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2023-08-01, Regular Meeting

Agenda



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03:35:01

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- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] The regular meeting of the Newark Board of Education for August 1, 2023 is now called to order. Roll call, please.
- ▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] President Thomas?
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Here.
- ▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] Member Hill? Here. Member Jones? Here. Member Nguyen? Here. Member Plancarte? Here.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Are there anyone, is there anyone from the public that would like to speak to closed session items? Seeing no one, we will be adjourning to closed session where we will discuss public employee dismissal, discipline release, public employment, Lincoln School principal, conference with labor negotiators, employee organizations, NTA and CSCA, conference with legal counsel, existing litigation, case number 23CV034303, and conference with legal counsel, anticipated litigation.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Member Nguyen made the motion, and Member Jones seconded the motion. Also in closed session regarding conference with legal counsel anticipated litigation, a motion was made to reject the claim by Member Nguyen and seconded by Member Hill, and it was a unanimous five vote to reject that claim. Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I believe the superintendent would like to remove one of the items from the agenda?
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] I do. Yes, thank you, President Thomas. Let me go find it real quick. We are going to remove 11.6 to the next agenda. as well as the one that goes with it, which is 12.4. So 11.6 and its companion 12.4.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] OK. If there's no other changes requested by board members, I would entertain a motion to approve the agenda with the exception of 11.6 and 12.4.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] I move to approve.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] I'll second.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I'll second that. OK. Member Hill made the motion. Member Jones seconded it to approve the agenda with the removal of 11.6 and 12.4. Please vote.
- ▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] 5 yays, 0 nays.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Perfect. 5 yays? OK, thank you. Next, we move on to superintendent approval of I mean, introduction of administrators.

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- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Yes, wonderful. This is one of my favorite things to do. And I am so excited this evening to be introducing our new administrators this year. They are just a fabulous bunch of people. So first, I'm going to begin with our new principal of Kennedy Elementary School. That's Miss Ifeoma Obodozie.
- ▶ [**Ifeoma Obodozie**] Good evening. I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to serve as new principal of Kennedy. I am enthusiastically looking forward to meeting all the students, the staff, the parents, and I'm looking forward to collaborating with them in making sure that we have excellent outcomes for our students. So thank you so much. I feel so honored.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] And I think we'll introduce your newly approved principal of Lincoln Elementary School, Ms. Amanda Gollither.
- ▶ [**Amanda Gollither**] Hi, everyone. It's nice to see all of you again and some new faces as well. I am really excited to be back here in NUSD and continue leveraging my experience at music to help our students at Lincoln move towards that academic excellence and just build off the community they have. So thank you so much for having me back.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Thank you. We are so pleased to have you back, Ms. Gallaher and Evie. It's great that you're here, and we look forward to great things happening at Kennedy.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] At this time, it's my great pleasure to introduce the interim co-principal from Newark Memorial High School, Mr. Pat, or Patricio Uribe, who also is a graduate. He is like a 40-year resident of Newark, graduate of our schools, a former administrator in multiple districts, and now a retired interim. He has served at Newark Memorial as an interim assistant principal last fall, and now joins us for the start of school. And it's been fun, and he's been doing a great job. So to everyone, Pat Iribi.
- ▶ [**Pat Iribi**] Thank you all. My name is Pat Iribi. Again, class of 78. I am very excited to be here. Family, they all know. And I've already run into former students and classmates that are all giving me the old pat on the back, which is kind of surprising. But welcome to Lincoln Elementary School. I was sent to the principal's office way back when. I was at Memorial High School, and there are only four buildings out there. And so it's great to see how it's grown and developed. And I'd like to invite all of you to come and participate in what we want to do there. And yes, I'm retired. And so I'll be heading into retirement as soon as we get things settled. And thank you, Dr. Penny, for allowing me to participate.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Thank you so much for helping us out.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Mr. Ruby, you are failing at retirement miserably. And then for those of you who don't know, he's not here yet tonight. He may still come a little bit later. The other co-interim principal at Newark Memorial High School is Dr. John Bernard, who we all know is the former superintendent of Newark Unified School District.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] So the high school's in good hands. Good hands with Allstate.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] You better believe it. Right.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] OK, next we have employee organizations, NTH.
- ▶ [**Cheri Villa**] All right, good evening, Superintendent, board members, and the rest of the Newark community. My name is Cheri Villa, and I'm president of our NTA. I wanted to start the year by welcoming the new administrators. And also, this Friday, I have the pleasure of welcoming 30 new hires to our new teacher orientation, 30 new hires. A lot of work, our HR department over the summer. So big, Ms. Waters isn't here anymore, but much appreciation to the work that she did before she left and to the rest of the HR department. 30 new hires though, that's a big number. I'm hoping, thinking about the previous years, there's been a few

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Situations where we have young teachers, new teachers who come in and they spend all this time at school getting their degree and their credential and their first couple years and then they decide maybe this isn't for me. That's a shame to think that. Let me turn that around. I hope that we provide our new teachers the support that they need to help build these teachers into good teachers. So, again, 30 new hires for this year. We do still have roughly 14 open positions. You know, I know there's offers out in long-term subs covering, but adding that to the 30, we got approximately 44 new teachers in our district.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] So, something to think about. We've got a big job ahead of us. We do. We do.

- ▶ [**Cheri Villa**] On behalf of NTA, I'm looking forward to making sure that our people stick around and are supportive. Thank you. On a positive note, after this Friday's New High Orientation, next week we do have the Welcome Back kickoff, welcoming back approximately 200 of our NTA members back to school this year. So looking forward to seeing everybody again and welcoming everybody into the new year. So thank you.

- ▶ [**Marie dela Cruz**] Thank you.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Cheri has graciously agreed to help us host, co-host the new teacher orientation on Friday. So it's going to be fabulous. Thank you so much.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] OK, next we are moving on to public comment. And we do have one individual that wants. I think NEWMA's here. Did you want to speak for NEWMA? Yeah.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Oh, OK. OK. I'm sorry, Olivia. I thought maybe you were here for NEWMA.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] OK. Oh, I'm sorry, too. OK, so next we move on to public comment. And we do have Branch Brewster, who would like to speak to non-agenda items.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Hey, Branch. Hi.

- ▶ [**Branch Brewster**] Good evening board and executive cabinet. My coming here tonight was unplanned, so I'm kind of speaking off the cuff. Usually I'm more prepared, so hopefully I can get my point across. First, I'd like to welcome Ms. Gallaher as to the school. I really, really enjoyed working under her as the last few weeks of last school year. And one of the last things I said to her before I went on summer was, I really hope you'll be our principal next year. So I'm really glad that she is our principal. but that's not the main reason I came here tonight. I exchanged some emails with some board members and the new superintendent, Dr. DeLeon at the end of last year regarding the class sizes at Lincoln for this coming year. And last week I received an email asking if I would take overflow students in my four or five combo. And I received a statement phone call again from Principal Gallaher this morning asking me the same thing. That would put me at 31 students in a combo. And my colleagues, my fourth and fifth grade colleagues, received similar emails and similar phone calls, which, if they say yes, would put them at 33. In a fifth grade class of 33, a four or five combo of 31, and a fourth grade class of 33. And when I emailed the board at the end of last year, we knew this was coming. And I was letting the board know that this was coming. And I encouraged the board and the school district to consider opening another class. And it seems like not much has moved over the summer. So we're still at those increased class sizes. And the alternative is that students, if we don't accept these students, The alternative would be those students are overflowed to another school. Now, when I was asked, I begrudgingly said yes, because I'm not willing to let the decisions made here in the district office flow down to the students. And I refuse to see students kicked out of Lincoln because there's not enough space. When we have an empty room, we could easily open another class. I know President Thomas did a great job very thorough response explaining the financial situation of the district. And I respect that. I understand that. But I wanted to come up here and let you know that what you look at here are names and numbers on a spreadsheet for the financial situation and the numbers and how to move numbers around. But when we overflow students or have jam-packed, overfilled classrooms, that those are real people,

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real students who are not getting everything that they need, or who are being sent out of a place where they're comfortable, where they've been, who would have to then be sent to another school. Now, I can't speak for my colleagues, but I have begrudgingly said yes to accepting 31 students, but I'm not happy about it, and that's why I came to just one last time implore the board and the school district to consider opening up that other class. We have the space, we have a room that's gonna be sitting empty. And I know the team at Lincoln would rally behind anyone who came on last minute to take that job. I myself was hired one day before school started, back in 2019. So I would, so yeah, that's why I came here. And I just hope that we can do something to prevent students from being overflowed and from having jam-packed, overfilled classrooms. Thank you.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Thank you. Thank you. Well, do we have any other comments, public comments online or otherwise? No other comments. Superintendent report. Superintendent report. She's going to put it up.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] All right. President Thomas, members of the board, thank you so much. It is such a pleasure to start off the new year in our first board meeting. So the first thing I want to say is welcome back to everyone, anybody who's out there watching, our parents community, our wonderful staff, our students. Welcome back to the new school year. We're really excited to be here and have done some really great work over the summer that we're extremely proud of. The first day of school is Wednesday, August 9. So everyone, get there with bells on. I know we've had a little bit of a challenge with some of our messaging out. We've got a brand new system, and there's always some kinks in the beginning. Just know that for all of you out there, the first day of school is the 9th and do check all the websites and social media if you haven't gotten an email because all of the information is also posted. We posted it also on our district website and on all of our social media. So if you're still wondering about anything regarding your student beginning school or anything, where do I go? What do I do? It's all on there. Just go to our website, your school website, or on social media, and you will find it all there. So welcome. Again, I want to welcome the new members of our NUSD family. We're so excited to have some great new faces out there at the principalship level. Next slide. There you go. So I wanted to talk a little bit about, oh, and one more thing, too. I wanted to also say, I forgot to put it on the slide, but to all of our wonderful district employees, we're excited to have you back. We really have been looking forward to it and have planned an absolutely fabulous, a wonderful, a spectacular district kickoff. We're talking spirit overload. We're going to have best school spirit, loudest school, best school gear, loudest department. So with lots of prizes. And let me tell you what the prizes are. So the principals and the teachers out there are going to love some of these prizes. So we've got the great big lined poster sticky paper we've been asked for. We've got the fabulous smelly markers. We've got extra. a bright fluorescent paper. We've got the deluxe dry erase marker sets. So we're really going all out. So we're going to be watching. The board and I are going to be the judges. And we're going to see which site's at their tables. You'll have tables when you sign in. Who is on it from the minute they walk in? who's on it when they're in there. Also, we're going to do school and department chance. So when I call out your school name, we're going to get to see who's loudest. Don't think I don't know the high school has an advantage, so it's going to be by level, right? Because that's not fair. They've got like three times, four or five times more employees. It's not fair. But we're going all out. We're gearing up, so we can't wait. So everybody, come in your gear, your spirit, ready to go for the New Year. So that's our kickoff. That'll be Monday morning. Their beef food will be ready between 7.30 and 8.30. Come fellowship and be full of your pride. And then we're going to go in and have a wonderful kickoff. And also, I'll probably let you out early as a gift of time to go back to your sites. So anyway, I look forward to seeing everybody on Monday morning. Another thing, summer projects. I am so excited about some of the work we've done as a district in the summer projects. Now, a little bit earlier, I mentioned our Parent Square integration. We did that over the summer. Parent Square, I've used it in other districts before. I think it had already been explored here before I got here and was underway. Parent Square is a two-way communication platform for school districts, meaning that it will translate information going out from the schools and districts in over 100 languages. But then if the parents want to contact us back or message a teacher, message a principal, it translates it back to English for us in over 100 languages. So we are really excited. Now, there are always little glitches. But Paul, Rose, and all of the office managers, and all of the departments and principals have been working really hard to get it up and running. And so I think it's going to be amazing for our parents. Another thing is ParentSquare talks to ParentVUE and StudentVUE. So you'll be able to

