

AI Generated - Transcription will contain occasional errors and omissions.

Not a report authorized by the NUSD - Click on the provided YouTube links to hear the actual dialogue.

2024-11-06, Regular Meeting

Agenda  BoardDocs
A DILIGENT BRAND

Duration 03:51:51

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] at 7 o 5 p.m. and 3.1 report of closed session at actions there's nothing to report moving on to item 4.1 pledge of allegiance we can all stand please I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for in which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. Meeting practices and information 4.2. Members of the public may observe the meeting via the NUSD YouTube channel, live transmission on Comcast channel 26, or in person at the NUSD boardroom. Spanish translation will be available via Zoom. The public will have the opportunity to address the Board of Education regarding non-agendized matters and agendized items with a live audio-only comment via Zoom with advance notice requested by email at publiccomment at newarkunified.org, a written comment by submitting a speaker card or speaking card via email at publiccomment at newarkunified.org, or with live in-person comments by submitting a speaker card with the executive assistant. OK, moving on. Can I get an approval of the agenda that the superintendent has requested that we pull two items, that we pull 14.4 and 14.9. But if everything is OK, if I can get a motion. Actually, can we offer 2.3 and 2.4 in the closed session? Yeah, I'm sorry. Yes. So although we've already covered that, we do need to add to the motion that we pull 2.3 and 2.4. So can I get a motion to approve the agenda with the exception of 2.3, 2.4, 14.4, and 14.9?
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] I'll make a motion to approve the agenda. In addition to polling, 2.2, 2.4, 14.4, and 14.9.
- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] I'll second.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Member Jones moves. Vice President Jones moves. Member Plancarte seconds. And do we want to do this via board docs, Ms. Lemus?
- ▶ [**Toya Lemus**] Yes, we could do it via board docs. Online voting is open. Votes are in. Five ayes.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Great. Motion carries. Moving on to 6.1, student report. I guess, is the student member going to come? Do we know? OK. All right. So moving on then. 7.1, Employee Organizations. Do we have anybody here from NTA or doesn't we don't have anybody? So CSEA. OK. NEWMA. No? OK. All right, so moving on to 8.1, public comment on non-agenda items. OK. So there are no comments on non-agenda items. 8.2, public comment on agenda items. Ms. Parks, would you like to speak now on 8.2 and 14.4, or do you want to wait until we reach those items?
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Not 8.2. No, 8.2 is public comment.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] OK, so what is this one?
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] The two that you were going to rate, I thought you were going to rate on the new number two. Oh, I see. OK. OK, all right. So then I guess you'll be commenting in the future. OK, so moving on to 9.1, superintendent report. Thank you.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Well, good evening, board. It's been a busy week. As many of you know, we've had the elections. I just want to share with the community that all votes are not in yet. And so we are hopefully optimistic about Measure O, and it appears to be very successful. We also know that there is still, as much as a couple thousand outstanding ballots still sitting out there. And so at this time, we're not ready to really comment on whether or not that election has been certified. It actually won't be certified from the registrar until later on in November. And so there's still more to watch. And then each evening, it's my understanding that the registrar

YouTube Links

voters will be giving us an update. The next one is tomorrow. Is it at 5? I think it's at 5 too. You know, there's more to watch on that. But we do want to thank the community for having been so supportive of us as we work through Measure O. I want to thank the committee that worked tirelessly on trying to get the word out about the importance of Measure O and what we do for the facilities. And I want to thank the many partners that came in to help get that messaging out and, you know, sitting out there. And although it wasn't necessarily the school district that did that work, it was definitely the work of our committee. I'm just really grateful and thankful that they gave such generous time to be able to talk with people up in the community. It was pretty amazing how much support there was for our students and for our teachers and for our schools and classrooms. So it was quite evident. I just really want to thank all those that are involved. And I especially want to thank our two ad hoc members here for the board, Priya Plankardeh And Phuong Nguyen, you guys were amazing. And then really, I mean, everybody contributed in many different ways. But the work and the efforts that went into this, it was definitely in the great team spirit. So thank you very, very much.

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] I just really want to quickly acknowledge Member Thomas. I know that she really got on top of us and really motivated us. And I just really appreciated you. And we wouldn't have been able to get out front without her generosity and leveraging, putting it out in the League of Women Voters. So thank you.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] With that, that concludes my report for this evening. We've got holidays coming up upon us. And I think November to me is always a time of just really being thankful and grateful for those that you work with. for your families and your friends. But this year, I think, you know, when I think about so many changes that are happening throughout our country right now, this is just a time for us to really reflect on what we can do, what we can do to help support each other. And most importantly, what can we do right now to help really support our kids with a successful future? So thank you all.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] OK, moving on to 9.2, Newark USD 2024 Williams Report.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Yes, this is a notification that the county sent us, providing their confirmation that we, for the sites that they went out to go visit, that they acknowledged that we were in compliance. And so this is just an FYI to the board. There's no action on this this evening. But I wanted to let you know. I will share with you, I still am concerned about our facilities as you've heard me talk about this. Although they are what they call functional, I will say there are many facilities. And as students have been talking to me about the disrepair of some of their facilities, it's much deeper and greater than I even realized. And I learned a lot during this election process as they brought more information to me and shared information. I really want to thank Joy for helping to coordinate that. I was able to spend some time with the students, especially over the high school and the middle school, who showed me their concerns. When I think about that, and although I realize there's a standard that they look at to make sure that it meets the health code standard, they still aren't the kind of conditions I think that you want to have our children in each and every day. And so although we are in compliance, I will say I'm really very hopeful that if Measure O passes, that we'll be able to get in there and do more work to be able to bring our facilities up to the quality that we'd want for our kids.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Moving on to 10.1, 2023-2024 CASP data overview.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] So I'm excited to have Karen Allard present to you this evening. The CASP data is a snapshot of how our students are doing. It provides us with in-depth levels of what we should be working on for data. It definitely is targeted around our instructional goals that we have set here at the district by our board. I think this is like one of the most important pieces of evidence that as we sit there and we start looking at what do we need to do to be able to help and support kids, looking at this data is an important element. So it's a long presentation, I will share that with you up front. I think we've tried to streamline it as much as possible, but we wanna make sure that we have a conversation about what is happening instructionally. And by the way, there's been a lot of changes to instruction. So I don't want anyone to think that this is the fault of anyone. The state's adopted a new curriculum recently. We've been in the process of looking at what we would be using for adoptions over the last couple of years. There are changes and challenges happening. There's also a lot more

YouTube Links

technology integrated in the curriculum than there used to be before in the past. These are the things that we kind of need to start looking at. It also looks at the state standards. How do our state standards apply if we're using older instructional materials? It may not align with the CASP exams that students took. And so with that, I'm going to turn it over to Karen Allard to be able to present. So thank you very much, Karen, for being here this evening and for your team and all the work that they did on pulling this presentation together.

▶ [**Karen Allard**] Thank you. Thank you, Board of Trustees, for the opportunity to share the 23-24 CASP results. As a reminder, the CASP is a state assessment system that contains several assessments. The Smarter Balanced English Language Arts and Mathematics are administered to students in grades three, eight, and in grade 11. There is also the California Science Test, referred to as CAST, or C-A-S-T, that is administered to students in grades three, five, eight, and once during high school. I will be sharing all assessment results this evening, as well as our efforts to advance student learning. There are four achievement levels on the Smarter Balanced ELA and math assessments. Level one represents students who did not meet grade level standards, and level two indicates students who are close or who nearly met grade level standards. In tonight's presentation, the shared results will indicate the percentage of students who met or exceeded grade level standards in ELA, math, and science. Back one more, please. As I begin to share our 23-24 results and some historical data, the presented data will start to unfold a story that may give us direction moving forward. Our results are about systems, systems that are perfectly designed to get the results we are achieving. It is the systems that we need to take a greater look at to increase student outcomes, and I'll talk about this later in the presentation. I want to start with overall comparisons for the 23-24 school year. In the next four slides, I will share comparisons between the state of California, Alameda County, and NUSD, comparisons between two of our neighboring districts, and two slides that were provided by ACOE that highlight district performance across the county. Next slide. The first comparison slide shares results for the state of California, ACOE, and NUSD in ELA and math. Starting on top, the number of students across the state who met or exceeded standards in English language arts was 47% and 35% in math. And for the county, 55% in ELA and 47% in math. For Newark, The dark blue bars share the percentage of students who met or exceeded standard, which is 44% in ELA and 35% in math. In comparison, we scored 3% lower than the state and 10% lower than the county in ELA. And in math, we scored the same as the state at 35% and 12% lower than the county. Next slide. In regards to two of our neighboring districts, FUSD scored 73% in ELA and 60% in math. New Haven scored 50% in ELA and 30% in math. And NUSD again scored 44% in ELA and 35% in math. This data shares that NUSD scored 29% lower than FUSD in English Language Arts and 6% lower than New Haven. And for math, NUSD scored 33% lower than FUSD and 1% lower than New Haven.


▶ [**Karen Allard**] The graphics on this slide were provided by ACOE. The information gives an overall perspective on how all districts performed throughout Alameda County and ELA from 22-23 to 23-24. One district showed no growth, five districts showed an increase, and 11 districts declined. NUSD results lowered by 0.1%. Next slide. For math in Alameda County, Newark did increase by 0.4% from 22-23 to 23-24. Nine other districts also increased their overall math results while eight district scores declined. Next slide. I will now start to share specifically for NUSD starting with ELA. The next six slides will share results for 23-24, and I will also provide a historical perspective pre and post pandemic. 2,318 students were administered the Smarter Balance Assessment for ELA in grades three, eight, and 11. Overall, 44% of students met or exceeded standards. This means that 1,020 students are on grade level in English language arts, and 1,298 are below grade level. As we look at the other student performance groups, we can begin to notice the current opportunity gap. Students identified as white and Asian are outperforming other student groups. Our lowest performing group are English learners, which make up 20% of our student population, followed by students with disabilities, Hispanic, economically disadvantaged, and black African-American. Next slide. The number 44 is significant. The red dotted line indicates the number, indicates the year of the pandemic. If we start to historically dig deeper into the data, it has been a common trend for the students to perform between 44 and 48% pre and post pandemic. I do want to highlight that we had some slight gains the year before the pandemic and the year after with 48% of students meeting or exceeding standard. For the last two years, we have flatlined at 44%. Next slide. As we look at multi-years, our data has increased and decreased over time. This slide gives a historical perspective of three

