've been in partnership with the Museum of Flight since 2015. And the language at that time was a little-- not aligned with district and state policy. So we are simply aligning the language. I believe it was referred to as a-- sorry, I don't want to mess up the language on that one. Yeah, so I believe it was a--

[INAUDIBLE]

I'm sorry.

It was originally labeled as an interlocal agreement. And an interlocal agreement is required to be between two governmental agencies. The Museum of Flight is not a governmental agency.

And so we had to look to a different clause in the same state rule to say, actually, what needs to happen here is a resolution by the school board to say, this program is important to our students. It provides them something that otherwise they would not be able to have. And so the prior way we had gone about was just-- so it's the same program. We're just getting to it via different method that will make sure that we check all of the boxes for OSPI and the state.

Yeah, it's one of the many things we've done over the last-- my tenure over the last five years to right the ship and make sure the language is in policy with the state and also the district policy. So just one more step in the right direction.

Greatly appreciate that. Directors, any followup questions or comments?

Yeah, so I appreciate hearing about the pivot and increasing access by possibly providing transportation. Would that increase enrollment or participation?

The hope would be yes. Right now on average, most of our programs have between 80 and 70 kids during the school day. So we would love to offer the opportunity to 70 or 80 more kids during the school day, in addition to the third session program at the Museum of Flight.

OK, and then just from feedback from students, do you have an idea about what the impact has been for their participation?

Yeah, this is a direct pathway for students to become pilots. And so they gain that through Museum of Flight during the school year, but also continues in the summer. And it's all free. And so that's one of the biggest roadblocks we've overcome, is we have kids that are accessing this pathway that normally would have to pay for private lessons and also flight time. And so we provide all that through the agreement with the Museum of Flight.

Wow, thank you. That's so important. I mean, hands-on experience and the lived experience of being there is just life changing. Thank you.

For sure.

Thank you. Any other followup questions? Thank you guys so much. May I please have a motion?

I move the Highline School Board approve resolution 12-25 in support of the Puget Sound Skills Center Aeronautics Program in partnership with the Museum of Flight. Can I get a second?

I second.

Roll call please.

Director Espinoza?

Yes.

Director Tidholm?

Yea.

Director Holien?

Yes.

President Van?

Yea.

This motion passes 4-0.

Thank you. And that concludes our intro and action items. We're going to move to our intro in the first one. And there's going to be a presentation. 10.1, motion to approve revisions to board policy 3210, Nondiscrimination.

Hi, again.

Hi.

So technical compliance revision is the name of today's board meeting. These are also technical revisions also from House Bill 1296, which I mentioned when I was up here earlier. What the House bill did was expanded the nondiscrimination to extend nondiscrimination protections to people based on-- the language exactly out of the law-- ethnicity, homeless, immigration or citizenship status, and neurodivergence. In addition to the changes that had to be made because of state law, I went ahead and reordered the language in the nondiscrimination statement that's in policy to match our published nondiscrimination statement that we include on all of our websites and all of our other publications, such as applications and enrollment forms and things like that. Happy to answer any questions.

Thank you so much, Holly. Any followup questions?

We still have two weeks, so if there's anything we can most definitely be in contact.

Absolutely, thank you.

10.2-- this is motion to approve the use of WCP Solutions to purchase custodial supplies for the '25-'26 school year. Any questions or comments? Hear and seeing none. 10.3-- motion to approve the declaration of the identified district vehicles as surplus property and authorize sale via GovDeals. Any questions or comments on this?

Yes, so do we actually get money back from selling these? I saw that some of them were very old, like from the early '90s, which is not very old because I was born in the '80s.

Can't make any promises about how much we will get, but generally we get something. I'm hoping for more than \$1.

OK, sounds good.

[CHUCKLING]

Thank you.

Any other questions? OK, thank you.

Thank you very much.

10.4-- motion to approve Valley View School replacement project, modification of easement to Highline Water District and execute a bill of sale. Any questions or comments? Hear and see none. And our last one is 10.5, motion to approve the KCDA Field Turf Sylvester Field installation, closeout of PO number CP230081.

Any questions or comments? Hear and see none, so that concludes our intro items. Any calls for additions or to our upcoming consent agenda? None. Can I please have a motion to adjourn?

I first want to apologize for the lack of my tongue cooperating with me today. But on that note, I do make a motion to adjourn.

All those in favor?

[INAUDIBLE] will second?

I will second.

Oh.

All those in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Any opposed? None. Thank you very much. Have a great evening.