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get that information through ParentSquare. It can also be on your phone. It is a phone app. I have it on my phone. I know Jennifer has it on her phone. She sent messages for me from her phone. And here's the cool thing. We're going to be able to post forms on the app. And so parents, when we get this up and running in full use, instead of parents getting these big packets full of paper, forms to fill out, we are going to upload them. open their phone app, and complete the forms on their phone while they're sitting, like getting their hair done, or their nails done, or not their nails, maybe their toes. Not their fingernails. And fill out forms and signs. and send it back. And what we're hoping is that really helps increase the percentage of forms that we get back, particularly important forms like our Ed Benefits form. Mentioning our Ed Benefits form, all of you out there, you've gotten it. We really would love you to fill that out and send that back. That's not, we don't look at that as, You know, people sometimes say, oh, it's money, it's money. We don't look at it that way. I look at that form as resources for kids. Those are the monies that go directly to services for kids, the supports that students need. That's what the Ed Benefits form is for. And we want our district to be able to give the best services. Also, we know that there are more people in the Newark community who qualify than we actually get forms for in our district. So we have some people that aren't doing it and we please ask that even if you think you're not, it doesn't matter, it does matter to please turn in those forms, please submit those forms. So that's one thing people can do here and we're hoping that the ease of it will just help people to do it and get those forms in right away. So that's ParentSquare. If you have any questions about ParentSquare, you can contact Your principal, the office managers, even up here will help you if you want to call us, we'll help you. So that's an exciting thing. So now I want to review another exciting thing is our summer facilities project. So I have asked Susan Condon, our Director of Maintenance, Operations, and Transportation. Come on up. Come on up, Susan. She's not used to being in the spotlight. So it was like pulling teeth to get her to come. But here's the thing. When we set high expectations and we really want our schools to be outstanding, we want to recognize the people who make them outstanding, right? So I wanted to recognize the people who've been working their tails off all summer and have been doing some of these projects. So Susan, I've listed on here some of the many projects. So if you want to maybe, I don't know, can you see the presentation from where you're at?

▶ [**Susan Condon**] I can, but nobody else can if you want this thing on here.

▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] This is not on. Oh, that one's not on. Oh, no.

▶ [**Susan Condon**] I don't know how to turn it on, but no one can see your board.

▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] Oh, no.

▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Can we see if we can? Yeah, we're going to go get him. Sorry. I am so sorry. I had no idea that the audience couldn't see. We'll get it going. My mouth. No, I'm glad. Thank you for telling us.

▶ [**Susan Condon**] Hi, President Nancy and board members. It's been a long time since I've been here. Hi. Executive cabinet, Dr. DeLeon. So I'm familiar with this podium. If you know me, you know I was in CSCA for quite a few years. been a mouthful. Anyway, do you like me to start or do you want me to wait?

▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Please go ahead and start and it'll pop up if you want to talk about some of the projects that have been done.

▶ [**Susan Condon**] Okay, so we have our HVAC. I want to enforce that it's not just the maintenance department. We couldn't do any of this without everybody. You know, I was going to say Marie Delacruz and I have been in a lot of the bond meetings, so we've been dealing with the RGM, R-G-M Kramer, and they are responsible for a lot of the things that have been happening. They've been diligent, can't even say the words, in making sure things are getting done in time for school. HVAC project we have been working with that for the last couple years and we've been putting in the last few HVACs in the schools. We still got a ways to go but we're getting there close and that's exciting because it'd be nice to have our school start with some cool air. So I know we've been working

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on that for years. Paving projects we've been Working on the paving project over at the quad at the high school, mainly because of tripping hazards. We went into the pod, and it was one of the bad areas, and we've just made it safe. And we did that as well at Lincoln. Big areas to be done. BGP, we just put a new parking lot in. You've got to go by. It looks really good. I was a little worried there for a while. There was a lot of dirt, and then all of a sudden, it's a parking lot. So that's pretty cool. The landscaping, we have been trying to beautify the landscaping for the past year or so. And I have to say that my grounds people are a really good team. And they've been working really hard to get rid of the weeds and upgrade those grounds and get the water going and make it look pretty. And I think they're doing a darn good job. So, we've got, okay, I am a little blind. What is that? Work at Coyote Hills? The murals. Oh, the murals. Did anybody go by Coyote Hills? That mural is gorgeous. It's gorgeous.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] We have pictures coming in the next few slides. Okay, cool, cool.
- ▶ [**Susan Condon**] The Newark pool, I'm not sure what we're doing yet on that, but are we working on it?
- ▶ [] It's a mural.
- ▶ [**Susan Condon**] Another mural. Nice, I didn't know that one. Again, a lot of these things are done by outside vendors as well that come in. We've got painting district-wide. We've done the lockers at the high school inside of now. If you go over there, you won't recognize the high school, you know. We painted the benches. The past couple of years, we've been buying, thanks to you guys, picnic tables for them to eat on. And we had some old tables that we've refurbished so they look like they're new. So that's good. And traffic improvement, we're still working on it, but we're working on that traffic over at Schilling. If you go to the parking lot at Schilling, it's kind of a little all over the place, and we've got to get that fixed up. So I'm happy to say we're doing a lot. My custodians working really hard getting the deep cleaning.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] We have another slide right there.
- ▶ [**Susan Condon**] Oh, there's more here. OK. All right. So deep cleaning. The deep cleaning with the custodians. I was a little worried about two schools because we had summer school till the 21st of July. And I have to say, we've kind of added a little bit more people over there, but they're doing excellent. I think we'll be fine inside for school. Irrigation system, we just put in some quotes for the irrigation to work in the back. We haven't had an irrigation guy for a year now, I guess, and things have really been hard to get stuff up. The grounds guys are actually going a step further and helping me change some of the sprinklers and things like that, but there's a lot of work that needs to be done in the back. So we're working on trying to get that upgraded. Track, they're working on the track, which is due for, I believe, oh, that's the high school. Junior high, we're working on trying to get a track, it's a dirt track, to upgrade. They haven't done it since high school back then. So it's been covered and they want to clear it up and have a good,
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Track needs. Clay track. It's a clay track, right?
- ▶ [**Susan Condon**] Yeah. They want to do the clay. So it won't be artificial, but we're working on trying to find somebody who will do it. Now it's a matter of him scheduling and see what it could do. And it could take about a month for them to do the actual ground, but it's on its way. I think that'll be great for the kids.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Hold on, Susan. I think what the board and the community needs to know, because we really do want to get that track done, because that is a championship middle school team. Oh my gosh, and I put J-S, J-H-S, and it's N-M-S. I just told on myself. But anyway, old habits. It's the middle school. In any case, it is incredibly difficult to find companies that do clay track. They are almost non-existent around here. And so there's like one. We called every district that we could think of, and we found a company. So she's trying again.