YouTube Links

performance groups, including economically disadvantaged, English learners, and special education students. This slide also gives us a picture of our current opportunity gap. In grades 3, 8, and 11, NUSD has had 495 English learners, approximately 20% of the student population. With 7% of English learners meeting or exceeding grade level standards, this means that 35 EL students out of the 495 are on grade level, and 460 are below grade level in English language arts. Next slide. This slide gives another historical perspective sharing information of students who identify as black or African-American, Asian, Hispanic, Latino, Latina, white, or two more ethnicities. Students who identify as Asian and white outperform other performance groups by ethnicity. Our Hispanic or Latino, Latina students have the lowest score at 30%. 53% of the population are Hispanic or Latino and Latina students which is 1,321 out of the 2,318 students who took the Smarter Balanced assessment. With 30% median or exceeding grade level standards, 396 students are in grade level in English language arts and 925 Hispanic, Latino, Latina students are below grade level. Next slide. This slide shares how students have performed pre and post pandemic in third, fourth, and fifth grades. If we take a look at 23-24, third graders had a 6% increase from 44 to 50%, fourth graders decreased from 49 to 39%, and fifth graders decreased from 43 to 41. Next slide. For the secondary students, the data indicates how students have performed over time. We focus on the last bar again in 23-24. Sixth graders increased performance by 3% from 49 to 52. Seventh graders increased from 40 to 42%. Eighth graders decreased from 34 to 32%. And 11th graders increased 3% from 49 to 52. This slide also indicates that 52% or lower of our students are not on grade level in English language arts. Next slide. I'll now transition to the 23-24 Smarter Balance results for math. 2,236 students in grades three, eight, and 11 were administered the Smarter Balance test in 23-24. 35% of the 2,236 students met or exceeded standards. As we look at the other student performance group, we can begin to see the opportunity gap in math. Students identified as white and Asian are outperforming other student groups by 15 and 25%. Our lowest performing group again are English learners, which again make up 20% of our student population, followed by students who identify as black, African-American, Hispanic, economically disadvantaged, and students with disabilities. Next slide. The number 35 is significant as for the last several years, we have remained in the 30s. Again, the dotted red line indicates the year of the pandemic. We had an increase the year before the pandemic at 38%. And then for the last two years, students have met or exceeded standard at 35%, which means overall 65% of students are below grade level in math. Next slide. As we look at multi-years of math data has increased and decreased over time. This slide gives a historical perspective of the three performance group, including economically disadvantaged, English learners, and special education students. This slide also gives us a picture of our current opportunity gap in math. Our English learners, 495 students in grades 3, 8, and 11 are at 7% meeting or exceeding standard, just like in ELA. Next slide. When we look at students by ethnicity, students who identify as Hispanic or Latino or Latina perform lower than students who identify as black, African American, Asian, white, or students with two or more ethnicities. Last year we had 1,321 Hispanic, Latino, Latina students in grades three, eight, and 11, with 21% scoring at meet or exceeding grade level, 277 are in grade level in math, and 1,043 are Bergoglio grade level in math. Next slide. This slide shares how students have performed in math pre and post pandemic. If we just focus on last year, third graders increased from 51 to 54%, fourth graders decreased from 49 to 45%, and fifth graders increased from 31 to 36%. Next slide. This slide shares how six, through 8th and 11th graders have scored in math for the past several years. If we take a look again at just 23-24, 6th graders decreased from 38 to 36%, 7th graders had 2% gain from 30 to 32%, 8th graders decreased from 24% to 23%, and 11th graders increased from 22 to 23%. Next slide. The last assessment results will be from the CAST, an assessment for science. Shared all the results for all districts in Alameda County for the CASP assessment. Overall, the county had 40.8 or 41% of students met or exceed standard in science. NUSD had 26.9 or 27% meet or exceed standard. 10 districts outperformed the county's results with scores higher than 40.8 and eight underperformed the county's results with scores lower than 40.8. Next slide. I also want to highlight that we did see a 0.8 increase in our CAS scores from 22-23 to 23-24 school year. Nine other districts also increased their SCIEnt scores as well. Next slide. Historically, students have remained at 26% meeting or exceeding standard in science. I want to highlight and acknowledge that after the pandemic, we had a 5% increase of students who met or exceeded standard with an increase to 31%. For the last two years, we have the same results in 22-23 as we did in 18-19. Next slide. This slide shares another historical perspective of the number of students meeting or exceeding standards in science. In 2023-24, fifth grader students increased their scores from 31% to 34%. Eighth graders decreased from 28% to 22%. And high

YouTube Links

school students increased from 21% to 24%. Next slide. At the beginning of the year, we started with one simple and powerful word, believe. And at the start of this presentation, I mentioned that our systems are currently designed to get the results we are achieving. While there are some good news with a few highlights and bright spots, we also have some challenges. We have work to do to increase student outcomes for all students, and it will be important that we lock arms and move forward together. And we also have incredible teachers doing the critical work every day with our students. The next slides will share some of the strategic and intentional changes we have implemented this year.

-  [**Karen Allard**] We have publicly shared the board and LCAP goals. These goals have been presented in multiple professional learning meetings and trainings district wide. By creating an awareness, we can all focus on the same goals, moving the organization forward together. We are also taking a look at our systems and having conversations on what is working and what is not to be different to support student learning. Next slide. We have also aligned three main focus areas to the board and LCAP goals. These include increasing student achievement while decreasing chronic absenteeism and suspension. One measurement to increase student achievement is the consistent use of the iReady Reading personalized pathway. And we have already seen a 5% increase in usage from last year at this time. It is exciting to share that compared to 23-24, we are also seeing a decline in both suspensions and absenteeism than this time last year. Suspensions have decreased from 112 to 45. and more students are attending school on a regular basis. Next slide. In alignment with the goal to increase student achievement, we wanted to dive deeper into our multilingual learners results who are currently at 7% meeting or exceeding standard in ELA and math. Along with the goals listed on this slide, we will also be taking a team to the annual CAFE, California Association for Bilingual Education Conference this spring to learn together side by side about what other districts are doing, as well as the best research-based strategies to increase multilingual learner results. Next slide, please. In TK5, we have implemented some new ideas, and I want to acknowledge the teachers who are doing this critical work and their ongoing dedication, passion, and commitment to support student learning. From TK teachers designing units of study to have consistency across the district, implementing 90-minute literacy blocks at all six elementary sites, as well as the implementation of 30-minute designated ELD blocks after the winter break. We are starting efforts to create meaningful change. It will also be important to create awareness of what students experience on the LCAP and Smarter Balanced assessments so that we can use this information in daily instruction to increase student outcomes. Next slide. In our secondary grades, we have started a multilingual learner monthly professional learning series at the middle school. And at the high school, we have launched our California colleges dashboard to support students college application process. We know we need additional efforts to revise systems at the secondary level. And these next steps which will include looking at secondary math pathways, implementation of ethnic studies, and adopting new curriculum aligned to the common core state standards, as well as purchasing supplemental novels. Next slide. Our Director of Special Education, Dr. Angela Walker, has facilitated and will continue to provide ongoing professional learning opportunities to strengthen our IEP practices district-wide. SPED teachers and paraeducators will also soon be attending crisis prevention training to provide additional supports on how to identify and defuse behaviors when they occur at our school sites. We will also be inviting general education teachers to these trainings as they have also requested this report support. Next slide. Students must feel safe and supported in order to learn and our community involvement is essential. The district continues to have multiple avenues of support to support students' mental and social emotional wellbeing through our partnerships with the county. For this school year, 464 students have already been referred to cost site teams and wraparound support and ongoing collaborative efforts are taking place daily to ensure students have everything they need to be successful in and outside of the classroom. Next slide. We have a team approach as district and site leaders meet regularly to review data, determine action steps to increase student outcomes. Together we are side by side in this work. Elementary administrators are visiting each other's sites and participating in learning walks to review each other's efforts to close the opportunity gaps at their sites and to provide feedback to each other. Site admin are also participating in monthly trainings and professional learning sessions, as well as biweekly check-in sessions for a continuous learning approach. Next slide. As we have started a multifaceted, comprehensive approach to increase student achievement, We are also, the executive cabinet is also seeking guidance and recommendations from the board to show us the LCAP advisory committee tomorrow night on how

YouTube Links

to increase student outcomes district wide, especially for our multilingual learners. The district LCAP advisory committee will also have the opportunity to review and analyze the data for EL foster youth and low income students. With the suspension of the DLI program this year, there's a large amount of funding that can be used to support student performance, and it will be important to allocate these funds this school year. Next slide. Our data numbers and percentages shared tonight tell a story. We also need to hear the stories of our students, especially our multilingual learners, as they may have additional insights that the data and percentages do not share. This is another step forward to close the opportunity gap in NUSD. This includes the presentation.

▶ [**Kat Jones**] Thank you.

▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Questions from the board?

▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] That was a lot to take in. It is a lot to take in. And we recognize that the data is difficult sometimes to digest. just because when you compare it to our local school districts and our state averages and see that we're down lower, there's a lot that's happened, right? And we're not the only district that's actually feeling some of these same issues. I think it was interesting data right after the pandemics, students went up a little bit, right? And they kind of dropped back down. I think they were excited to get back into learning. And then there's something about taking the test here that doesn't excite our students at all, that's for sure. I actually think our students were looking at other kinds of data that would help us ensure that we have better understanding of how students are doing in between times when they're taking these tests. We're using benchmark data to be able to help us with that, correct? And what I'm really excited about is our new and our seasoned educators that are out there, our principals, they're helping to lead this work in conversations with their teachers. you know, what can we do to help students be better prepared and help support them in this journey, right, to be able to be more successful? Because it is concerning information. And again, I don't think it's, and Karen, I want to thank you for pointing out that, you know, we know how hard our teachers work at trying to support our students. The testing itself, we wanna make sure that we're capturing what the tests are actually saying, and then making sure that we're really instructionally responding to that as well, like when we were preparing for students, right? And getting all that done. So it's, again, the stakes have gone up higher, and we are underperforming. And so we definitely, as the board recognizes, was one of your big goals, right? increasing academic performance for our students. I mean, it's not a surprise, probably, for you to see some of the data, because you've seen it before. But what are we doing to be able to improve it? And I really just want to point out and just thank our educational services team and all of our school sites for coming together and really taking a look at what they're doing with this. This work is being led not only by our educational team, but also by our teachers at sites, by site leads, looking at the data and information and what they can do, looking at best practices that their colleagues are doing. So there's a lot of work that's going in with us behind the scenes.

▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Other comments or questions?

▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Gosh, there's so much rolling around in my head, I don't know where to start. But I really appreciate that you pulled together all this data, and I appreciate the plans going forward. The questions I have kind of relate to that large amount of money that we have because DLI was suspended and getting down to the school site data. I know that there's been analysis of school site data and I wondered if you can talk about what the school sites are doing to look at their individual class data and how that might lead to that extra money being focused, not district-wide, but on the schools whose students are struggling the most.

▶ [**Karen Allard**] There is definitely a laser-like focus on multilingual learners right now in this district. Its data is shown in presentations in professional learning. It's showed in principal meetings. It's shown in ed services meeting. We take a look at it in cabinet. with only 7% of those students on grade level, we've really started to take a look and like, what do we need to do? How are we digging down? What are the whys behind it? There's a lot of factors to it from students not coming to school to are we giving them the skills that they need to be successful on the Smarter Balanced Test? How are we helping them to get re-designated to expand their

YouTube Links

language? We're starting. We're not there yet, but the conversations are definitely happening. And when you're starting to hear those numbers of how many are just below grade level, it's creating a sense of urgency.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] As a follow-up, I know that we spend a lot of money on iReady. And iReady is a formative assessment. And in the past, have you looked at the data or has the district looked at the data? Because it's been my... memory or it seems that we're not requiring teachers to teach, to take the iReady test, yet we're paying for iReady curriculum. It doesn't seem to me that it's been universally used, and yet it's very expensive.
- ▶ [**Karen Allard**] Yes, that was one of the changes we made this year as well. Historically, it had been used mostly for our little assessments throughout the year to see how kids were doing. Now in all of the elementary, and we're starting at the middle school, the message is out there that students are using iReady literacy 30 to 50 minutes per week. Every week, principals are looking at that data, who is where students are stuck, where students might not have had those minutes that week, maybe they were absent, et cetera. But that's where we're seeing the 5% increase in usage of iReady, and we're already seeing some nice shifts in changes. of where students were at the beginning of the year to where they just finished their first assessment just last week.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I mean, is it voluntary for the teacher to give already? Or isn't that something we should be requiring that they do those assessments for all the students?
- ▶ [**Karen Allard**] Yeah. At the beginning of the year, they received a message letter from me with the expectation for students to be on 30 to 50 minutes per week. When you're in between 30 and 40 minutes per week, that is usually the sweet spot. where if you're consistently with that usage, you will see a 1% to 2% correlation to how students do on the CASP.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] OK. And then lastly, science. We're putting a lot of money into Bayside. In fact, on one of our reports tonight, we show how much money we have been using for Bayside. We have FOS kits in all of our elementary schools. And we have the media center replenishing those kits. And yet our scores don't correlate very well with all the investment that seems to be made in science in the district. I hope you'll look into that.
- ▶ [**Karen Allard**] Yes, for sure. And I'm super excited about, especially our elementary science teacher. They are a laser-like focus on a cycle of continuous improvement. They are looking at their data. They know their EL students. They have students that they're focusing on who are EL. They are using vocabulary that's on the CAST test in their lessons. So what they are starting to establish is very exciting work.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Thank you for the presentation, Ms. Allard. I just really wanted to touch upon the fact that creating awareness and how that really sets the pathway to recognizing and how we can create that sense of urgency for our students. and using all the systems, the analysis systems that you have in place to pull the data so that our teachers understand how to read the data and then actually use it to implement changes. So I think that's great. And then, and the TK5 focus, I really appreciate the 90 minute literacy blocks and the 30 to 50 minute per week personalized pathways for the students. that definitely will help increase some of the EL challenges that we have. So thank you for the presentation.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Actually, I have one question. Regarding the secondary math pathways, I know that we had recently implemented those in the past couple of years. Have we or could we? in the next year, evaluate those and see how it's doing and then have a report come back.
- ▶ [**Karen Allard**] Yes, I would love that.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Thank you.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Questions.