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- ▶ [**Susan Condon**] Yeah, which is interesting because they used to do, Pacheco used to do a lot of the clay. They used to do a lot of the dirt tracks. And they've since sold off. But one of their employees moved to another place and they brought the equipment. So we finally tracked him down. So I'm excited we can get it done. It took me a long time to find somebody that will do it. So I'm anxious to get that one rolling. Pressure washing the schools, it's kind of the last minute before school starts, but we're working on that. Replacing ceiling tiles is part of what we do on a normal basis. We try to, the maintenance department tries to get our Williams Act items covered, which are plumbing and ceiling tiles and, electrical and all things like that. So we're working hard on all ends. So we've got our mechanic keeping things working. We've got maintenance going through and moving classes. I don't want to forget anybody. Waxing the gym floors, we had someone come in a couple years ago, we found out that by hiring this flooring person that we buy the wax from to come and do our floors, they actually get it done in a quicker period of time with less manpower because it would take us five to seven people to do the thing for a week. And they come in and they knock it out in a day or two and then boom, it's ready for days. It's kind of exciting and it looks beautiful when they're done. So we've got all of that. And Dr. DeLeon.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] So at the top left are the outside lockers at MNHS. Inside lockers, they look gorgeous, shiny, beautiful, repaired. They also sort of unbent a lot of them because they were bent and that when they painted. You can see also the painting of the benches, the 300 wing at the high school. Every bench, all the benches were painted. Down on the left, the bottom left, those are the benches at Lincoln. So the request was that benches district-wide are painted. Most of them were very sun-faded and or mixed, matched colors and or broken. So those are all done. There's the floor, gym floors, waxed and beautiful. And I just wanted you to see the quality of the work our custodial staff is doing on the floors. Look at the shine that they got on those classroom floors. It's amazing. There's a window that was repaired. So they go around, and any windows that are cracked or falling off, they go and repair and replace all of those windows. So that's a window. I don't remember which school that window was. That's Kennedy. Kennedy window. Up there, that is the pool mural at Newark Memorial. The mural below is Coyote Hills. Excited to see that. Aren't they beautiful? And then the next one over to the right is with the orange fencing. That is the paving project at Birch Grove Primary. And below, OK, that is the Newark Memorial High School Quad.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Nice.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Yeah, to the right, that's also BGP. And then above, that's Coyote Hills is getting paved as well. The men, the gentlemen, is that Coyote Hills? I have another slide. Oh, that was it, that was it. So that's some of the pictures, but all the sites are starting to look just beautiful. And when I first talked to Marie and Susan about this, I told them, I said, it's so important because There's a whole body of research around learning environments and the impact of clean, safe, healthy learning environments on student achievement. So I wanted to make sure that every single school has a great learning environment and that we maintain those every single day. So I want to thank Susan and her staff for that. We're super excited for the new year and can't wait till the first day of school. She still has a whole list.
- ▶ [**Susan Condon**] I still have a roller. And definitely thank the outside people who have come in and helped us, too.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Also, Member Hill.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] So, Ms. Condon, thank you for coming. Thank you for sharing your whirlwind of activity. Thank you. And it looks great. And as Dr. DeLeon is saying, I think just in general, I mean, we we want to be a district of champions and being a champion. Part of it is about appearances. And it doesn't necessarily have to be the big sexy product projects, right? It's the it's the little details that matter and And so that when people walk in, you know, they feel like wow, you know, I'm a part of something great So the work looks great And so thank you from for creating this feeling for our incoming or returning teachers and students.

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- ▶ [**Susan Condon**] So, thank you You're welcome. And it's being in maintenance. Of course. A lot of the things we do are inside You know, you're doing your plumbing and you're doing everything inside and people don't see that on the outside. So having the ability to add that to our group of things to do is exciting for us too.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I was driving by Kennedy School and there was a maintenance grounds person there cleaning up. No, this is last week. I gave him a big shout out.
- ▶ [**Susan Condon**] Oh, yeah.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] It just makes such a big difference to have the front of the schools looking nice.
- ▶ [**Susan Condon**] Looking good. And we had the tree people coming out today, too, and they trimmed some of those trees away from the roofs and stuff, too.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] That's great. Thank you. Thank you, Susan, for coming. Thank you.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] shout out I got to give a shout out to the Newark City Council and the city manager who passed an emergency resolution last Thursday night to fix that dog gum sinkhole in front of BGP they're working on it as we speak so it is getting fixed but they had to pass a resolution on an emergency to get it done by the first day of school so that was That was a prayer. So thank you, city council. And David Benune.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Well, next we will move on to, I guess I can ask the superintendent.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] So thank you, superintendent, for the great report. And could I ask a favor? And this is, you know, how can I put it? So this has been something that's been going on for a while. And I don't know how long, but at least prior administration. But, you know, we'll see a superintendent's report, but then later on it won't be easy for the public to get access to it. And so if we could just make sure that you post that later in the meeting, that would be wonderful. Okay. Great. Thank you.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Thank you. And that's usually posted in board docs.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] We can post it.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] We can put a folder on our website where they can get superintendent reports and updates and things like that. Because you're right, we don't always have the PowerPoints attached. So we can start a folder where our district PowerPoints can be found. That would be great. Thank you. Thank you so much, Ms. Sacks.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Oh, me again. So I'm asking you to lead the discussion of our overarching goals.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Thank you, President Thomas and members of the board. It has been an absolute pleasure working with our board members on setting some simple overarching district goals for us as a district. We began this work, talking about this work, I think, right, even during my interview process. But shortly after I got here, we began talking about the action research process and how do you move a district forward, or any organization for that matter. Probably one of the most important pieces is to set goals that are SMART goals. As the board reminds me frequently, make sure they're SMART goals. For those of you who are not familiar with SMART goals, I just want to make sure, for those of you listening out there, we're talking about goals that are specific, measurable, attainable. What is the R?

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- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Relevant.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] relevant and time-bound. So we worked over the summer at our board workshop on them, drafted them, and then the board requested that we have a board subcommittee to work. So thank you to Member Hill and Member Jones for working with me as the subcommittee on drafting the goals. And they went back and forth through multiple revisions, and here's what we have come up with, which is why they are on old business tonight, because we've been working on them for quite some time. So board goal number one, and there are four. Student achievement, our number one goal, and I think the number one goal of every district. Under there, we have two main sub-goals. We will increase student achievement in ELA and mathematics by a minimum of 2% overall, and 5% for every student subgroup during the two 2023-2024 school year. This will be measured by the CASP, SBAC, LPAC. I know there are others that we could do. We can also look at iReady and those kinds of things, but those are the main measures because they are posted everywhere. Subgoals from there will include a focus on early literacy and also on access to preschool programming. I want to let the community know that part of the continuous improvement process and the action research process is, or actually I think a lot of school districts call it the action learning cycle as well, is that once you have your goals, you start working in teams to develop sub-goals and strategic plans for those strategic initiatives. You set your incremental targets. And then you report them out, and you decide whether you need to make adjustments or not based on what your data is. So for those out there who want to know, why is there a difference between the overall and the subgroups? So as a state, we are required, we are charged with improving student achievement for certain subgroups of students who either are unrepresented or have traditionally not performed at the same level as the overall or other subgroups. So some of those subgroups are, for example, English learners, students with IEPs and special education, foster youth, homeless youth, and then there are others that are ethnic, groups that we also track. We track African-American students, Asian, Hispanic, Indigenous, and Pacific Islander, et cetera. And what we're trying to do is with the, so 2% overall, which is an attainable goal for a district, But 5% for the subgroups that are struggling, the subgroups who are behind, and often they are significantly behind, that is called an acceleration goal. So the goal, the percentage is higher because they have a lot farther to go normally to catch up. So you have to do a lot of targeted and focused work in those areas. So wait, go back. Back, please. Member Hill. Yes. Member Hill. Yes.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] So just a question for you, Dr. DeLeon. And I know we went through a whole bunch of iterations. And now it's kind of the time to make sure everything's coming together. But the one question I have is kind of what I would call crawl, walk, run. And so I think it's important whenever we set a goal that it's something that It might be a little bit of a stretch, that's fine, but it is achievable, right? Because we don't want to set goals that we know are, you know, are going to be difficult to achieve and then we don't achieve them and then it has sort of a deflating effect. And so, in your experience, do you think that setting 5% that that's realistic or should we dial that down a little bit in the first year?
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] I think we can look at the progress for individual subgroups and see how they've been doing and the number of students that are in the group and decide from there as we develop our strategic plans. I think we also need to look at a number of conditions. For example, one that is extremely difficult is students with IEPs, I would say. The part of what contributes to that is that we often have substitutes, or we struggle to fill vacancies in special education, et cetera. And so then there's sort of sometimes a double-edged sword is the students who need it the most. Sometimes we're late. We might be late filling a vacancy. And so we take those things into consideration. And if we need to lower it, then, as we discussed, We'll come back and do a progress report and talk about that with the boards that we thought, well, for this group, we felt 5% was reasonable. But for another group, maybe 3% would be a reasonable goal. So it just depends. And it also depends on what indicator you're really looking at as well. So it's a matter of working at it. 5% would be a stretch goal for some groups. Some groups need to stretch because they have that far to go. But it's one of those things where I think you try, you see, you discuss it, and then if you feel like that might be too far, you come back and you say, you know, I think maybe three might be better for this particular subgroup because of these reasons. So I think we just look at each of them as we go. Because we haven't really developed any strategic plans yet, so. Thank you. Thank you.

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You're welcome. OK. Our next one is we will increase our college and career preparedness rate by a minimum of 2% overall and 5% for every student subgroup, and meaning the subgroups that are behind, that aren't at the overall, as reflected on the California school dashboard during the 23-24 school year. So the last time we had this indicator was in 2019. And this district was 35% prepared in college and career. The college and career indicator, so the way the indicator works is that students can be counted as being prepared in various ways. And so some of those ways are, you'll look at the bottom, A through G. Making A through G. C or better. AP pass rate, CTE pathway completion, college credit, state seal of biliteracy, leadership military science. That's J-R-O-T-C. I don't know that we have that. Work-based learning, pre-apprenticeships, 11th grade SBAC scores above a certain level. So there are multiple, multiple ways a kid can get counted for being prepared. 35% is definitely a goal we want to work on. Because if the goal is that children leave us prepared for college and career, in other words, going on, being on the path to doing what they love and being gainfully employed at it, they've got to be prepared. So we definitely do want to stretch on the 35. I think it's totally doable. Sometimes it has to do with whether some courses are coded correctly and things like that. And so we're going to go in and make sure that we get everything aligned and cleaned up. I think a lot of Heather Decker has been doing a lot of work, Nicole, a lot of work toward that. So that'll help as well. So we'll see how that goes. All right, next. safe, secure, and healthy learning environments, a really important goal. So by March 1, 2024, each site will update, revitalize, and or revitalize the comprehensive site safety plan to include student and staff wellness and to address the metrics below. By June 30, 2024, the district will create an associated public safe and healthy learning environments dashboard to track key metrics, which will be on our website. And that dashboard and those metrics will inform our future programs and resources. The metrics are suspension and expulsion data, fights, drugs, cyberbullying, and vandalism in particular. Attendance rate, so meaning we will want to know what the numbers are for all of those kinds of offenses in our district. Attendance rate, chronic absenteeism, student discipline referral numbers, counseling, mental health services, and the number of students served. And then the last sub goal under number two is by September 2023, the district will present an updated facilities maintenance plan. for the provision of clean, safe, secure, and well-maintained facilities and classrooms with quarterly progress reports to the board. So in September, one of the board meetings in September, we will have a consolidated plan. So as you know, every district gets a full, most districts paid for a facilities assessment that's about like that big. And it includes usually about \$800 million worth of projects that you usually get a bond that'll take care of a tenth, if you're lucky. So what we're going to do is get a, and Mike has agreed to help us with this, to present a very consolidated sort of checklist for this year. What do we want to really work on this year? So it'll be much shorter and more easily done. OK, number three. Yes.