YouTube Links

▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] You know, I think I just have some comments. It's definitely a lot to take in, especially looking at our scores here and then versus our surrounding school districts and really how the data really does tell the story. And I think that's critical and that's key. And that's important that these conversations continue to be had. I know that we made it a goal to have academic achievement at the top of what we do to really challenge our kids. And I think that if we challenge them, for sure they'll continue to deliver and to really come out ahead and show us that you know, they can definitely perform. So I appreciate all of the work that's going in from the teachers and with looking and talking about how we, what the story that the data is telling because it's critical that we have that baseline and we continue to make sure that every decision that we make, it contains this information so that we know exactly where we need to continue to drive academic achievement and to hopefully improve our scores because I just, I feel like in a way, you know, we're, and I don't mean this to offend anybody, but I feel like in a way we are letting down our students and it's just, it pains me to see that the students that are scoring the lowest are, Latino students and our special ed students and it's just it's really it's really tough but I appreciate again that we have to address that we this is our where we're at this is a situation this is where we're falling short the data is driving the conversation and it's driving our goals and then also just to make sure that we continue to relook at our goals that we've set as a board to improve and increase in those areas so that everybody's held accountable because everybody has a part in it. Our teachers, our leaders, our community at home. And so we all have to come together and address the fact that we are falling short in areas and for these kids and really try to leave no child behind. So thank you again. I appreciate all of your presentation. I truly do appreciate the staff and the fact that we're having these conversations, the fact that the data is driving these conversations. And I really do hope that next year we do see an improvement and we continue the momentum. So thank you.

▶ [**Kat Jones**] Oh, you know I've got a comment. First of all, thank you. This is a really detailed report. I go back to slide 21, and I'm a person who likes to follow the cohort. And on slide 21, it's the third through fifth grade. I'm just looking at the math. I could have chosen the reading one. It wouldn't really matter. But when I look at that, and I look at the third grade for 22, and then looking at that same cohort of kids, because the next year in 23, we're looking at fourth grade, and in fifth grade looking at the 2024 and that cohort of kids. And so I follow those kinds of things because I think it's important to follow the group of kids, not just what's happening from one year to the next in third grade, but what's happening with that group of children as they progress through the years. I didn't take it up to sixth grade. I just looked at that one. And it does concern me because there is a drop each year that cohort is going down. So are there questions that are being asked of why? Why is this happening? I know as a third grade teacher, and even as a sixth grade teacher, but more importantly as a third grade teacher, I really focused on getting my kids to use iReady on a regular basis every week during the week. with the practice, not only was it helping to boost their, ultimately boost their scores, but it was given the familiarity of how to use a computer to test. Which, because third grade is new to that, it's really important that they feel comfortable on the computer answering questions. But the one thing that I believe iReady misses, and I'm not sure how to bring it in, is I know on CASP, they're asked to compare two stories and then write about it, take notes, write about it. But iReady doesn't push kids in that same way. So I think it is important for us to help students to be able to do that at whatever grade level, to read two stories and make those compare and contrast. I have seen a little bit of the benchmark personally brought home by the third grader in the house to see what is going on. It is very different from what our students have been used to in the past. I appreciate the rigor, but I also think it's really challenging for students. Those kids that are now in kindergarten and TK coming up through benchmark, it's always going to be easier for those kiddos. So I'm hoping that we can do some things that would potentially help the teachers, help the students with those reading strategies. Inferencing is really tough. And I'm seeing a lot of, what did the author mean by this? And then the four choices. are not in the three paragraph at the top of the page. And so those skills are, they have got to be explicitly taught. And it's really hard. And we need to support our teachers in how to teach those skills explicitly. We can't expect them to know how it is. We can't expect them to spend two or three hours every night diving in to benchmark. I'm hoping that, Teachers are focusing, perhaps, on the reading this year, and writing will come, and building it in as much as possible. But giving teachers time to digest all the curriculum that is new to them for ELA, but also to help them with how to teach things like inferencing explicitly, because it's really tough. And we know it's going to be on CAS,

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Karen Allard**] It's time and grace this year. And we also have some upcoming sessions to share with teachers in regards to what are the expectations, not only on the LPAC, the LPAC test is so hard. I don't know if any of you have saw it. It's really a hard assessment. So to inform, like, this is what the kids are being asked. How can we help them be comfortable when they're on it? And also on CAPS, like, these are some of the vocabulary. These are the question stems. So especially when a multilingual learner sits in front of the computer, He or she can say, I've seen this before. I'm going to give it a shot than just starting to push the button. So I think creating awareness of the expectations on those particular assessments will also help that they can put that information into their daily instruction.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] And I do hope that it's not just third grade teachers that are really focusing on getting their kids to understand how to test on a computer. But every grade level needs to be doing that and giving them that constant practice I wonder if maybe that's why some of our post-pandemic scores are higher, because they did so much more on the computer than when they came back to the classroom, and they weren't. I know personally in my classroom, I brought a lot more computer work into after the pandemic, into my daily lessons. And potentially, it has dropped off. It is something to think about. How much time are teachers utilizing that computer instruction that is going to help them in testing? Just another thought. Thank you for everything. This report was fabulous. Thank you.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] It's just something just kind of out of that part of the conversation. You know when I think about the newcomers that we have that come to our schools right. And our teachers you know do differential instruction. We don't take an older child and put them down to a lower grade. Right. We're providing the services at a different level, and our teachers are having to do a broad range of educational services. So it's not like everybody's on the same page at the same time. It's requiring those differential practices and thinking about how you go about doing that. And I gotta tell you something, it's hard work. It's hard being a teacher, and our teachers are really putting in the effort. So we really do wanna Agreed. Make sure that they know that we know the kind of work that they're putting into it and just how difficult it is.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] It is hard. And I do. I respect every single one of them. Being an elementary teacher myself, it's a lot of hard work. It takes a lot of diligence and passion. It takes a lot of passion.
- ▶ [**Karen Allard**] Agreed. And they're out there doing it every single day critically. It's a joy to be in the classrooms in this district.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] So Ms. Howard, thank you for the great presentation. And even though obviously we're seeing scores that we want to see improve, I'm very happy that we're having this conversation. And kind of a saying that I learned a long time ago is that you don't get what you expect, you get what you inspect. And so it's what you focus on, it's what you talk about. And I think that We need to have more of these discussions on a regular basis here in the boardroom, because this should be our number one priority. And if we continue to talk about it and explore it and collaborate on it, we're going to see improvement. Whereas if we only talk about it once a quarter, well, we're not going to get the same results. And so I really appreciate you bringing in this data, because it's a starting point. The one thing that, and you may already be doing this or thinking about this, I think that the challenge that the board has is that we've been doing a lot of work in establishing goals that are going to really impact our district. And I'm proud of the work that we've been doing in that respect. But at the same time, we can't get too prescriptive. And because there's too many things going on at the ground level that we don't see. And so when we say we want to see a 2% increase in ELA and math, I think that's really kind of as prescriptive as we can get at this point. Maybe a little bit more, but not much. But what I think would be really helpful is my sense about goals is that unless somebody really absorbs the goal and owns it and commits to it, the execution may not always be the best. And what would be great, this is just a thought, is that as we have our school spotlights, that can we have on a regular rotating basis the principal and key teachers come in to provide an update to say, OK, here's your big goal that you, the board, have set. Here's how we're now trying to operationalize it at our site. And it will be different on a site-by-site basis. And here's what we're committing to. And then here are the progress that they're making. Here are the struggles that they're encountering. And I think

YouTube Links

what would be even like creme de la creme is if we can get the kids to be committed to this too. I mean, because once anybody starts to say, well, wow, we're going to try to achieve something, and you start to get a little bit of traction, everybody gets excited. And so if we can figure out a way to have, you know, more of that happen on a regular basis and have the sites come and share what they're doing and give us updates and feedback and see where we can help, I think that we'd all be really supportive of that.

▶ [**Karen Allard**] I love that idea.

▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Yeah, I think that's helpful.

▶ [**Karen Allard**] And then I was just going to, like, As I meet with the LCAP Advisory Committee, any recommendations that the board would like to share with the committee as we take a look at that money that has not been allocated and how we can allocate it quickly to support our English learners, foster youth, and low income students. And our special ed students.

▶ [**Kat Jones**] I think it's going to be really important that we look at achievement and how do we help the teachers to build that achievement. And the other area, I would say, is safety, for the student, you know, for student safety. And SPED, I mean, I was having a conversation with a teacher today, and she was talking about how there are high school students that are part of the SPED department, but that are really struggling with being able to read. And yet, a secondary teacher is not trained to teach reading. And so how do elementary teachers support secondary teachers? Partner together to talk about how can the elementary teachers help those secondary teachers to help their students to learn to read that maybe they haven't had that opportunity. But I think I would say the biggest area, I would say, is really putting it into student achievement to help those kids to be able to lift those lower kids up. If it's a program or if it, I mean, I know that people are always hard to find, but if there's ways of supporting teachers with even just getting them to use iReady more, since it's already a tool that we have, or prescribing, like, get your kids on there 20 minutes a day. You know, yeah, that's more than, you know, 30 to 40 a week, but 20 minutes a day is still a short enough period of time that it'll help, but it doesn't take too much. So that's the area that I would say really needs it the most.

▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] Thank you. But also, just to piggyback on what you said, definitely safety as well. That's also one of our biggest goals, and that's also something that is really it's such a huge piece of the puzzle as well. So if we could figure out ways on how to support our staff, our sites, so that they have conflict resolution management, so that they are able to provide safe spaces for all students while they're on campus, and they understand how to approach these matters, and so that it's something that, it really, it has to be site, all sites wide because you know we have new people coming in you know someone leaves and we need we hire somebody else and so you know how do we make sure that we're providing this conflict resolution training again to help with safety for all students and then to support our teachers because I believe it's my understanding at least in certain sites that some of the more veteran teachers take on this conflict resolution training and then they trickle it down to possibly other staff and do we really want to make sure that you know I don't think we sorry I think we want to make sure that we ensure that the teachers don't feel that they also don't have enough of the support because they are in charge of so many things so if we can figure out a way to make this a priority and ensure that we address it so that we're not overloading our teachers, I think that would be really great.

▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] It comes up, it doesn't necessarily come up at the time of the LCAP necessarily, but at the beginning of the school year, you may recall there was a district that was in crisis, right, because they had a shooting, a school shooting. And it really gets raised here every time a school shooting happens, like, what are we doing? We are working with our police department and with our student services teams and with our principals and site staff to start looking at run, hide, fight. And then with that, we're also looking at some other added services that we really want to bring in to help increase safety awareness, because intruder safety is a huge concern of everyone. Our campuses have been open for a long time, and even though we're starting to put fences up and trying to secure some things down, once somebody's on your campus and they've intruded, now they're somewhat, you know, kind of in there. So we want to make sure that we're also providing some additional

YouTube Links

levels of support that need to be there. And so those are some things, too. I think we want to go back. There was very little money actually put into safety. It was almost like an afterthought last year. And I just want to make sure that we are continuously looking at some systems to be able to bring in to help provide that, whether it be certain cameras so we've got a better sight as to what's happening. It could be a device that allows for parents and visitors to stick in their ID card and is able to come back and tell you whether or not there's any kind of violations that we should be aware of when these folks come on campus. So I was thinking that might serve as a caution, right?

- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] Are we working with student leadership and having them to help them to be peer supports? If things are going on, like they're in a classroom and there's somebody who you know, kids would respond to because they're saying, you know, guys, we're going to be OK. Or, you know, having so that it's a peer rather than just a teacher. I don't know if that's something that's even out there. It just kind of dawned on me of.
- ▶ [**Karen Allard**] The high school's planning on starting something like that soon. They already have something in place, and they're expanding it bigger. It's definitely a great point to take a look at and, again, goes with, you know, student voice in the process.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] One thing that I think would be great from an LCAP perspective is, you know, I think that people have had good intentions, but I think that sometimes sort of the LCAP process has maybe been sort of independent of the larger board goals. And I think that they really need to be aligned, and I think that the LCAP committee needs to use that as sort of those goals as the guiding light. And then I think what would be great, and I think that this speaks to Member Blancarti's thought a little bit, is that sites have so many things that are going on, and principals and teachers have so many things that are going on. And I think that we need to be careful in sometimes pushing additional programs and things on them that may not actually help make their life easier. It creates another burden. And is there a way that we could create sort of maybe pots of money in certain categories and then say, OK, you know, cite, you know, here's this pot that's aligned to this goal. And you tell us, you know, what programs or money would be helpful for you to achieve goals that you're committing to, right? And then they can and we say, look, we're expecting you to help us achieve these goals. And you're going to define your flavor of it. And then we're going to provide resources to you and give you some flexibility around that. But we really need your help in achieving them.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] We somewhat do that inside of our SPSA plans. But that could be expanded as a possibility. Additional monies, we did trim back SPSAs last year, as you well know, as part of a budgetary alignment. But that's something I think with this money is something that we might be able to share across the board.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Because by the way, and we talked a little bit about this earlier, but we have great teachers in our district. And the fact that, I mean, we were one of the few school districts in the state of California that didn't see as big of a learning gap hit during COVID. And I think it was because of a lot of our experienced teachers. So we have great teachers. I think that the key is, How do we get them to be coming up with the ideas and sort of pulling what they need to achieve the results at a high level that the board is asking for?
- ▶ [**Karen Allard**] Thank you.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] I just want to really thank Karen Allard and her team. They worked really hard in this presentation to be able to bring this data to you to make it comprehensive. Something that we could use at our school sites to be able to help inform and also bring a discussion together for an enriched discussion topic. And then, you know, like what are our next steps that we're doing. And I just really want to commend the entire educational team and all of our leaders out there and teachers. This is a joint effort piece of work that goes on. And I know sometimes it doesn't always feel like that. It probably feels like sometimes the district office is like, look at this, but honestly, this is work that we have to do together, and we have to have the discussions together to be able to move this forward. So thank you very, very much. All right.

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] OK, moving on to item 11.1, fiscal health update.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Yes. I just want to see, we also have some consultants that will be joining us online this evening, and that's the MGT team. This is the team that we brought in that when we worked with Mike Fine to identify some consultants that could continue to help us do some more forensic looks at our budget to be able to bring into alignment. Do you know if the MGT team is sitting in the waiting room? Okay, great. If you could make sure that they're queued up, that would be great. First of all, for me, I'm very excited to be able to have this opportunity to be able to share with the board and with our community just a little bit of a fiscal health update as to what's happening here at Newark Unified School District. When you brought me in as being the CBO, I got to tell you, from the time I was hired to the time I started, the deficit kind of grew from what I understood. And it grew for a bunch of different reasons, as you all know. And it really goes back to March of 2023. And I kind of want to go back and just go back a little bit in time and talk a little bit about our history of how we got to being in deficit spending. In March of 2023, you had a second interim report that had some huge warnings inside of it. And in those warnings, you also received a letter from ACOE telling you that they were very concerned about ongoing significant deficit spending. And that was across multiple years. And so in March of 23, you had an interim superintendent here. During that time period, you were in negotiations with your employee groups. And a 16% raise was given, even though there was a warning letter that we had already ongoing concerns with deficit spending. We then added and compounded that by doing a 16% increase. I'll be honest. You had to do the increase to stay competitive. I get it. But that meant that you went even deeper into the hole. What was interesting is the adopted budget didn't quite show the same gap that you saw from the second interim, and didn't quite meet the same thing. And to me, there probably was something in there. I think it was a very optimistic budget, hopeful that some target areas might actually have gains in it. As you came into the unaudited actuals, about that time, I think you brought Mike Berg in. And Mike Berg was your consultant. Mike, through some of his digging and working with the team, you know, they kind of discover through an audit of actuals, they close out the books, and they're looking at the new budget that we have. And remember, we're doing a three-year rolling average budget, right? That's how our budget works. That gap is about \$12 million. And it's a big gap. And that gap continues to grow. That 16% raise was part of it was retro going back to July 2022. You had 4 percent, that was 10 percent that was retro in April of 23, going back to 2022, and then you had a 4 percent that was given in July of 2023, and then another 2 percent in January 2024, which makes it a 16 percent. About the time that I think I was hired, we were about 12 million is what I thought was going to be where we were at. By the time I got here, it was closer to 14 million. You might recall we had some CALPADS data. that came back and we ended up getting hit with some fines. Some of it we were able to correct on some things, but they weren't willing to give us all the corrections. We were not the only school district that was hit with those fines. There were quite a few school districts that got hit with CalPAD fines. And then, of course, it rolls over, right, because it's inside the calculator now, right, where your multiple years are there. So you're going to see those fines for the next two years, this year and next year. So we'll continue seeing that. It took us a little while to do the first interim. In that first interim, we were able to pare down a little bit, got back down to about the \$12 million level. And then the second interim, still we were able to show a little bit more progress. And that's about the time that Dr. DeLeon left. And we also lost a lot of key level administrators here at the district, along with other technical people, which I think makes it more difficult, right, as you're trying to do some of the forensics. You may recall Mike Fine came in, had a conversation with us, you know, really talked with us about it's important to do the deeper work now to be able to get the return on the investment. And really where we turned the corner was when we did our adopted budget this year and also brought in the unaudited actuals, right? We were really able to close down that \$14 million gap to just under \$4 million. That's a huge change. And by the way, it wasn't just the work of the consultants. It was the work of a lot of people here in the district trying to change some practices, putting some things in place. There's still more work to do. Don't get me wrong. There's still a lot of work to do. And we're not out of the water. At this point, I'm going to turn it over to Jose Quintana. And he's going to share with you his perspective a little bit about where we're at with this. And then also online with us this evening is the team from MGT. We've got Patrick Dyer and Eric Hall. They are part of the MGT team. And they've been partners with us as we've been looking at this work. And I think what's important is to talk about we had to spend money with consultants that have the expertise to help us get to that return on investment. And a lot of people know it as

YouTube Links

being the ROI in the business world, right? And you want to make sure that when you're spending money, that you're getting something out of it. And really what we were able to do, we were able to really start to save our district by not spending as much money in different areas and finding areas that we could have instant savings that would help our district fiscally be more solvent. So with that, I'm going to turn it over to Jose.

- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Thank you. Good evening, board. And so I want to give you just a six-month fiscal update on basically this timeline when we started with our consultants and working with our district staff here. It started in April with initial \$49,000 contract with them that quickly increased to \$32,000 more in June of 2024. This was further increased, \$10,000 in August of 2024. And this is something that where we started seeing not only the expert support, but working with our staff that was here available with looking at our NYPs and our budget, seeing the bigger picture to present before the board here. All of these efforts resulted in a \$4 million savings since our second interim period reporting. We've been facing a lot of challenges with vacancies, key positions, key leadership that, quite frankly, without the consultancy would not be made possible, along with Tracy McCarr, who took on this role as your CBO and your interim superintendent. Of course, this has to do a lot with our staff that we have not been able to retain, just two positions that have gone out that have been almost impossible to fill for the last five months. That just shows an indication of what the climate is like out there. So having this partnership really assisted the district. So with that, in May 2024, we discovered not only some things that were rapidly increasing, in support due to the fact that we did not have key roles, positions in the district. So that started increasing the spending quite rapidly. So in June of 2024, the board approved more resources for expanded needs. So in July of 2024, we increased the reliance for closing the fiscal year books. This is something that obviously that expert knowledge that we needed, we need to put some money into that and because of this, Wanted to just show quickly the chart here, Ms. Toya, that shows us a little bit of the efforts that were in the other. So that showed the efforts of not only the teamwork with our consultants, but it really paints the picture of where we had the cost savings of actually having this partnership with MGT and our district personnel here that was able to come up with a more.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Just pause for a second. I just want to make sure we get the chart up before you go any further. It'll be easier to see with the chart. Yeah, absolutely.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Are there paper copies? That one? Reading that.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Just expand it there. Download and then open. There you go. Then open at the bottom. There you go. Present mode. I'll tell you if you can do present mode on there at the very top. Towards top, top, top. No. Topic. There you go. OK, so this MIP dashboard shows where we were at, 23, 24, in that pinkish color there, where we had a \$14 million deficit and would have kept going and increasing. And that's where we see the 25, 26, taking off from that point where the 23-24 MYP, if it had not been corrected in 24-25 where we had a realignment and obviously budget findings, that's where we see the curve in the \$14 million and a \$10 million savings, which puts us at \$3.9 million true up here into our unadded actuals. As we know, this is just a six-month review, fiscal review, but We do have the first interim that will be due here in the next board meeting that we'll be presenting. So this is simply just a snapshot that gives you that idea of where the savings were at with our consultants. Those are things that we have been documenting closely and that we want to bring before the board here and make sure that they're fully aware of not only the team that's in place here now, that we have our fiscal director, we've got obviously Myself is a CBO and we have still some direction that we're getting from Tracy here of how to realign this. She has the historical data. We want to make sure that you have a clear picture what the expectations are, where we're heading, and this is definitely the right direction. We also see there the 26, 27 NYPs that were taking off at a very, very high number of deficit spending without that being harnessed or retained or realigned, then we would be in a different situation. Really, really thankful for FCMAT and MGT, the team that have partnered with us, to make this a better picture for us all, a much more robust and healthier picture.

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] So... If I could just take a moment and just say something about 23-24, the 25-26, which is kind of that darker blue line, and the 26-27. Those three, that red, the dark blue, and the green, really are the elements that if we didn't self-correct from the 14 million, we would have been in a much more grave situation for 25, 26, and 26, 27. Because of the work that was done, was really doing some of the deeper dives, and in closing out and trying to realign some things, moving some things out of position control that were redundant, just a number of different key things that we did. Sometimes we were even paying for multiple services. So I just want to just tell you that 24-25, that 3.9 is where we're at now. We're not going back up and doing a much higher number. We're going to continue to sit there and try to stay in line. But that 3.9 million, that deficit really is happening. It's not so much in the 24-25 school year. It's really happening now in 26-27.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Right.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] So although we know that there's still a 3.9 gap that we're trying to solve for here in 24-25, it really shows up in 26-27, which was in your multiple year projections that you might recall seeing. And so it's important that we understand where we would have been, where we're at today, because of some of the work that was done.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Absolutely. I do want to just reiterate that there were five key positions that were filled, purchasing, payroll, fiscal. So closing out the books so that really did assist in putting us where we're at today.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] So if we're saying purchasing payroll and they weren't filled so that's why we've saved money? What are you saying?
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] That MGT supported in those roles. So I'm saying that the role that they supported.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Okay so the the \$270,000 is what we would have had to have paid to those people to do what MGT has done.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] We would have paid more than that. So if we're looking at our CalPERS, our benefits, and their salaries, it would be a lot more for those five positions. Am I answering your question?
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Yeah. I guess what I don't understand is to see the plan, see what constituted all those savings. And I don't understand where did we do away with certain positions? What does it mean? What did they actually do? What is the plan that they put in place? And how is it going to impact? What we're able to do, because if you're taking work out of the system, or you're taking people out of the system, is there work that's not being done? Are we saving it on because we have more efficient HVAC systems? I mean, how are we saving it?
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Right. So with that, I know that what the previous team did, when I say previous team, we have to really give credit here where it's due. There was some cutbacks that needed to be done. That fake bank did recommend that we had a realignment of staff. So there was a lot of layoffs that were conducted. And I'm saying what the plan is.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] To attrition.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Right, to attrition. But we're going to have to look at that closely yet for this fiscal year. So there's still an alignment. That is the plan. Yes.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] So I think where Member Thomas is coming from is that it's great that you were showing a \$10 million savings. But we want to see the details of the \$10 million savings. So what positions equated to that \$10 million? What programs equated to that \$10 million? It's nice to see lines and graphs, but what we really want to see are the details. So would that be fair?