-  [**Phuong Nguyen**] You just triggered my memory on something, because you mentioned the bond. So I would also, if we can make a revision to that and add, because I would like for us to try and go out for the bond in 2024 to include, you know, prioritization for bond projects included in that?
-  [**Penny DeLeon**] Oh, absolutely.
-  [**Phuong Nguyen**] Or possible bond projects.
-  [**Penny DeLeon**] That is a great idea.
-  [**Phuong Nguyen**] Thank you.
-  [**Penny DeLeon**] Maybe we could put that in our customer service survey as one of the questions about if we went for a bond, what projects would you like us to work on? See what the community says.
-  [**Phuong Nguyen**] Yes, similar to what the city of Newark had just recently done.

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- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Yeah, absolutely. OK, number three, parent and community engagement and communication. By September 2023, the district will convene the following stakeholder committees to increase parent and community voice and to inform the educational program. I will be convening a superintendent's community advisory council. The invites will go out mid-August for that. A district budget task force, as Marie will be working on. Mr. Berg has also agreed to help us lead that as a person who's led a community task force before, and also as an objective person who doesn't have an emotional sort of connection to any program or anything, so he can kind of give a very objective lens as he sort of gives information and leads the group through that. And then also a community schools task force. I've also asked, and I didn't put it on there, and I forgot, and I'm gonna add it. No, no, she's like, it's okay, it's okay. I am going to convene an inclusion task force to begin to think about the work to ensure that every student, particularly our students with IEPs, are reaching his, her, their greatest potential, meaning that they have access to the mainstream and to high-level coursework to the extent they possibly can. So we're going to work on that piece. Yes? OK, good. I'm excited. That work always excites me. And then by September 2023, the district will increase two-way parent communication through the implementation of ParentSquare and bimonthly district newsletters. So we're already starting with ParentSquare. We're not quite there with functionality yet, but we are going to work on it. And the metrics for both goals, the community engagement and communication will be a customer satisfaction survey with the baseline survey to be administered in September 2023 and a progress survey administered in June 2024. So entrance and exit for the school year. And as a district, we, there are companies that you can, that will, like they have a whole, sort of database of questions. And you can kind of customize the questions that you want for your customer service survey. OK. And then number four, fiscal health. As we know, by year four, we're going to be in some trouble in our budget. And so I met with the county superintendent today. And she goes, you know about year four. And I'm like, Yeah, we'll fix it by then. So by February 15th, 2024, the district will present a comprehensive plan to eliminate the structural deficit and balance the budget, including strategies for increasing revenue through ADA and building back a six percent reserve. Sub goals will include a focus on sale and lease of surplus properties and an evaluation of position control and hiring practices. Again, Mr. Berg, this is the work, actually the budget task force will come and present this with Mr. Berg. They'll, whoever the co-chair, the chair is, they'll come and give their recommendations to the district about what needs to happen. Statement, and then lastly, the board was really strong about wanting a statement of commitment, and this is it. All goals will be addressed through the lens of equitable access and opportunity in all we do, including the provision of resources, human, fiscal, and time. All right. Thank you. You're most welcome. Thank you. Any questions, comments?
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Member Hill.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] So thank you, Dr. DeLeon, for pushing us to pull these together. I think that they are great, and it's going to get us off to a great start. And as all of you know, I've been reading a book, which I've actually sent copies to all the board and to Dr. DeLeon, about Bill Walsh, the former coach of the 49ers, and what he did to take the team to become the Super Bowl champions. And really the theme in that book was that he created a performance standard. He created, in every single area, goals and measures that he knew were going to help the team achieve excellence. And then he worked to teach them and train them to do that. And so I think that this is the starting point for us. And the only small request that I have on the very last part, so our statement of commitment, would the board be OK if we said all goals will be addressed through the lens of equitable access, opportunity, and excellence in all we do.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I can agree with that. One of the things, getting back to the 5% comment that member Hill made, if you look at The state of California, 43% of all students are captured in low socioeconomic Latino students. In Newark, we have 34% of our students are low socioeconomic Latino students. And as a subgroup, they are very needy. And they've been identified as needy at the state level also. And so when we're talking about the 5%, since they're one-third of the overall, the 5% might be a little bit. Yeah, but I think if we keep that group in mind as being probably the most needy in terms of their sheer size and their sheer distance from meeting the the goal of being, what do you call it? Meeting the standards.

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- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Mastery goals, standards. Meeting the standards. Standard mastery.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Yeah. Yeah. Member Hill.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Just to follow up on that, President Thomas. So it sounded like, Dr. DeLeon, when we talked about this just a minute ago, that you had said, OK, here's the goal, but we're going to convene the different groups and have a discussion, and then maybe kind of revisit it. So could we maybe put this as a placeholder and then say, okay, by such and such a date, you tell us when, that the subgroups will come back with a commitment to the percentage? Because I think it's really important to have a commitment, right? It's, you know, if you have a goal and then you say, well, maybe I'll make it, maybe I won't. You know, but I really want us to fire people up to say, okay, here's the goal. Maybe it's a little bit of a stretch, but we think we can do it. We're going to do it. We're going to commit. So, is that possible?

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Absolutely.

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] I do have a comment on that. I understand the importance of commitment to, you know, the outcomes, but at the same time, you know, this is the first time we would be evaluating the subgroups in this extent and for us to give a year to be able to do that and then come back with ideas to be able to add on to improvement and then maybe have commitment afterwards.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] So am I hearing that you want the subgroup to be 2% because we had originally had everybody 2% including the subgroups and then the board members requested an acceleration goal of five. So then do we want to go back to having no acceleration goal or do we?

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] I think the acceleration goal is a really good idea. That gives us at least something to reach for, you know, and I mean a possibility that you can get there. But also it gives us the ability to also reevaluate if we don't meet it and why and figure out why, where we're struggling at. And then we can proceed to try and make some adjustments and then commit to the ongoing whatever percentage that we feel like we can have our students, you know, strive for.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] But I really feel strongly that for the subgroups, the needy subgroups, they have to be more. We'll never close the achievement gap unless we don't strive to have a larger percentage of them improving than the overall group.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] So could we do this? Because I know, Dr. DeLeon, that one of the things that you're doing is you're going out and meeting with the different schools and things, is you're talking with them about, okay, so you want to do this or we want to do this, but then you say, well, but what are you going to commit to, right? So it oftentimes helps to have the bottom up versus the top down. So maybe we say, OK, at a minimum, it's got to be 2% for everybody. However, we want to challenge you to see if you can do better, and then hear what they can commit to. Because rather than us say, well, you're going to do this, if they come back and say, well, no, we could do 5%, and then they've committed to it. I mean, could we do it? Could we do that? Or if they say 3% or 4% or whatever it is, Is that aligning with what you're talking about? No?

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Not necessarily. I think what member Nguyen was saying is we should try it, try a stretch goal. And then if we don't achieve it, then we come back and do it. Because it's an action learning cycle. The purpose is to adjust if you don't make it and figure out either is this a good goal or not a good goal? Or do we adjust the goal? Do we adjust the means to the goal? Right. Like what happened. Right. So I know member Jones also had an idea maybe from another perspective. I don't know.

- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] Well my I was thinking about you know we're looking at this so maybe in six months we look and see where we are see if the schools are feeling like yes we're going to be able to meet this or this is going to be really tough and make a make a change at that point where we're pushing them, but they come back and say,

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we feel like we can get to four, but we just can't get to five. I'd like to present the challenge, being reasonable in, we understand if it's lofty, it's lofty. It's lofty for a reason, but let's start with this and perhaps come back in six months and see how schools are feeling. See how we're feeling, how, you know, everyone is feeling about this because it is, it's all of our goals. We're all involved in this. So, you know, we need to come back and maybe come back in six months or three months or at some point.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Like one of our progress reports. Right. Come back and talk about.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] Exactly. You talked about the progress reports and if this is part of that. then we have a chance to say, well, that was really lofty.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Well, and we need to use some intermediate goals like I-Ready as opposed to our end of year CAS.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] Yeah, absolutely. And I-Ready is a good one for, at least for the levels that are using that. I believe we pulled it into middle school now. So at least from elementary to middle, we could use the I-Ready to see how we're doing. Yeah. Member Hill.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] So one of the reasons I'm pushing for a goal that people commit to is an example that I read about from General Schwarzkopf, who was the guy who had led the Iraq-I war very successfully. But he had been a more junior officer during Vietnam. And he observed a lot of behaviors and things that caused us to not be successful in that war. But one of the examples that he shared was he talked about how when he came to Vietnam, he was put in charge of helicopter maintenance. And they had a real hard time keeping helicopters in the air. And he said, well, OK, so what's your uptime for your helicopter site? So what percentage of the time do we have helicopters operational? And whoever was like the sergeant or whoever said, oh, well, you know, it's like 65% or something like that. And he said, well, how did you come up with that number, right? And so he just arbitrarily said, well, tomorrow or going forward, it's going to be 75%. And he maybe had some intuitive basis for it. But his thought, as he explained it afterwards, is he said, that what because he said, well, what was the goal? And they said 65 percent. And then he said, and what's your performance? And they said 65 percent. Right. And so whatever you set the goal at, that's usually what people perform at. Right. And so, you know, so therefore, you know, I don't think it's good to give people an out. It's you know, it's like, hey, OK, let's come up with something that we think is realistic. and then let's push for it, right? Let's really, really dig in, but let's not have sort of an out because, you know, I just don't think that champions think that way. So, but maybe we need to have some more.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] And obviously, reevaluation after a certain point is not giving somebody an out. Those are still our goals that we're trying to achieve, but we need to be able to see if, one, there really And two, if we need to put resources into making them attainable. So, that's what I want to see. I just don't want us to, you know, unrealistically put some sort of measurement out there and never achieve it and never reevaluate it and never, you know, put effort into making it better. So, for me, that's what I'm hoping that we can get out of this, you know.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Yeah, for years and years, every CPSA said we want to improve our scores in math and ELA by 3%. And we never really did that action research to track whether we were making 3%. And if not, what changes are we going to make to reach that?
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] And then obviously, if there's going to be at different sites, if there's patterns of improvement and how the sites got there, because I know that a lot of our sites are not, they're not the same, you know, programs that we implement are not the same across the board. So, we can look at that, reevaluate that and say, hey, maybe we need to implement this district wide. So, those kinds of things that we all need to consider too.