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Absolutely. That's the crux of it. And what are the impacts? I mean, to get rid of that many dollars, it's going to have an impact. What are the negative impacts? We have been short-staffed in the business department, and you came up with the need to extend the audit because there was not people doing the job to get the materials that the auditor needed. I mean, is part of that savings because we didn't have those people? I don't know. You know what I'm saying? Are we staffed correctly?
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] No, we're not. We're not staffed correctly. We do need some support. We definitely need more people in the business services office. Those are things that we're looking at and hiring those key positions that would help us to complete this audit. So obviously, this audit was given to us, I believe it was back in April. with the staff movement or the attrition retirements or layoffs, what have you, we have seen that it was basically not addressed. These audits were not brought to light. They were not brought to the committee. They were not updated. So because of the shortage of staff, a lot of moving parts. So yeah, I definitely would love to show you more numbers as far as where those savings came from. But you're going to see a lot of that that basically was discovered through our consultants that basically said, OK, this is the picture, the bigger picture for us to be not only physically solvent, but to start doing exactly what FITBAC recommended, just to start.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] I think we understand that, but we just never saw it. I mean, like, we never physically saw it.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] I don't know that you can actually physically see it. So I know you guys keep asking me for this transparency piece. It's really difficult when you're looking at accounts that were sitting either inflated for some of the spending. Sometimes they were sometimes multiples of the same accounts that were actually in the books twice.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Patrick, are you on? Then say that, but also show us. These are the findings that we found. And itemize them to equate to the \$10 million so that we can reconcile it. Because right now, we can't. And that's why it's hard to really Hey, were we really in deficit of 14 million or are you just telling us now that you found 10 million? But still you never say like or we never see exactly what it is and so for me and I think that's my biggest problem last time when when we were going through this is that I never saw like the cost savings of each position that was laid off and then now if we did we hire five key Sorry, I can't read my glasses and my handwriting. But do we hire five key positions? And then have we associated that cost into the \$10 million savings? Because if you didn't have it then and we had consultants doing the work, obviously if we hired five key positions, that would equate to salary, benefits, and additional money that we are now are not one-time dollars, but you know, annual cost that is associated to our budget. So, like, I don't think that member Thomas and I are asking for anything that is like unusual. We just want to see to be able to reconcile the \$10 million savings.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Are you in line, Patrick? Can you hear us? He's not there.
- ▶ [**Toya Lemus**] Patrick, can you unmute yourself?
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Because I mean, we're happy that there's a \$10 million savings. We just want to know.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] It's been a lot of work. So some of it, remember, came from a couple of different times. So part of it comes from.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] We're here.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] I just don't think you hear us. There you go. Hey, Patrick, we are at the point where the board is asking us how we came up with some of the savings that the MGT team. It's been a lot of work. So some of it, remember, came from a couple of different times. So part of it comes from. We're here. I just don't think you hear us. There you go. Hey, Patrick, we are at the point where the board is asking us how we came up with some of the savings that's MGT. So some of it comes from a couple of different times.

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Patrick Dyer**] So part of it comes from our system. Did you hear us this time, Tracy?

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Yes.

- ▶ [**Patrick Dyer**] Lovely. Well, I think what I'm going to have Eric talk about is the \$4.7 million in found revenues, and then we can talk more in detail the balance of getting from the 14 down to the 3.9. But Eric, do you want to talk briefly about those components of the 4.7? Yeah, sure. Happy to do so.

- ▶ [**Eric Hall**] President Hill and members of the board, good evening. Superintendent Vicar, members of the staff. I'm Eric Hall with MGT Consulting. It's been a pleasure to have the opportunity to work with your district and help the district build back the internal capacity in the business services offices that that Jose talked about. One of the things we've discovered so when you think about budget and you look at your district budget you've got income and you've got expenses. So we were able to help help the district better balance their budget in terms of looking at the district's income. What's what's being booked and what's being realized in income. And then on the expenditure side as Superintendent Bacar mentioned that there were some entries that were double entries that were actually costing, making it look like the district was spending more money than they really were, because there were duplicate positions in the budget and things of that sort. On the income side.

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Eric, Mr. Hall, if I could just stop you for just a second. We're going to try to get a little bit more sound in here.

- ▶ [**Mr. Lozano**] It might be your microphone. It's every day.

- ▶ [**Patrick Dyer**] I think it's speakers. I'm not saying probably. I paused if we had an echo. We can't play it on and be part of the Zoom.

- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] Is John here?

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Yeah, he's here.

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Should we test it?

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Can you guys on your side increase your microphone level?

- ▶ [**Patrick Dyer**] Let's see here. Does that sound any different? Better?

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Yeah, that's better.

- ▶ [**Patrick Dyer**] Great.

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] All right, thank you. Sorry for that interruption. I just want to make sure we can fully hear you.

- ▶ [**Eric Hall**] OK, no problem. Did you want me to start over, or did you hear what I had said previously?

- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] You might have to start over. It was really hard to understand, Eric.

- ▶ [**Eric Hall**] OK, OK, well, good evening, President Hill and members of the board, and Superintendent Vackar, and members of the staff and the community. I'm Eric Hall with MGT Consulting. When we look at a school district budget, we have to consider not only the expenditures, the expenditure side of the budget. Your district's

YouTube Links

about \$77 million. But we also look at the income side, right? And so through some of the work that we did in looking at your budget and what we would call coming in and scrubbing your budget, we're able to help the district realize some additional income. That income spread over two fiscal years, 2023-24 and 24-25. Let me pause there. Is the volume OK and the voice OK? Yes, it's better. And so we were able to help the district book additional revenues that were either not considered, the district wasn't aware. I'm working with the county office just because we're in school districts every day. We look at these things every day and we have a team of people that fully understand district budgets and revenues. So where we see other districts booking revenues like for the LCFF working with your SELPA for example looking at your state funding for special ed and looking at some federal funding as well as some ROP funding. We looked at some additional about four point seven million of additional revenue that the district was able to realize over the two the two fiscal years. And that's huge because that's a tremendous amount of additional revenue that would provide support for the district not having to make budget reductions. On the expenditure side of the budget that's the revenue or the income side. On the expenditure side you know I think our team discovered a number of entries that as Superintendent Bekar mentioned were double entries or some positions that were in the budget twice. There were some other other entries that were in the budget for expenditures that potentially were overstated. So we cleaned that up. We scrubbed that part of the budget and we were able to to help the district with an improved fiscal situation. The district's in much better fiscal shape as a result of that cleanup work. And I think it comes to Tracy and Jose's comments about the number of vacancies that the district has had in the business services area. And so helping the district build that internal capacity, build that infrastructure, if you will, in the business services department, I think it has gone a long ways to help the district with its fiscal condition. I'd also like to thank Tracy Vacar herself for the good work she has done. on this and focusing on this and having her team focus on it. And we appreciate, I'll just stop there. We do appreciate the opportunity to be of service to Newark and the staff and the students in the community that you serve. Thank you.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I have a question. Go ahead. 4.7 million is an awful lot of money. And especially since our special ed costs have gone up so much, and you said some of it, was coming from the it was savings from Special Ed or SELPA. I'd really love to see a spreadsheet that shows those savings and whether or not there are any of them one time or how did we miss 4.7 million dollars in revenue? It's just I don't understand.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] So it's not necessarily all revenue. So some of it ends up being
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] He called it revenue. Will?
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] So what I heard from the consultant, I don't remember. There's Eric and then what's the other gentleman's name? Patrick. So what I heard is that there was \$4.7 million in revenue that we weren't accounting for. And so obviously, if we recoup that, that would reduce part of the deficit. but then on the expense side that you found some duplicate positions. And so when you eliminated the duplicates, that also reduced the deficit. But I think that what Member Thomas and Member Nguyen are asking for is we would just like to see the detail of that. And so we would like to be able to see what specific revenue sources, how much kind of a line item, and then what duplicate positions, what's each position, how much is it, and then have a total. So am I summarizing that correctly?
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Yeah. I don't know at this point we would be able to go back and give you all those exact details by the specific account necessarily because as they go through them and they're doing some of this stuff, they're making the entries and they're moving things around, right? So I don't know that they're necessarily going to even have all of that completely captured as they do all of that. I'd have to go back and check with the team.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] I'm sorry. That would be very difficult to do. No. This is not a difficult request because we when they're making those changes, you shouldn't be just changing money in and out without having an actual account of like the findings first as a, there on a spreadsheet as a backup to like what it is that you're doing before you go in and make changes to the system. And that's the problem that I have is that there isn't, the process isn't like a clean process. So basically, we can't really account for at the end of the day to reconcile,

YouTube Links

hey, these are the money we found in revenue to say, hey, this is a true savings where we found the misalignment. Because at the end of the day, we want to be able to capture where the misalignment is so that we, one, don't make that same mistake again. And then, two, when we do have duplicate entries, it is really important to capture that and to see what position and why and what is associated to it, and to reconcile against that number. So to me, that's just accounting. I mean, and I don't know. Sorry.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] And what I would say is that so MGT, I think one of the challenges that we have, right, is that so we've had a contract with you guys to come in and help us, and we much appreciate your help. But we've also had some overruns. And again, understand that maybe some of that was necessary. But I think that what we would like to be able to say, and I'm hoping, given that you guys are professional consultants, that as you've made these changes, that you could go back and do some forensics and give us a breakdown of that detail.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] I did want to say, President Till and Board, that there was an increase of services from NGT May of 2024 due to some of this data that was erased from our systems and we had to repopulate them. So I think that's where I think the superintendent is coming from that it's not as easily as accessible. We had to literally rewrite that and make sure that our numbers were chewing up. So there was a bit of data missing in that time period of May into June.
- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] Can I say something? I'd like to say something. So I, again, I appreciate all the work that's gone into this. Thank you, everybody. But it really, when I see this dashboard here, to me, again, concurring with my fellow board members, is that it's really difficult for me to see visually what the cost savings were. And, you know, granted, I'm not saying we need to get really granular and in detail and provide every single item here, but if we can in general just see a graph of some sort that gives us an idea of, you know, this is where the consultant money went, this is where we cut back and how much, and then this is where we saved on attrition. I think it just would really help visually paint a picture, because again, looking at this, I think it's great. Again, I appreciate all the work that's been done, that we've done, but it really helps to tell that story. And so that in the future, when we have to make those tough decisions again, we can revert back to a chart of some sort and say, this is what we've done before, and then have it be presented with future year multi-year projections.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Patrick and Eric, is that something that you can produce?
- ▶ [**Toya Lemus**] You have to unmute, MGT. Can you hear us?
- ▶ [**Eric Hall**] Yes, I'm sorry. We didn't hear. You were addressing MGT. We didn't hear the question.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Yeah, the question is, so the board is asking whether or not we could give a more detailed explanation as to how, on both the revenue and the expenditure sides, how we came up with these numbers. I know some of it I know is inside of our reports that we would have done for unaudited actuals for, For the second interim, we would have a piece there. You're also going to have a piece that was actually done through your budget adoption as we realigned and identified really where our budget resources and assumptions were that we used. And you're also going to have a piece of it inside your unaudited actuals. Those pieces may not necessarily be something that you can materially pull out and just, I can just go off and just go show you because there was more things that were done within that. But I think if you're looking at some of the other larger account pieces, if I understood what Eric was saying, there's about \$4.7 million that they were able to help us identify that helped to continue to correct what we found already from the second interim and then also how our budget adoption was actually done for the 24-25 school year.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Can I bring up another? I think there's an overarching issue that concerns me, and that is that these problems, these budget anomalies that they were able to correct, they accumulated over years. And they accumulated with the staff that we relied on over those same years to paint an accurate picture of what our revenues and expenses are and our budget and everything. And we don't have a purchasing person. We don't have someone looking over our position control. And I worry. We don't hear how recruiting those positions is

YouTube Links

going. And do we need to offer more money? What are we doing to make sure when these experts from MGT go away that we have staff that can continue the work. And we don't go into that malaise again of weak numbers and weak accounting.

- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Excellent point, Member Thomas. We did have interviews for purchasing managers, and we finally did get a candidate. We offered the position. They refused the position because we had no benefits, and they needed benefits. So we're going back out after five months of trying to recruit candidates. And so it's been an ongoing process to retain or attract talent that's skilled out there. And not have these benefits for them is a huge factor.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] But benefits are equated to dollars. Dollars can be equated to salary. I mean, is there anything we can do creative to pay for the cost of adequate people or qualified people coming into these jobs? I don't know. It just seems to me there's got to be some kind of solutions to something like that.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] So I think when we look at parity in salaries, we're pretty close to where other salaries are for some of these positions. Not for all positions, but for the majority of them, we're right in line with wherever their fellow colleagues are at. The difference that really separates us is that we're not offering the benefits. And that benefit piece is an expensive element that we have not been able to contribute to. We gave it away years ago, and we didn't keep up with it. And so now that's a bigger bite now.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] But aren't those numbers on a spreadsheet where you say, OK, this salary equates to so much for benefits that you are able to purchase through the district? That's how our teachers pay for their benefits. It's embedded in their salaries. And does that mean we're not paying enough in salary for this individual to say, if that salary was on parity with others that offer benefits, then it's not on parity because the other Others offer benefits over and above what we had offered this individual.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] And your budget doesn't really, at this point, allow for us to do that without us going further into the hole for our third year out to be able to do that. And so it's something that the staff were taking a look at it. We're not there yet. I mean, I'll be honest. Our first and foremost mission was to make sure that we reduce that \$14 million down to a place that we can start making more effective decisions. We're at a place now where we can start making more and better effective decisions, because we've been able to really bring our budget back and kind of true it up to be more where it needs to be. I think it was a great comment that was made earlier, I can't remember which board member said it, but it was like, you know, was the \$14 million kind of a false piece out there? In some ways it was, because if you aren't showing all your dollars in the right way, or if you've got things that are double booked, then you're going to have more money that's being shown inside your budget that wasn't really accurate. Until you get back in there, you start to find the savings. And so some of the savings was found through looking at some of those things. I just don't know that we can go back fully and give you all that information. But I mean, we can go back and see what we can do and try. And that was the question, I think, that we were asking MGT. Would they be able to go back and show some of that? I think they could probably show some of that. I don't know if they can show all of the entire \$14 million, because they wouldn't have been part of all that to begin with. Part of that was working with Mary Stark and working with Roseanne. They, too, were looking at things and saying, wait, that position doesn't exist. Let's close that out, right? I don't know that I'm going to have exactly all those things for all that time. But we can show you part of the story about where MGT was at. I think we're able to go back and show from that point from second interim on.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I mean, our system here is pretty bad hearing presentations like that, you know, either can we get them to come in person maybe next time?
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] I think MGT would be happy probably to come in person. Patrick, would you be okay with that in the future?

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Patrick Dyer**] Oh, absolutely. And I was going to say, Tracy, we can talk to the team that closed the books and get a lot of the detail that the board's asking for from also pulling in Bill O'Lean, who will know about some of the attrition savings. So yes, I would be happy to do that.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] See, that's the larger concern is that when we switch over from contractor to contractor, everything that we've done to find these savings should have been documented. And we should have that. And I feel like if we don't have that, and now when we talk about this, there's no validity to the savings unless we actually see the details. And not necessarily, you know, to the full extent, but to really kind of understand, you know, like, these are the starting points. This is what, you know, we found during this interim of investigation, and this is the second one, right? And then the total combined. But I don't think that that's unreasonable of an ask.
- ▶ [**Patrick Dyer**] No, we agree.
- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] Thank you. Thank you.
- ▶ [**Eric Hall**] Anything else? Thank you very much.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Is there any other questions for MGT or for the fiscal team from the board?
- ▶ [**Eric Hall**] I'll tell you that these are the kinds of things we see in districts that have lost staff and either aren't able to recruit and retain high quality business services staff members, or other kinds of HR issues that might occur in the district with respect to delays in staffing. And when we talk about five positions, we know, at least in the fiscal side, the director of fiscal services and the CBO position was vacant for a number of months, both of those positions. But I think you're on better footing now. You have had a superintendent that's paid attention to this. You brought Jose on board. We've spent a lot of time and a lot of hours in helping put the adopted budget together as well as the unaudited actuals. And we'd be happy to work with Tracy to come up with a report that she feels will meet your needs as a board, understanding what you're asking for, and understanding your insights to address the questions that you've asked tonight. to spend some time on that so that you can see as a board the work that's been done and maybe potentially the additional work that needs to be done in the future to prevent the district from sliding back into the fiscal danger that you were once in. So happy to work with you on that.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Great. Thank you. Ms. Parks, would you like to come forward and ask your question?
- ▶ [**Cindy Parks**] So I'm a bit confused. I'm really, really very, very disappointed that there wasn't anything ahead of time that we would have had to view. So we would have been able to, well, not that this is really anything. To be honestly, when you think about your contract, which you're going to be approving the next two items, it's going to be \$270,000 to this group. And you get one slide. I'm very, very, very disappointed. To sit there and say that you've cut so much out of the \$10 million. we get to look at one slide without any proof of the \$10 million. And to be honest with you, to listen to the 23.24 school year, that really was, that was the unaudited actuals. Where's that money? Because that all happened last year. Your savings, based on what I'm seeing there, is really then from last year. And I brought to your attention before the fact that in your budgets and in your interims, you have how much staff you have here. And when you look at the number of staff, you're running like, say, it was running around, say, 50 for NTA. It was running around 160, I think, for CSEA and about 42, 43, 44, 45 for NEWMA. And when you look at those numbers, but yet I would talk to Cheri Villa and ask her how many teachers she would really have, and it was always about 20 less than what you were budgeting in your report. So there was part of your savings. And I brought that to your attention before, is that your numbers of your staff don't match what you're actually projecting for your certificated, your classified management and your management group for your salaries. So there's part of your savings. And the fact that they're telling you that they don't know where it is, I mean, I just am blown away. Numbers are numbers are numbers. If anything, it's in black and white. to not be able to say, here's where we were, and here's where we are now. I just don't

YouTube Links

understand that. And if it's a matter of nobody thought to sit down and write the numbers down, well, shame on you. But to give us one slide for that kind of money and not be able to explain to you where the savings is is just disgraceful. And I really feel that some of it is in you built up all these numbers and these salaries, And then you hired contract people for some of those positions. And this has been brought up before, is that you were running two sets of books innocent. Here's who we said we were going to hire, but we didn't hire those people, so here we're going to contract them out. And you were running, yeah, two sets of books like you were paying that position twice. So some of this isn't shocking, but put it in black and white and explain where you save \$10 million. I mean, it's shameful.

▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] You know, I'm going to say something because I got to tell you something. Coming in here to this district, it's a really difficult district because it doesn't have all the right kinds of systems put together. And I will tell you, the practices inside the district and the systems inside the district have created a lot of the problems. I am really offended, quite frankly, by the statement that it's kind of smoke and mirrors. It's not smoke and mirrors for us to be sitting out here and working on this. This is really difficult work. And it's a really difficult district. And it's really difficult problems when you cannot afford to be able to pay your staff and be able to provide the benefits to be able to keep it consistent. It's really difficult. And there have been hundreds, hundreds of hours put into trying to figure out what's going on with your books. And they are very difficult. I've had some of the best experts that know what they're doing and have the experiences that have helped turn this district, maybe some of the money was here. I'm not disagreeing that some of it was probably right here, but it wasn't well understood because it was double booked. I don't disagree with any of those things, but I am offended by the fact that it makes it sound like this is something that just happened here in the last eight months.

▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Because it didn't happen here in the last eight months. We weren't saying that. We know it's been years in the making.

▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] So I just want to be really clear. We've worked really hard to be able to sit there and bring in some of the alignments. Some of it is the way how the district has done business. And it does not make it easy to sit there and show those things. Those are things that you won't see in some of your reports that you sit there and look at. Some of it you will see. Some of it you're going to see the adjustments as they go off and make the adjustments. But when you're getting in there and you're trying to do the accounting of what's happening with some of this, I don't know that someone's sitting there and keeping track of absolutely every little thing that happens with that. You can probably run some reports back through ESCAPE and be able to see some of the alignments and some of the transfer things that happen with it. Yeah, we can find those things. But you can't find it all. And you can't also find where the assumptions were wrong and they built a budget based on false assumptions. We can go back and talk about those things, and here are some of the things that they used. And we've done that. We've talked about those things in our reports. But I don't know that I will fully be able to get to you the full amount of the \$10 million to be able to show you every little line item of that. We will do our very best. We continue to navigate with that. But I am just going to say real clearly, this is really difficult work. And this is a really difficult district that has not had the right kind of expertise that's needed to be able to keep it going for a long time. And I gotta tell you something, you've got dedicated people that work at it every single day in our business office, in our personnel office, to try to make it work. But it's not easy to do because you don't have enough people. We try to do it on a shoestring so that we can make sure that the resources go where it needs to go, and that's the classroom, as much as possible.

▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Well, let's just take this one position of of the purchasing person or that would be doing some of this work. And let's look at all of our positions that we are funding and see if we can adjust our salary schedules so that eliminating a position that maybe we don't need, and I've brought up several positions to the superintendent that I think we don't need, and maybe be able to have a salary schedule that includes benefits or the money for benefits that other districts are offering that keep us from not being able to attract good people. We've got to solve that problem because MTT is going to go away. And we're going to have the same problems if we don't solve it.

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] And believe me, I'm worried thinking about next July and the fact that we had to hire 71 teachers this past July because they exit out of here because they go someplace else because we are the AAA team that comes in here and we train them up. And then they exit right out of here because they can go someplace else and go get benefits for their family, maybe start a family, do all the things that we kind of expect to do in education, but we don't get to do it right here in Newark. The people that stay in Newark are the ones that don't need to have the benefits because they've either got a spouse or they've got some other way of being able to get the benefits.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] And weren't we told that the 16% would kind of bring us up to parity with some of our neighboring districts? For salary. Not from a benefits perspective. No, they don't all have benefits. They gave them a one-time benefit. But they don't have benefits in New Haven and Fremont.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Right. But what I would like to point out is that in the district where I work, we have Cadillac benefits. And so we're not competing next just to people next door. We're competing in the Bay Area. And the challenge I think that we have is that the rate, so although we've had a lot of inflation recently, just historically, the rate of inflation for health care has been significantly higher than everything else. And so when we gave up our health care, when we try to, do some type of true upper adjustment to our salaries, we're doing it at a lower rate of inflation that's not keeping up with the costs. And so ultimately, you have to solve that problem. But I would say, based on our discussion this evening, I think that take it one step at a time. What I heard from our board is we would like to have greater granularity around what has gone into these potential savings, and that MGT is going to try work to help us do a reconstruction of that so that we can see that. And then, as you're mentioning, Member Thomas, maybe part of it ultimately is an issue of so that we don't get ourselves into a situation later on where we can't continue to handle this ourselves. What are the key positions that we need to fill in order to make sure that things are handled properly going forward? Go ahead. Member Jones.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] So my question is if we do we want to spend the money for MGT to recreate what has happened or do we want to spend the money to install some or whatever the right word would be some systems and procedures so that we don't keep ourselves in this cycle of this happening because We haven't been able to run ourselves well financially. And it's because we don't have the systems and procedures in place. So to me, why aren't we spending the money on, and I'm not upset, it's just we should be spending the money on putting in systems and procedures so that we don't get ourselves in this situation again. How do we move forward? Yeah, it'd be great to see where it all came from, but honestly, If it's going to cost \$50,000, which I don't think it would, but if it's going to cost \$50,000 to go back and recreate what that \$10 million is, great. What's that \$50 million going to get us other than a couple more slides? OK, great. Is it going to get us the systems and procedures in place? No. That \$50,000 needs to be spent on how are we going to help ourselves not have this happen again? I really don't care. I really don't care where this money came from. What I care about is what are we doing so that this doesn't happen again in the future. Because that's the most important thing. We have to move forward. We can recreate 1990 all we want but it's not going to get us to 2030. We need to get to 2030.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] We agree with you. Member Jones. That fiscal transparency is key moving forward. What has happened in the past is the past. And these were just the highlights, really, to just give you a fiscal health update, just a picture. It's not our first interim. It's not an official report. This is just why we had to get six management level positions to be filled by consultants. That's the bottom line. And it's going to cost you money to find these savings. Mike Fine said, FICMET, don't be cheap. As a board, we need to look at it. As a school district, we need to look at this. You've got to stop being cheap and saying, well, let's cut this, let's cut that. No, let's put all of our interests on the line. And that's retaining, recruiting people that are qualified that we have that are coming to interviews. And they're saying, sorry, I can't. You don't have what I need. Love to start here, but so those are the real conversations. That's how we're going to make the change. How can we have those discussions, right?