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- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Absolutely. Thank you. Are we to the point where we can have a motion to accept these goals?
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] I'll make a motion to accept these goals with the changes that we have spoken about.
- ▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] I'll second.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Member Jones makes a motion. Member Plancarte seconds it. Please vote. 5-8-0-nay.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] OK.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Remember, the motion passes unanimously. Next, we move on to new business. And I would ask the superintendent to lead the discussion on these agenda items. 11.1 is resolution declaring surplus instructional materials.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] All right. Ms.dela Cruz, would you like to lead that? Or is it, I think it's Ms. Oh, is it Dr. Pierce-Davis? That's this one. Let me open it. I'm sorry.
- ▶ [**Nicole Pierce-Davis**] So this is a resolution that includes instructional materials that are no longer usable or they're simply obsolete. It's outdated materials and items of that sort. So I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] What happens to these materials?
- ▶ [**Marie dela Cruz**] We either donate them, dispose of them, or I said donate already, donate to charitable organizations. Or we can also hand them out to students.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Thank you. May I have a motion to accept this resolution?
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] I move to approve the resolution.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] I'll second.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Member Nguyen moves to approve, and Member Jones seconds to approve the Declaration of Surplus Instructional Materials. Please vote.
- ▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] Vote was unanimous.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Pardon?
- ▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] It was unanimous.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Unanimous. Passed unanimously. Thank you. Next, the approval of the single plan for student achievement for Lincoln Elementary School. Dr. Pierce-Davis.
- ▶ [**Nicole Pierce-Davis**] I got this one right. Yeah. So as you know, we ended the year with an interim principal. So there was no concerns around the IPSA. There was no, just simply with our interim principals, we decided to hold off until the beginning of this year. So we humbly submit this subset to you along with the rest of our school sites.

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- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] May I have a motion please?

- ▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] I'll make a motion to approve.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I'll second. Ms. Plancarte moves to approve and member Jones seconds.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Please vote.

- ▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] Five Yay

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Member passes unanimously. Thank you. Next, 11.3, update textbooks and licenses for French and Spanish courses.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] All right. There you go.

- ▶ [**Nicole Pierce-Davis**] All right. So for this item, as we presented our local indicators at the end of last year as part of our LCAP process, one of the areas we scored slightly lower than we wanted to was because our materials for Spanish and French were out of date. So this is our opportunity to update them. And instead of spending money to do it on an annual basis, it actually is cheaper in the long run to move forward with that adoption now instead of just trying to kind of slowly do it over time. This will sort of bring our materials up to date, which is where we need them to be in order to create that high level of conditions for learning.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I have a question. I noticed that in one of the I think it was French, for example, that first year French students, there were 66 students in first year French. And in second year French, we bought books for only 50 students. Do we not expect some of those students to take their second year of French? Or are we going to be short on those books?

- ▶ [**Nicole Pierce-Davis**] That's an excellent question, because we do really encourage students to take two years. So that shows your knowledge of education. I believe we base these numbers just on need and what we saw in course requests. So you do anticipate a small drop off from year one to two, but we do try to prevent it. Students don't have to take two years of French. They can take other languages either outside of the district or switch over to Spanish if they so choose. So, again, we really just base these numbers off of course requests, try not to... Well, if we end up having more students, it's a good thing.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] We can always order more books. Absolutely. Yeah. Great. Any other comments or questions? I move that we approve the updated textbooks and licenses for French and Spanish courses.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] I second.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Member Thomas, Make some motion. Member Hill seconds it. Please vote. Five yeas. Okay. Five ayes. Thank you very much. 11.4, policy updates.

- ▶ [**Nicole Pierce-Davis**] That's you! You're on, girl! Well, first and foremost, I want to thank Member Jones and Member Thomas for being on the liaison committee that was set up at the end of last year. They got to see the many, many policies that are coming through. This is part one of many parts that we'll be conducting. So these are the policies that we're putting forward for rescension, either because they've been included in another board policy or administrative regulation, or because CSBA recommends that they be rescinded because they're obsolete or no longer needed. As you know, our liaisons have reviewed these policies and agree that none of these policies have been listed unless they've been agreed by the liaison committee. to go ahead and move forward with rescension. Is that a word? That is a word. Okay. With their rescension. So I'm happy to answer any questions. We have a spreadsheet of our notes, our collective notes. It's been great working with them. I love this

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process. You guys do great on this.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Member Jones, do you want to make any comments about our process?
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] I learned a lot. That would be my first comment was that I learned a lot. I now understand why a lot of things as a teacher in the district were done the way they were, which was very eye-opening for me to like, oh, that makes sense. Those, you know, light bulbs going on for me at this point. I felt the work was really good. I did. I just learned so much. It was great working with the team, having a spreadsheet so we could see how each other felt. about the different ones, where we agreed, where we didn't, the discussion that then took place. I felt like the process was very thorough and that we made some really good decisions on these.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I agree. And to the extent that these are being eliminated, the ones that we have as board policies should have the same titles and the same information is the ones that CSBA recommends so that when they make an update, ours will automatically be flagged to be updated and easily updated as we go forward. So getting our new board policies in the next coming weeks and months will be a good goal for us. Thank you for that work. Yes, Member Nguyen.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Thank you, President Thomas and Member Jones for doing the legwork and getting the steps to start cleaning and helping get these organized and rearranged and updated. So thank you.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] May I have a motion?
- ▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] I move to approve. I'll second.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Member Nguyen moves to approve. Member Pancardi seconds. accept the recommendations for removing these board policies and ARs.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Please vote.
- ▶ [**SPEAKER_16**] Aye-aye.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Passes unanimously. Thank you. And thank you for the work that you did Yes. Going through the funds. Thank you a lot. OK, 11.5, Pappas Energy contract.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Miss Delacourse, now it's you. You know, in other districts, all the surplus goes through business services. So that's why I was like, oh. We share here.
- ▶ [**Marie dela Cruz**] You share it. This board item is for a change order on a contract that was approved by the board back in December. It was for a project that will install electric vehicle charging stations at the maintenance yard. It's mainly for our buses. And we had originally planned on using some old lights and some poles that we took down from the high school when we started the solar project a couple of years ago. Unfortunately, when it came time to install the lights, we only found the poles. So we do need to order the lights. And that's what this change order is for. It's about \$2,096 for the lights and the poles.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Member Hill.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Thank you, Ms.dela Cruz. So I was one of the board members that had a question about what was the change order. And in the response that got sent back to us, as you had mentioned, that we were missing some of it and we suspect it was due to theft. And I think this was in the MOT yard. And it's my recollection that we had a similar issue earlier this year where we had a whole bunch of catalytic converters stolen off of vehicles. And I think we had said that we were going to put uh, security cameras in place. So can

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you give us an update on, on just the security measures? Because I'm just concerned if we've, if we have a lot of equipment here that, you know, are we going to have ongoing issues? So could you give it help give us a little bit more information there?

- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] You know, and I'd also like to tag along and just say, if also in addition to the security cameras, what are the, what's the process to further mitigate this so that there is sort of some sort of a check in and check out form of the supplies that are entering and leaving the yard? And is there are there designated people who are going to be in charge of it as well? Thank you.
- ▶ [**Marie dela Cruz**] Yeah, I mean, we do currently have security cameras we haven't added anymore. We really need to assess the areas where this might be happening. Moving forward, we did talk about creating a system and taking the inventory of what's being taken in and being stored at the maintenance yard. Another possibility, it's not just maybe they were stolen, but sometimes they clean up and some things get accidentally thrown out. So communication, I guess, is another where We all have to communicate before we dispose or try to get rid of some things that may, that are there for a reason. And, you know, because they've been sitting there for a couple of years, maybe somebody thought they were not going to be used and they just got thrown out. So, yeah, moving forward, we do have to create better system of trying to keep track of everything that goes in and out. When we move furniture from schools, any surplus inventory, they end up in the yard. And we store them. And we just have to have a better system of keeping track of what goes in and what goes out. And that way, too, if we get new staff, somebody says, oh, I need a new desk. And we can look at our inventory and say, oh, yeah, there's a desk in this storage bin. Because we do have some stored in bins, some out in the open.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I think it's not just the MOT yard, but both in our last FCMAT study and in our recent audit, I think the auditors brought up the fact that our asset tracking system is woefully inadequate. And so at some point, I think we need to have a report on what we're doing to improve it.
- ▶ [**Marie dela Cruz**] Yes, Member Nguyen.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] So currently, do we currently have an asset tracking software?
- ▶ [**Marie dela Cruz**] We do. We have our ESCAPE system. And when we transitioned to ESCAPE, there were some items that were manually recorded. And some of them were transferred into ESCAPE of the records that we have. And then others, unfortunately, were not. So we really need to take a district-wide physical inventory and get that all reconciled.
- ▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] Okay.
- ▶ [**Marie dela Cruz**] Thank you.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Thank you. All right. So, may we have a motion?
- ▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] I'll make a motion to approve. I'll second.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Member Plancarte makes a motion and Member Nguyen seconds it to approve the change order for Pappas Energy. Please vote. Five ayes. Thank you very much. 11.6. I know, I was just ready to say that. 11.6 has been pulled, so we'll move on to 11.7.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Vice President Hill, hold your horses. Nancy said that she wanted to go home early.