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Put those systems in place. I physically feel more confident that that \$3.9 million is a much more true number than anything else that we've ever had to start off with. And yeah, there's a lot of different things. And I got to tell you something. Every single day, we run into something and we're like, how does that happen? Why does it happen? And we ask the questions. There are a lot of broken systems. And I can tell you the biggest one is that we have no control over our purchasing, in my opinion. We've not had a purchasing manager in here to help us look at systems. We've got Amazon orders that are out of control, quite frankly. And the type of items that we buy sometimes through Amazon aren't really just the basic needs of what we need to have, but sometimes, like, kind of like the catalog type stuff that I don't know that we need to have, you know, special colored calendars or special glasses done in certain kinds of colors. Maybe the basic black safety glasses are enough. I mean, I think those are things that we need to really look at when we're using our systems and making sure that we're really getting the right bang for our buck. And right now, our purchasing systems don't really exist. They are a mess. We weren't necessarily doing all the right kinds of bids. And I want to thank board member Thomas for spending time with me when I first got here early on. In showing me some of the different things that would get past the board and get past the district that weren't being done correctly. And you were absolutely right. They weren't being done right. Those were the wrong kinds of systems. But there's work to do. I don't know how much I want to live in the past, but we can go back. I can ask MGT. They said they would be willing to try to help us put this together. They do have some things. I think it will be at a higher level that you'll see that.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] But what I would say going forward though is I understand that we've had a jigsaw puzzle that's been thrown up in the air and then there's pieces all over the place and we're trying to put it back together and it's been complicated right and so I understand that and I understand the consultants coming in trying to figure out figure it out and sometimes we've had handoffs and maybe the handoffs haven't been perfect so I understand the challenges. But I think that one of the requests before us is to have MGT continue to help us. And so MGT, I would just like to kind of, I guess, put pressure on you because you're talking to a consultant who was a consultant for 26 years. And so I would say that going forward, if we're going to pay your fees, that we expect a level of documentation and a level of explanation of what's going on so that we can feel comfortable with where we are and we know that we can take these numbers to the bank.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] I'm in agreement with President Hill. That's basically what a consultant should be doing is making sure that we have those documentation and that's the main request. Of course, you know, if part of the their scope of work is to also provide us new processes and procedures or recommendation on those. That would be excellent too. But for us to, you know, have a summary, like high level summary without having any level of context to it, I don't think that it's easily digestible. And that's the main concern that we have.
- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] I would agree. We definitely want to make sure that we are investing in our future, in our future systems, and that displaying this is really hard to read and really hard to comprehend. So I agree with Kat that I would hate to go back and spend money and time on trying to recreate this, although I think for transparency's sake, it would have been great to have had now. But moving forward, yes, I agree that we need to be able to have this transparency to be able to digest it and then to be able to also allow our community to understand and digest it as well, because it's just really difficult to see. And while I do celebrate the wins and I do appreciate all of the hard work, I understand, Tracy, that you came in here at a time when, you know, things were things things were, you know, it was just things were all over the place. And so I know that you dove in headfirst and I really appreciate that. And I appreciate all the work that the staff that you work with has done too. And it's not fair to them either that we cannot provide them with the appropriate systems. And so we do have to figure it out because otherwise we're spending time that they could be using to be strategic to focus on of coming up with new things or possibly going to trainings and they're trying to figure out the basics of how to work with a broken system. And it's not fair and it's not right. And also it brings down morale. And it's really difficult to move forward when you don't have the right support. And so it is our obligation as a board and as leaders to make sure that the staff is equipped, whether it's the people that work with Jose or whether it's our teachers and our staff. So yes, I'm glad we're having this conversation, but just again, for transparency sake, for the future, I think it would just be really helpful to have MGT help come up with a document that clearly shows maybe not granular.

YouTube Links

We're not asking for granular. I mean, at least I'm not. I'll speak for myself. I'm not asking quite for granular, but at least just to have an understanding of what the separate tiers are and where we're saving money and where we're missing the ball on. And I think that would just be really helpful. But again, I do want to say, Tracy, I really appreciate you. I'm really grateful that you're here. I've seen all of the hard work that you've done, and I appreciate the staff. And again, I apologize that we cannot. We have not been able to fulfill our duty and figure out a way to provide our staff with the correct systems to work off of.

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Sorry, and one last question. I know you mentioned the six management positions, but what is the position titles that we're missing right now?
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] The current positions that we're missing right now are we are recruiting for a director of maintenance and operations. recruiting for the purchasing manager position currently. There is an accounting tech position, I believe, that's sitting out there that we are getting ready to recruit for. And then there were the HR positions that were sitting out there as well. I had to go back and I know we've got the assistant superintendent of HR. We've been moving slowly on that. Obviously, we've had Chris here that's been helping us. navigate and try to work through some things. And then we had the one position that got filled by Miranda. And then there's still one more outstanding position out there.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Do we need a position control manager? I know we got rid of it, but it seems that we have problems in position control.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Well, I think there's been problems in position control. But I think really what needs to happen is between business and HR, they need to figure out exactly where position control lies, and they need to make sure that their system, through the time that you go off and you say that you're going to fund a position, and you've got the paperwork, that you're really doing it accurately, that you know where it's coming from, that you understand where all the split funding's coming from. So it's not just about position control, it's about making sure that you've really hit the right targets for what the funding is, and that it's gone through a systematic check. And that's something that we now have started to put in place. So I can tell you that every new position, comes through executive cabinet as we're looking at that to see whether or not that's something we can afford. What's replacing it? Is it every time there's an attrition opportunity, we're taking a look to see is this a place where we can realign? And I think perhaps some of the harder part of the conversation is we still have a gap, folks. We still need to close some things down. And we still have more hard work yet to do. And that means that there's potentially layoffs coming this coming spring in order to be able to get there. If we can't get there with attrition and we can't get there with some other cost savings to be able to close down that \$3.9 million, we can't offer anything extra to our employees until we figure out what that looks like. And there's not large COLAs coming in. We're not seeing those kinds of things right now. And so those are things that we really need to sit there and make sure that we have our eye on the ball and make sure that That we understand exactly where our budget is going to and that's the one thing I can say now is I feel like I feel confident saying I feel confident in our budget. You know does that mean all the systems are fixed? They're not. As a matter of fact on the agenda this evening is to be able to bring in a consultant for purchasing. That's done here through MGT. This is a person that's of a high level, brings a lot of expertise, is going to be able to help us create the system so that even when the person comes in, they can step into a system that's actually kind of set up and working. That's something that you want to make sure happens. And those are the pieces that have really been missing here as we work with that. And that's a hard element. We have struggled in payroll. We have struggled making sure that we get payroll correct and that we take out all the right kinds of things and that people that are selecting their benefits. But those things are all coming up. Those things in other districts almost seem seamless. And here they seem tedious. And part of it is just making sure that our systems are aligned in talking to each other. And that means between departments we have to talk to each other as well. And those are hard conversations.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Member Thomas, typically it's a joint effort for position control with HR and payroll, fiscal services. Currently, how we're curtailing that is going through executive cabinet and making the decisions of what do we have funds for, what is really a position that is necessary, or how could we align this to our budget.

YouTube Links

So I think systems are being put in place here to make sure that some of the key positions, we're wearing different hats currently. So we're looking at purchasing. We're looking at requisitions. Hopefully, this bond here will have all the numbers in, will pass. Typically, you have a bond manager for that, you know, facilities director slash bond manager. Those are key positions you're going to require to manage this bond, or else that's another hat that one of the executive cad members have to wear. So, yeah.

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] The other thing I think we need to think about is, you know, we've reduced in enrollment size. We're shrinking down to a point that we're becoming a small district size. We're no longer at the medium-sized district. And we have people in positions that make it look like we're still at a medium-sized position. And so we're beginning to pare down. Our numbers are getting scary for enrollment, folks. We're at 4,800. That's nerve-wracking. And if we lose another 180 next year, Another 180 after that, we're going to be under that 4,500 mark. And that's a place that we're in the small school district category. And yet we're still operating in some ways as if we were a little bit larger and wanting to still be a little larger because that was the comfort zone, right? So as you're paring down and more people are taking on more responsibilities, it's feeling really uncomfortable. And part of it is they're getting new roles given to them. They need to learn how to work with those new roles. They need to have the training and the support systems as we pare it down. Because there aren't as many people that are going to be doing the same job. We're going to get to a place where if we had two people in the same position, it's going to come down to one person being in that position. Because we're all of the same size. And that's going to get harder. And again, we're doing cuts like that so we stay away from the classroom as much as possible. And again, those are uncomfortable conversations. It'll be uncomfortable for staff to think about that tomorrow morning when they're listening to this conversation, knowing that that's coming. And we try to do that whenever it happens through attrition. And those are difficult things to do. No one wants to lose a position. But we're getting smaller. Final comments, Jose? Final comments, Patrick or Eric?
- ▶ [**Patrick Dyer**] Yeah, we have a couple. One thing is to reassure the board that MGT has the details to brief them with a summary report. We've reconciled your payroll June, July, August, September. We closed the books. We have all the detail. We just need to put it in a level that makes sense so that we're not in the weeds on journal entry level, transactional level detail, but we have the detail. Number two from us is that Amendment number four does have SOPs. So we, we aren't just doing the work. We know that the procurement item needs structure around it so that you're not in this place again in a few months or if there's turnover, you have some of the systems in place from a veteran procurement person that did that kind of work at a much larger district for I think it was 30 years, Janie's experience. So you, you are going some planning for the future, not just getting the work done because of vacancies. So I just wanted to reassure the board that. Any other?
- ▶ [**Eric Hall**] Does the member for?
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Yes. Yes. Thank you, gentlemen. And one thing I would also say, in addition to SOPs, and maybe it's built into your contract, or maybe it's something that we need to revisit later, but I think that we've had some challenges in the past where we've brought vendors and consultants in to do work. And a lot of times they'll do good work, like they'll potentially set up a website for us or whatever, but then there's not really any sort of train the trainer. And so there might be some documentation, but the consultants leave and then there's new people that come in and there's not really a good handoff. And it's hard sometimes to just pick up an SOP that somebody's written and sort of figure out how to use it. And so we might want to think about some transition as we bring in new positions or new people to fill these positions. But that's that's we're getting we're getting a little ahead of ourselves at this point, but just something to think about Okay, so let's thank the MGT group for being with us this evening.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Thank you for for being online Yes, thank you. Oh you bet Great.

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Thank you. Okay moving on to 11.2 master contract amendment number three Superintendent Yes, I want to give this to Jose Quintana to present
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] So this is the extension for amendment number three that will increase the contract by \$120,000 for a total contract amount of \$211,950.18. This would bring in the additional services that we require for purchasing manager currently to process all of these requisitions and in the interim, go out once again and recruit A new purchasing manager.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Actually, that's number four.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Sorry.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Number three is for services already rendered.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] So that would be amendment number three, purchase order for fiscal services provided by MGT. We bring this to the board recommending that they would approve this amendment number three.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Questions from the board?
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I move approval of 11.2, master contract amendment number three. I'll second.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Member Thomas moves, Vice President Jones seconds. Miss Lemus, if we could do board docs both, please.
- ▶ [**Toya Lemus**] May have to do a manual vote for this specifically.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] OK, so we'll go.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] I do have one question.
- ▶ [**Toya Lemus**] Go ahead.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] So I know that this contract is through April of 2025. And then it says, even though the contract amount is for 120, is it, and it says for a not to exceed amount of \$91,000. 10,000. Oh, 10,000. But that, oh, never mind.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] No, that was the original element. And now the new one is, amendment number three is taking it up to \$211,958.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] But the \$91,000 was through April of 2025.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] And we exceeded that amount to be able to close out the books. That's part of the problem here, is it took us more hours to be able to do all the work that needed to be done.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] So how do we know that this amendment isn't going to exceed if you're going to ask for an additional amendment to the original contract?
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] I can answer that. Typically, there is a, if you will, a countdown reporting of how many hours were used. So these equate to the hours. This was something that was not put in place before when MGT was here. looking at this closely. We've had those conversations that I want a weekly report that states how many hours are being used up and what's the balance left. It's just basic accounting. So we'll be looking at that on a

YouTube Links

weekly basis of where we're at for that net amount. So we can not only safeguard the district for not going beyond that not to exceed amount of \$211,000. So there were parameters in place is my answer.