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- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Yes, and I do, you guys.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] We're moving.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] We're moving. Yeah, it's 5 o'clock in the morning for me, having just gotten back from overseas. Revised job description, cook and food service delivery driver, item 11.7.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] This is, I think normally, Catherine would be presenting this, but I will present it tonight. This is for, we changed the job description and the salary range for cook. because our director of food services, Ms. Sayers, says that it is really critical for your district cook that they have a certain skill level. And previously, we weren't able to recruit people with that level. So this is to adjust that to get the right people with the right skills. And then also, we did some adjustments to food service delivery as well, driver as well.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I have a comment and sort of a question. On the previous agenda item, Pappas Energy, the item details described that the dollar amount was \$2,096, for example. In this one, we don't have a dollar amount. And the dollar amount should be how many of these positions there are. We were told it was about 11.6%, but overall, what is the dollar amount impact on the budget of making these changes? Do you have that?

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] I don't remember.

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Yes. This is just a revised job description. It doesn't necessarily need to have a dollar amount tied to it. During budgeting process, that's when they tie dollar amount to the positions.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Well, if we approve these increases, There's dollars attached to that. And so for the current positions that are going to be moving up, it is a budget issue now.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] It's going from range 38 to 42. And honestly, off the top of my head, I don't remember. I remember having the conversation. And honestly, I don't remember what the exact dollar amount it was. But what we did was significantly increase the duties. and the skill level for this position because we just couldn't hire the people that we needed. So in my mind, this is a really critical service and I would definitely want us to be able to hire. And it is several thousand dollars more for sure, absolutely.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] It's just good that we know what it is.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] It's my fault.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] We put it on the agenda, that's all.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] It is my fault, absolutely. I will take responsibility for that and I don't remember

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] It's OK. It's OK.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Can you just send the? Yeah, I'll send that to you afterwards.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] OK, so please may I have a motion?

- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] I'll make a motion to approve both of the job description changes.

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- ▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] I'll second.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Member Jones moves, member Plancarte seconds that we approve the revised job descriptions. Please vote.

- ▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] Five ayes.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Thank you. Five ayes. Passed unanimously. Yay. Next, we have the 45-day budget revision.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] I believe that Ms.dela Cruz would love to present this information.

- ▶ [**Marie dela Cruz**] Yes, thank you. But I did want to add a comment on that cook position. We did look at it. There was about a 10.5% increase. I just don't know the dollar amount, because we did look at that.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] And I apologize. Being overseas, I didn't have a chance to look at that, and I would have asked the question ahead of time.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] I should have seen it, and I didn't.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] It's my fault for not looking at it earlier. Thank you.

- ▶ [**Marie dela Cruz**] It's OK. So on the 45-day budget revision, the board adopted the budget back in June, June 15. And since then, the governor signed the budget on June 27th. Fortunately, the two most significant changes weren't too bad. They impacted our arts, music, and instructional materials grant, as well as the learning recovery grant. There was a 5.6% reduction in the arts, music, and instructional materials discretionary block grant. which was about \$176,000 less than our original allocation. And then on the LRE, the Learning Recovery Grant, we originally were allocated \$6.1 million. And the new budget had a 14.4% reduction, which amounted to about \$885,000 less. However, the state is planning to pay that back. starting in 25-26 over a three-year period. So it's almost like a deferred kind of a budget adjustment. Unless something happens, that's the plan. And then on the arts music grant, remember we are expecting to receive Prop 28 funds. And that will actually more than make up for what we we'll lose in the arts music grant because preliminary estimates right now is about 700,000 on Prop 28 coming to the district. And so for this, the actual impact will actually be reflected in first interim because our adopted budget didn't include, we didn't include the arts music because it's really contingent upon what the carryover is going to be and that will show up in our unaudited actuals.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Do you see any issue with the plans for the art grant, for example, being impacted?

- ▶ [**Marie dela Cruz**] Based on the expenditure plan? Right. Yeah. I believe there are some areas that we can look at that won't significantly impact the original plan.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Great. Thank you. Member Wins?

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] I just wanted to add on to what President Thomas had mentioned. Is it possible for us to reevaluate and look at the initial plan that we had rolled out for the arts? Because I just wanted to see. I'm curious where it's going to be impacting the allocations for the arts program.

- ▶ [**Marie dela Cruz**] Yeah, sure. Off the top of my head, I'm guessing it's It may come from the school site allocations, because a lot of the schools didn't spend all of their money. So I think we had some fallout from that. OK. Thank you. So we can bring that back. Thank you.

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- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] OK. Thank you. May I have a motion to approve the 45-day budget revision?

- ▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] You make a motion to approve?

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I'll second. Ms. Plancarte makes a motion. Ms. Jones seconds it to approve the 45-day budget revision. Please vote.

- ▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] 5 aye.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Thank you. Next up, personnel items consent agenda.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Okay, that would be me. Let's see, let me get it up here. President Thomas, I'm asking that the board approve this slate of items including the personnel report, an MOU with CSCA, actually two MOUs with CSCA for, I'm sorry, one because we pulled 12.4 12.4, so a personnel report and the memorandum of understanding between CSCA and NUSD.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] May I have a motion to approve with the exception of 12.4?

- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] We'll make a motion to approve with the exception of 12.4. I'll second.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] OK. Member Plancarte moves. Member Nguyen seconds. to approve with the exception of 12.4. Please vote. Five ayes, thank you. Yes, Member Nguyen.

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] I just had a quick comment. I just wanted, I'm looking at the PAL report, and I'm just really excited and happy to see some of our secondary teachers who were long-time subs that are now here, especially I'm going to give him a big shout out because Mr. James Reynolds was a huge popular science teacher at the junior high and at the high school, and he's also an alumni, class of 93. So, I'm just excited to see that he decided to be certificated now. So, congratulations to all the new hires. And everyone who's making probation. Thank you.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Yay.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Member Thomas, may I also make a quick comment on that? Also on the PAL, I do want to recognize the resignation of Catherine Ingham-Watters and do appreciate her 23 years in this district. This is the district she grew up in and the school she went to. And we miss her. I did really enjoy working with her. And she's going on to the city to bigger and better things and working with some great people over there. And I wish her all of the best in her new endeavors.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Thank you. Next, we have consent agenda for non-personnel items. Is there any board member that wants to pull any of these items for discussion? Seeing none, may I have a motion?

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] I move to approve consent items 13.2 through 13.21.

- ▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] I'll second.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Member Nguyen moves to approve the consent agenda. Member Plancarte seconds. Please vote. Thank you, Ms. Rangel, for being here. Thank you. In case we had questions.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Thank you.

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- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Thank you. Okay, next we have an information only item, board policy whistleblower and conflict of interest.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Yes, Member Thomas and members of the board, thank you so much. Member Hill has requested that the board have a conversation about the potential of having a whistleblower policy as well as a conflict of interest policy in this district. This is an information only item. Also, I distributed a sample individual conflict of interest certification from another organization that we didn't have in time for posting, but we have it now. So we also put copies out and distributed them to the folks who were here in the audience. We will post this document when we post the documents for the board. So anyway, I just wanted to point out to everyone that we do have conflict of interest policy ourselves. and there are there are plenty of information sheets and whatnot because this is a longtime law in the state of California. And then also there I posted the labor code about whistleblower protections and what they are for. So I will since this is his item I will. Member Thomas is if OK with you. We'll have Mr. member Hill Mr. Hill, almost.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] But he's a Mr. Hill as well as a member Hill, but he's a. I thought you gave him some adjective, like Mr. Fabulous. I'll take that, too.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] The fabulous Mr. Hill. Wow, OK. I love it.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Wow, I don't know how I can. I guess I'll just have to live up to this. OK, so yeah, I was the one that requested that we start to talk about these two items. And this is really just the beginning of a discussion. And I think that each one maybe merits a study session and then maybe some work to put together some, either revise existing policies or put new drafts together. But I think that these are issues that we've faced recently and I've seen some some gaps in the process, and I think it's important to address. So as it relates to the whistleblower issue, so there are definitely whistleblower laws in the state of California at multiple levels that protect people, theoretically. But what I think we've seen is that oftentimes in practice, they don't. And if you look at how this is done in corporate America, and when I say corporate America, I really mean Fortune 500 companies, they are required by law to actually have a formal whistleblower policy. And those issues get, well, they usually go to an independent third party. that receives them and then there's a regular reporting that happens to the board. And the reason why that's so important for publicly traded companies is because it's to protect against fraud. And so they don't want to have fraud occurring and a whistleblower being able to or being stifled and then investors being damaged. But I think that in our situation, we the board are concerned about any type of of issues that are going on. And we want to make sure that we have a robust process where those people can come forward. And then it really comes to the board so that they're able to evaluate and to provide direction on that. So that was the request for the whistleblower to look at this. And I think oftentimes it's helpful to have a third party administer this. But again, I think it's something we need to do more investigation around. Related to the conflict of interest, this applies at a number of different levels, but the area that I'm most concerned about is in procurement. And if you look at the law, and I've certainly looked at it, the laws that are in place right now to protect against conflict of interest, they usually only very clearly they only clearly identify direct financial conflicts of interest. And so if there is a direct financial conflict of interest and that is discovered, then you're going to appear before the Fair Political Practices Commission, and you're going to be in big trouble, as well as in front of other bodies. But when it comes to appearance of conflict of interest, where maybe there's an interest, but it's not completely apparent, That's where it gets a little bit fuzzy. And there is case law that supports avoiding or not allowing even the appearance of conflict of interest. But it's muddy. And I think that we've seen those gaps in the recent past couple of years. So I spoke to one of my former colleagues, a former client down at LA Department of Water and Power, who's been a procurement professional her entire career, like 25, 30 years in government. She worked for both the airport authority as well as for LADWP. And I asked, well, how do you guys approach this? And so she shared with me an example of their policy. So I handed that out in our last meeting, and it was actually on their letterhead. What I did this time is I just took that and put it, I pulled out the LADWP references and put it as a sample, essentially form or certification. I got it to Dr. Daly on late, so that's why we had to hand this out. So that's what you're seeing in front of you. It's really not different from what I

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handed out a month ago or so. But the idea behind this is that literally for every single procurement activity, so whenever you've got a request coming in, anybody that's a participant in the chain, they would get this as a form that they would have to sign off of. on and say, not only do I not have a conflict of interest, but I don't have an appearance of conflict of interest. And if I do, then I note that, and then I request that I'm going to recuse myself from this. And so that offers a protection to us because, number one, it puts in the front of people's mind that we're working with the public's money. We have to be objective about it. and that really we need to maximize the benefit that we deliver to students. And so we want to make sure that there are no conflicts of interest that interfere with that. But it also puts on record that later on, if something does occur, and people said, oh, well, I didn't know. Well, no, in this every single transaction that you have, that you're involved in, you have to sign off on this form. And so you're signing off. If you didn't identify that there was a conflict of interest, well, that's on you. That's not on the district. So that's what they do at LADWP very successfully. I'd like to ask that, just at a minimum, that we consider this for our district. And I think that it maybe needs to morph into a larger conflict of interest policy for the board. And so again, no action needed to be taken today, just discussion and maybe some future study sessions to try to finalize it.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Is there a CSBA conflict of interest policy? There is.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] They are. There are recommended CSBA bylaws. There are recommended CSBA exhibits. There are codes, a fact sheet. I don't know that it's specific to procurement necessarily. It's with your own business dealings, your own personal Holdings, your own personal business, that kind of thing. So, for example, if you have interest in a company, you wouldn't, you would recuse yourself from a vote to hire that company, et cetera.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] And that's partly why I think that that's what we saw recently is that a lot of the conflict of interest discussion that we see in school districts, it's aimed at like the board. right, or it's aimed at very high-level people, but that's not really where the decisions are being made, right? And so we need to drive down that awareness in the procurement chain for people to understand, well, I can't just go out and hire my buddy, you know, Fred to go supply, you know, I don't know, some food service contractor, whatever, because I think that they're great, you know, because if I, if, you know, if I'm steering business their way or they've helped me in the past, well, you know, how really objective is that procurement transaction? And so I think that we want to have really people think about that so that we get maximum bang for the buck.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I worry too if we've gotten to know some of our vendors, we've gotten very comfortable with who they are and the service they provide at our last ROP meeting. there was a request to upgrade IT equipment, which was over \$100,000. And it's required that you go out to a second bid, or you go out to get a bid, but they hadn't done that. I think there was just this whole feeling of, well, we've used them before. They've always given us a good deal. So I think part of this is not just a financial conflict of interest, but a friend type thing or feeling too comfortable without and not really looking at maybe we should be looking at other vendors and seeing if we can get a better deal somewhere else.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Well it's interesting that you brought that up because you know I don't think that board members currently are aware that we're practicing that practice now. I mean we just approved Lozano Smith who's also had some issues prior in the district. And why. Because There's personal relationships and feeling comfortable that they're going to be able to do the job well based on personal experiences. So, I mean, for me, that could be considered conflict of interest.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Go ahead.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] And so I think the important point here is I've spent much of my career in procurement. And although there are always intangibles, and sometimes there are prior working relationships where you've worked with a vendor before, and they've done a good job, and so you're more inclined to want to continue to use them. But at the same time, I will say that It's best practice that whenever you have a procurement that you go through

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a process and you try to make it as objective as possible and that you always try to put things out to bid. And because you're all, even if it ends up that you're going to be awarding, ultimately awarding the contract to a vendor that you've used before, at least it keeps everybody honest and it makes them sharpen their pencil. But if you just kind of bypass that, then I think you start to go down a slippery slope.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] And in the case of attorneys, there are multiple firms that we have relationships with. And we have to just keep ourselves honest about who we use and why we use that firm for whichever purpose we use it for.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] But that's my exact statement. I mean, what I'm trying to say is that, We can justify whoever we want to choose by going through a process, but at the end of the day, is it a really valid process? I mean, I'm just saying, be careful what you wish for.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Can I add something to you? I'm actually really glad that member Wynn brought up the attorney process, because in every district I've been in, one of the first things I do is I go out to bid for attorney services, because there are many, and many of them are fine, very great, wonderful, outstanding firms that specialize in different areas. You have your attorneys that are fabulous at board governance. Those are fabulous in special education, pupil services, you name it, business procurement, facilities, negotiations, all those kinds of things. So we're going to be going through that process now. And so really, all of our attorneys We just now started with Lozano, but all of our attorneys, including Lozano, are going to have to go out to bid and come in and interview using a rubric for all of those services, various services that I've collected over the years, a SPED rubric and an HR rubric and whatever. And we will interview. And if there's a board member who would like to be present during the board governance interview, So that, you know, we are going through a fair process in that as well. Because there are many different companies out there that are wonderful. And I think it's true. I think it's important to remember that education is a very small world. And if you've been around long enough, especially as long as I have, You've worked with everybody. You've crossed paths with everybody. You've been to presentations with everybody. You've bought curriculum from everybody. I mean, you've had these people in your district as trainers. You had them whatever. So it becomes almost impossible to not hire somebody you know. Also, there's something to be said for what you said, Member Hill, about the intangibles, right? There are things called great experiences. You have those companies that you've used that are amazing, and then you have the ones where you're like, oh, we will never use that company again. And so I think having a fair process where you're going out, you're searching for multiple people, even when it's not a bid limit thing, you're not going to spend \$100,000, But you're going to have two or three companies come out and talk to you about what they can offer, if it's curriculum or whatever it is, so that you can go through a fair rubric-based process, I think is important. So I agree, actually, with everything that was said here. And it's a bit of all of that. And in the end, we do the best we can for kids.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] And I'll just tell you that in my former career, I worked as a consultant. And at the early part, I worked for some of the big firms. And so whenever you're doing a massive IT implementation, there's really only a handful of providers that are actually qualified. And so the companies, our clients, they all know that. They know a lot of the partners, et cetera. But they also know that they need to actually go through a formal competitive bid process because, because there are a lot of details. Some of them are very quantifiable, so how much you're going to charge. But some of them are, you know, what's the team that you're going to field? And even though you might know the partner and you might like the partner, but maybe the people that are going to actually be working on the engagement are straight off the bus, you know, the school bus and are not any, you know, or really don't have enough experience, you have a chance to assess that and make a really informed decision. And some of it's qualitative, but I think to your point, Member Nguyen, that we should try to go through as rigorous a process as possible, even with things that are maybe a little bit squishy, so that we make sure we get the best deal.

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- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] I don't disagree on procurement processes, but I'm just telling you that you might not get somebody you want.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Exactly. Because somebody could be better. That's the honest to God truth, and that happens. You go through a bit, and sometimes there's somebody who's just better.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Exactly.
- ▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] Thank you.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Thank you. Looks like we're going to be right on time. Right on time, yes. So next, we move to Board of Education Committee Reports, Announcements, Requests, and Debrief. Ms. Nguyen?
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Thank you, President Thomas. In terms of any committee reporting back, I don't have anything. We've just been out on recess, board recess. And in terms of announcement, I just wanted to welcome back NUSD. It is another new beginning, a fresh start. I hope that everyone had a wonderful summer break, had time to rest and relax. And I hope that you also had time to reflect on the prior year. And with new beginnings comes, it's filled with new opportunities. So I hope that for students who are struggling last year, just know that, hey, you have a new opportunity to turn over a new leaf. And what you've set your mind to and your goals to, you can achieve. Just work hard, and I hope that Our families support our students, and our staff also support our students to achieve the best that they can be. And I just wanted to wish the students, teachers, and staff, and administrators an amazing new school year. And then also earlier, we had gone over the improvements at the school sites. I just want to give a shout out to fellow NMHS alumni Anthony, or Tony Burns, class of 1993. I'm thanking him for the mural projects that were completed at Coyote Hills and at Newark Memorial High School pool. They look amazing. And then this past weekend at the Taylor Swift concert, NMHS PTSA parents and student members volunteered to work at the concession stands. And just by happenstance, I was at the concert on Friday night. And when I lined up to get food and water, I ran into our NMHS PTSA group members who were there volunteering and earning money at those events for projects and to raise funds for PTSA so that they can support our students for events or any upcoming needs and wants that that they may need that may not be covered under the SPSAs or any district funding. So just wanted to thank our, actually, Diego, who was one of our previous student board member was there working and Sonia Torres, one of our counselors. Yeah. And a lot of parents from the cross country team. So I just wanted to thank them for volunteering and really, fundraising for our students. So thank you.
- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] I'd like to just go ahead and say that although we've been on summer break, it feels like there's been so much going on here to get everybody ready for the new school year. And so, yes, we've been on summer break, but then we've also not. So I just want to thank Dr. DeLeon, the staff, all of you, you know, everyone at the sites who has been completing all of the work. to get us back to the first day of school. And I also want to just say a huge thank you and welcome back to our new and veteran teachers and staff. I know that As summer's winding down, you're all busy preparing to perform the most important job, which is to teach and impact every one of the students in our community. And I appreciate all of you very much. Whether you play a larger or a smaller hand with our body of students, you are all directly making and building our Newark community and placing its future trajectory in the right direction. And that is no small job. And I am extremely grateful for all of you. And I want to also say that this upcoming academic year, I am personally looking forward to hearing from all of our teachers and staff, along with the community of families, our parents and students and others who have a vested interest in improving student achievement and success, along with equal equity distribution for all of the students of Newark Unified School District. I want to also recognize that there will be many of you who will come before the Board of Education this year. And some of you are subject matter experts in your field and what you have to say is important and it matters. And my hope is that you will ultimately feel heard, valued, respected, and safe to express yourself so that the Board of Education can collectively govern to maintain the success of every student at the forefront while establishing and maintaining respect, trust, support, and safe environments for all. I also want to thank my fellow board members and the staff who have collectively

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invested a significant amount of time and effort into streamlining a very extensive process of updating and aligning board policies, and also the subcommittee board members who work closely with Dr. DeLeon to set the overarching district goals that are set forth for the upcoming academic year. I surely do look forward to working alongside of my fellow board members and Dr. DeLeon this year, plus getting to know so many of you who I've yet to meet. And finally, to all of our students and families and community members, I hope you had a wonderful summer so far. We're officially winding down the last few days of summer break, and I wish you an equally wonderful time this next and final week of summer break. And I'm looking forward to seeing and meeting many of you next year.

- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] I just want to say welcome back and thank you to the people who have worked so hard this summer to get schools ready, programs, facilities, whatever it has taken to really bring us and USD to a better place and a new beginning. And I really look forward to everything that's going to be happening this year.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] So a couple of things. So first off, committee reports. So we are going to have an audit committee meeting this coming Tuesday, so a week from today. And I think I've mentioned in a prior meeting, we're going through a process. So according to our charter, we need to revisit who our audit partners are on a regular basis. I can't remember the exact time period but I think it's somewhere between five and seven years that we evaluate and decide whether we want to continue going forward with the same audit partner or whether we want to choose. So a new one. So we're going to be going through a competitive process. We're going to be discussing first off the RFP and so really what are the criteria that we want to look at and evaluate in the process. And then once we're all in agreement around that, then we'll launch that. And I imagine it's probably going to take a couple of months to get this all sorted out. But we'll be talking about that, launching that officially this coming Tuesday. So that's the audit committee update. In terms of announcements, I just want to echo all my fellow board members in welcoming everybody back. And again, thanking Dr. DeLeon and All the staff are working very hard this summer. And I was surprised, actually, that Dr. DeLeon had agreed to start early. I wasn't anticipating that she was going to start until July. But I'm really thankful that she did. And so with her leadership, really lighting a fire and moving us forward. And so I'm very thankful for that. And I would like to issue a challenge to The entire district to say, let's take up the torch, right? Let's really try to be the best, right? Let's strive for excellence, and let's have that as our motto. And then finally, two important requests, one more important than the other. So I'll start with the less important one. first request is, as we were just talking about legal services, so I had learned from Dr. DeLeon over the past month that in the last year, I think we as a district have spent something like more than a million dollars on legal services. And we have a \$65 million budget. And so this is really out of control. And this is money that doesn't go into the classrooms. It doesn't go to teacher salaries, you know, to a variety of other, quite frankly, more important resources. And I think the unfortunate thing is that despite the fact that we've been spending so vigorously, it hasn't resulted in a reduction in lawsuits, but rather it seems to be going the other direction. And so my request is that I think that we as a board really need to look at how we handle legal services and probably need to put together a formal policy. But I think before we do that, we need to be informed with some more data. And I would like for the board to consider exploring bringing in an independent auditor who can audit our legal bills, right? And this is a pretty standard thing. And when I say just independent, it means an attorney that we haven't used before. And let's really understand what we've been spending money on. and what sort of seems reasonable and what, you know, seems, you know, not. And then we as a board can then sort of evaluate, well, how do we want to craft a policy that maximizes and basically makes, well, allows us to make good use of, good, efficient use of legal resources. So that's my first. Request do I have permission from the board to explore this topic further?
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Okay, and then the second request the most important request is Before you make your second request It's not that I don't agree that we need to reassess. I think that right now So you want to spend additional? more money on legal to have an evaluation of our legal status. But I think that that's something that staff can easily put together in a staff report to tell us what it is that we're currently spending money on in terms of legal fees. And maybe go from there first before we make a financial request to do an internal audit on on legal findings that what we're spending. I think we should allow staff to at least review what it currently is. I think that they have a good grasp on what it is that we are spending legal on. And I know that from speaking to Dr.

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DeLeon, Superintendent DeLeon, you know, in the months that she's been here in regards to like, you know, the requests for legal services. She knows exactly what her concerns are and she has addressed them to us already, whether it is on a one-on-one or together collectively. So I think that I would recommend that we would allow staff to come back with a staff report in regards to what actual dollar amount is being spent on different legal services that we are currently going out right now. And then if it's unsatisfactory for any reason, then we can do a formal audit.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] So the reason why I'm asking for us to have a specialist in legal services come in and audit is as a former consultant and service provider, I know that I could run circles around my clients in terms of billing them for services that they would have no idea whether those services were appropriate or not, or what I was charging them for. And so my request is that we have an insider who really knows how to actually look at legal bills and say, well, it looks like you've got a lawyer doing this. And why don't you have a paralegal doing this at a much lower rate? Or here you've got a partner billing out of this, where there's another comparable one that's billing out of that. And that's something that requires legal expertise. And so I think that we would be further ahead in the curve if we just bring somebody in. Because I promise you that in the end, it's actually going to pay for itself. So usually when you do these kind of audits, you find out areas where you can save a whole bunch of money. So that's my request.
- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Can I add a quick thought to that? Because I've asked Mr. Berg if he would take a look at some of our bills to tell me if he sees anything out of the ordinary. And so he's kind of doing that. And he's also waiting for the last invoices to see how much we've actually encumbered from different companies so that we know what the total is. For a few months there, I was signing like for one company \$100,000, \$90,000, and \$100,000. And so it's alarming. But we'll see what the final number is when we get all of them through. But and then by company and how much we're using each. But I think if you don't mind, I'd like also to wait for all of those to be invoiced, all of the like I have a stack on my desk right now that I haven't even signed yet that are back invoices. And so those to be done, have that all done, and then let him give it a quick look, and then maybe sort them by company, by topic, and all of that kind of stuff. I think we can maybe do that. He's already kind of looking at that kind of stuff for us anyway, so that might be one way.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Yes, because all of the invoices are, all of the vendors that you have in your current finance system, you're able to run a report that lists out by vendor name, how much has been spent, you know, for whatever the date parameter you want, Member Hill. And they should be able to list that. And in those systems, they are attached, the invoices are attached, so you know exactly what they're paying for, what services are usually indicated on the invoices. And I would actually prefer going that route before we actually spend additional dollars to be able to, because it's already in our system. We're able to pull it.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] So I'm OK with, you know, looking at something on an interim. But the concern that I have, you know, is some of it is things that I've seen. Some of it is things that I've been subject to. And so when I got a communication from our former DWK partner who was handling our account, William Tunick, saying, oh, Member Hill, I'm helping the district audit CPRA, or no, not audit, process CPRA requests. And here's one that I would like to forward to you, requesting basically the contents of your laptop and all communications on a particular subject, blah, blah, blah. So that really concerns me around what are our lawyers doing? And why are they involved in certain activities, and particularly directed at board members? And I think that it will take somebody with legal expertise to unwind some of this and say, well, why exactly are you paying a lawyer at however many hundreds of dollars an hour to go, quote unquote, process CPRA requests? So again, we've got a big mess here, and we've got to sort it out.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I can understand. you know, the points on all sides. My suggestion would be that member Hill work with Dr. DeLeon and figure out the best way to move forward to have everyone's interests kind of considered. Absolutely.

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- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Thank you. Absolutely.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Sounds good. So now to my most important request. So for those of you that aren't following it, Lotto is over \$1 billion tonight. I believe that the results have been announced, but I'm not sure. Well, they've been processed. I don't know if they've been formally announced. So my request is that if I win Lotto, that member Joan agrees to take over for me as vice president.

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] That's so generous. I thought you were going to donate half to the school district.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] I would have been like, right. If I win a billion dollars, I will donate half to NUSD.

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] OK, noted. It is. Oh, we have that in the minutes. We have that on record.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Oh, we're getting brand new buildings. Did you hear that? We're getting brand new buildings. He only buys one ticket. So just so you know, because he's figured out the probability. He buys one ticket.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Well, there's one chance in over 300 million, and there's about 300 million people that live in this United States. So just picture your chances.

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Did you run your number through ChatGPT? Is that why?

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] You got the algorithm right? So I won't repeat everything that my board colleagues have said, but my sentiments are with them in thanking everyone for their summer work, welcoming students and staff back, and saying how much we appreciate all of you and the hard work you do for us. So thank you. I'm on the ROP board, and Karina, you're my alternate. I know this is last minute, but it's Did we miss a meeting? Yeah, so what's happened is I have a medical procedure that I have to be at on Thursday. And that's when they set up a meeting long in advance to have a board workshop. I think it's 9 to 1030 on Thursday. Do you have any chance to?

- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] It's in the morning, right? It's in the morning. Great question. 9.30 in the morning. 9 to 10. It's 9 to 9.30.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] That's the big one. No, I think it's 9 to 10.30. Well, that's OK. And I haven't brought it up to them yet. But it would give you an overview of it's really to bring our new members up. And they said they'll catch me up later.

- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] Well, the issue is that I didn't realize I double booked myself. And I didn't realize it, but we're going camping. Oh, well that's. So I weren't sure.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] No, and it's not necessary. They said they would catch me up later on the discussion. And I was on the ROP board for many, many years. So this kind of orientation I don't think is necessary for me as the newer board members for ROP. So thank you. I just, this just came up, okay?

- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] I'm so sorry. I wish I could be there. No problem.

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] President Thomas, I'm interested. I don't mind filling in for you.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] You're interested? Okay. I'll call them and see if you could sit in for me. Yeah. Okay. Great.

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- ▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] You're welcome.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Okay. I think I'm last.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Yes, you are.

- ▶ [**Penny DeLeon**] Just have one thing to say. In my experience, whenever you set a goal for folks and students, when you set a goal for students, staff, or administrators, or schools, they absolutely will meet whatever expectation you set for them, especially if they know you believe in them. And I absolutely believe with all my heart in the outstanding teachers, administrators, and students of Newark Unified School District. And I know that whatever it is that we set our minds to do, we can do it together. We might not do it in year one, we might not do it in year two, but at a certain point, we're gonna do it because we are outstanding. So I believe, I believe we will meet those goals with all my heart and we're gonna try our little hearts out to do it. So I wanted to say that because we sit and we talk about, should we, should we, should we not? My experience is whatever expectation you set, people will meet it if you believe in them. And that's the important piece. So anyway, with that, have a good evening. Yes. We believe.

- ▶ [**Marie dela Cruz**] We believe. We believe. We believe.

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Got to watch Ted Lasso then.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Would someone like to make a motion to adjourn the meeting?

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] I'd like to make a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9.36 PM.

- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] I will second that at 9.37 PM.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Member Nguyen makes a motion. Member Jones seconds. Do we need to vote electronically? Please vote.

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Don't shut it off.

- ▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] Please vote. Member Nguyen.

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Roll call. She's doing a roll call because she anticipated that you turned off your computers. Yeah. Aye. Yes.

- ▶ [**Jennifer Sachs**] Member Plancarte. Aye. Member Jones. Aye. Member Hill. Aye. Thomas. Aye.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Meeting adjourned. Thanks for a great meeting, everyone. Yay.