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] But now this one is going to extend through April 30, 2025.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] April 30, 2025, correct.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Will we need them the entire time if we get people in the positions that they're working for?
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Can I just share? Amendment number three has actually already been spent. We actually overspent inside the account. And this was done. in transition of people coming in with billing exiting before Jose came in, Nancy was here. In order to be able to close out the books, it took a lot more hours. Some of you may recall that they actually had to go back and do it twice, because at some point, the books got reversed by somebody else internally and created where they had to go back and do it a second time. And it was additional hours and time to really get down and start to do the deeper dive around the unaudited actuals. It was a very difficult closeout to be able to sit there and shrink down all the various contracts and to make sure that they were closed out correctly. As a result, it did net in a huge savings that we were able to find because they found additional revenue that actually helped us. as we did that. So those were the positives that came out of it, but the amount of money here is actually four and over, so it's actually already occurred.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] So we have to approve this so that you can pay the vendor?
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] That's correct.
- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] Thank you.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Amendment number four is a little bit different.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] And just to confirm, right, and I think that you mentioned this, Mr. Quintana, is that Obviously, there was work that was occurring. And because of the transition, et cetera, there were hours that were being incurred that we weren't being fully made apprised of. And so now we have a cost overrun. And so I think the thing that, obviously, I would expect the way the board would want to have is some control someplace so that that doesn't happen again.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] That is correct, President Hill.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] and attachment to the amount of hours that equates to dollars that have been overrun because it wasn't included in here either. Thank you.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] I do want to share that one of the things that MGT, as we were working on this and we realized what happened, they did give us a 25% discount for the months of July and August. I did want you to note that that was something above and beyond what the original contract was, which had a 10 and 15% closet, and they took it up as high as 25% in order to help give us some additional savings.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Once this is cleaned up, is this something that can be done by our own staff? By Nancy? I believe so, yes.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Well, definitely. Nancy has one component, but a purchasing manager has a different component. And obviously, dealing with payroll, those are multi-efforts. So yes, we do have in place someone that can complete these reports. They will take a little bit of time without these key leadership positions in place.

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] So I think the vote's on the table when people are ready.

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] So you had a motion and a second, right?

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I've already voted.

- ▶ [**Toya Lemus**] OK. Votes are in. Five ayes.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Thank you, Ms. Lemus. Going on to 11.3, Master Contract Amendment 4, Superintendent.

- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] So Amendment Number 4 is for the extended services from MGT not to exceed \$271,000, \$958.18. This would go through June 30th of 2025. This would be to bring in a purchasing manager expert that would not only assist us in this process, but I do want to say that they also have the capacity of assisting with other contracts. When I say other contracts, I mean procurement of contracts with construction, things that we're currently working on with two of our projects that MGT actually assisted in those construction documents, front end documents that detail the specifications. So they are bringing some knowledge right now that I'm very familiar with. But I think having them in place as we procure or go out for recruitment for a purchasing manager, I think this would be a key role to train that person to that. Once again, you know, train the trainer as President Hill has mentioned. Having this person in place would really assist the district in getting these components in place. So this is a request to have this amendment number four for the extension of this contract for a purchasing manager role for this business services office.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Questions from the board?

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Well, just one suggestion, I guess, and that is in the past, In the item details, we've had a list the cost or the, you know, so pulling together all of the costs and having a, I know it's included in the body of the background, but to have it under subject access type cost so we can see right up front how much the contract or this item is for.

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] That is an error on our part when we did the agenda And that will be corrected for the future through a checklist.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Other questions? I just have one question. So have we already identified the individual that's going to play this role?

- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Yes. Yes, we have.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] OK. And they are a purchasing expert?

- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] They are.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] OK. And obviously, some of this is execution that they're going to be doing. But are they also going to be, I mean, you talked about how they're going to create some documentation and potentially do some training. But are they going to also help us provide some kind of sense of, OK, here's where we're spending money, and here's opportunities for savings and documenting that?

- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Absolutely. I think that goes without saying with construction costs, allowances, looking at your entire project and project management. value engineering, those are all disciplines within purchasing manager role.

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] OK. Because I think we would like to really emphasize and ask that up front so that they have that in their mind. Because \$271,000 is not insignificant. But I think that if they can demonstrate that they are actually helping us achieve savings, and that we can quantify that, can help us justify this.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Absolutely.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Thank you.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] By the way, this person's already done a little bit of work already with the district and taking a look at our purchasing systems. So familiar with some of the things that we're doing. Also familiar with how some of the purchases are being made and the amount of time that we're spending both in taking the small items and having to And then also, the worst part is when we have to go return something. It's a small item back through Amazon. And the amount of staff time that it takes sometimes to return a really insignificant piece of item, right? So looking at systems like that again, believe it or not, it takes a lot more staff time to sit there and reverse something when someone wants to go to return it.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] And to throw it away.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Yes. I mean, I hate to say it. I mean, that's, you don't want to say it that way, but yes. Those are the kinds of things that if we were also capitalizing, I think, on some of the other systems that are out there with us through cooperatives, it would help save us a tremendous amount of money to be able to sit there and start using things like that. And also keeping a stockroom that would actually have some of the things that we use on a regular basis. And then we actually go to that pool from the stockroom and then take that off of whoever's account that comes from. So looking at some of the more common items and being able to do things like that would be a lot more helpful.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] So I will say that some of the contracts that we currently do have that we're holding onto just because we're putting in processes and procedures that people aren't used to it, they're not comfortable with it, weren't aware of it. I met with librarians today, this morning, an excellent group of librarians, and found out policies and procedures that they were different ways and sideways. And so, but not to their fault at all. They're like, no one's ever told us. Or thank you for spending the time here. Give us instructions. If we're a new librarian, what are the first steps to do for purchasing through procurement? What do we need to do for books and to have scholastics here? That could be pretty simple, but not to someone's view that just tell them, here's the keys to the office, to the library, and here's the keys to the bathroom. And that's it. So a lot of process and procedures has been one of my heavy lifting since I came here to the district. And so that's why a lot of contracts you've not seen, although there are many that will be coming in your pipeline. But we want to make sure that the adequate documentation is there, that we're protected under warranties, that we will have training for our end users. as well as our maintenance and operations team. So this would be a help with this purchasing consultant.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Go ahead, Member Nguyen.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] So one other question. I know that the project fees and there's rates for each of these services, administrative support, analysts, director, associate, senior associate, vice president. So I know that This is an addendum to the original contract. So if you guys don't use all of the money that's in addendum number three, it rolls over into this position, potentially, right? Because it's extending it to June versus April for another three months. May, June. Oh, two months. So for this procurement, I mean, for this Purchasing Manager, which of the following position does the hourly rate associate to?
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] He's actually a director level, so \$185 per hour. I do want to just confirm that Amendment Number 3, those monies have been used up, so there's nothing to transfer over. So we just voted on that. So this is just for, this Amendment Number 4 is just for this individual from 2011 to 2071.

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] So when are they starting?

- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] As soon as we board approve it, we can have them started as early as this. Well, she's on vacation starting this Friday and into two weeks out, so late November.

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Maybe I can provide some additional clarity. So the fiscal team that was helping us with closing out the books, helping us with getting the unaudited actuals prepared, that team is actually done. And we now have our new team in place with having Nancy and Jose here. And then we're going to be hiring an accounting tech to help with some of the other work that gets done in our offices. Aside from a purchasing manager. Aside from a purchasing manager. And then because of the purchasing manager, although we did the recruitment and we made an offer, that position turned us down, we actually came back here and we increased this dollar amount knowing that we're going to need some help with services. in addition to training time. Originally, we were only just putting training time in here to be able to help with the transition of the new person coming in, making sure systems were set up. Now we're going to need this person to actually help us for a few months while we go back out and we recruit again. I can't say that right. We recruit again. So the dollar amount actually increased this past week after we were turned down by the person we made the offer to. And I will say she was a talented person, individual. I'm sorry she's not coming. We were hopeful.

- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] Thank you.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Other questions? Can I get a motion?

- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] I'll make a motion to approve.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] I'll second. Vice President Jones moves. Member Thomas seconds.

- ▶ [**Toya Lemus**] Online voting is open.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Are we waiting on somebody?

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] I voted.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] She said she voted. Votes are in. Five ayes.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Motion carries. So old habits die hard. So given that we still have some things to cover, I would like to make a motion to extend our meeting until midnight.

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Can we pull two items?

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] So I think we have Mr. Lozano on. Oh, is he? Oh, there he is. Yeah, so I think we would want to, because he's on the line, right? Yeah, he's close. So I think we want to have him cover this. But we could, I mean, I think we could postpone the other one.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Yeah, I think we should postpone 12.1. Yeah.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] I know that she wanted to be part of the discussion. That's fine. OK, so that'll help, but I think we should. OK, so can I get a motion to move to 1130?

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] I'll make a motion to move to 1130. I will second.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Vice President Jones moves. Number one seconds.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] At least we're laughing. There we go.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] And I think we'll need to do a roll call vote. Or did you, or? We could do online voting. OK, perfect.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] That's 18.1, right? This is, yes, 18.1. To confirm, you said 1130?
- ▶ [**Toya Lemus**] Yes. OK. Online voting is open. Votes are in. Five ayes.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Great. Motion carries. So moving on to 11.4, student member voting update. And do we have Mr. Lozano online to discuss this?
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] We do. And before you is a memorandum from Mr. Lozano that I think he's going to try to outline some of the elements of his recommendations to you. Mr. Lozano, are you online? I am. Can you hear me?
- ▶ [**Mr. Lozano**] Can you hear me?
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Is there a way that you can increase your microphone level, Mr. Lozano?
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] It's been much louder in the past. There's something on our end, I think.
- ▶ [**Mr. Lozano**] I don't know if you can hear me.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] We will do our best.
- ▶ [**Mr. Lozano**] All right. Good evening, board president, board members, and Superintendent McCarr. You all are in receipt of a memo that we prepared that outlines the entire process that pertains to student board members. And I will point out some of the highlights of that memo and take any questions that you might have. As you all know, you have appointed student board members since 2019. And that board member, student board member, has all the rights to materials and attending every board meeting that all board members have, with the exception of anything in closed or executive session. The student board member has a right to cast what is referred to in the code as a preferential vote, and that vote is supposed to be a formal expression of that student board member's opinion and is to be recorded in the minutes and cast before the official vote is taken by the other board members. However, the preferential voting right of student board members cannot be used to determine the outcome of any motion. Motions will stand or fail based on what the regularly elected board members have voted. The board also may adopt, which you did in June of 2019, a resolution authorizing a student board member to make motions on all matters that are in your open session with the exception of anything pertaining to employer-employee relations. Again, any vote that the student board member cast is only an indication of their opinion and their preference. It's to be recorded and it's to be given prior to the formal vote of the board members. Student board members have a right to attend regular sessions. They have a right to attend any staff briefings or any other functions of the governing board. They're not obligated to stay at 10 board meetings past 9 o'clock. I don't know if your student board member is there tonight at this point. They have a right to be appointed to the same committees that board members serve on in the same manner that regular board members are appointed. And they also have a right to decline the appointment to committees, subcommittees of the board. They have a right to compensation. They have a right to mileage, and their

YouTube Links

compensation and mileage is on the same terms as other board members or regular board members receive. You have two board bylaws. I think one is on your agenda for updating tonight on the next agenda item, which is consistent with the education code. However, there is one portion that I saw that I am questioning, and it indicates that the board is authorized to award elective course credit to student board members. But I did not see that in the education code sections pertaining to student board members. So that's a question. I don't know where that came from. I know it's a CSBA-recommended policy, but I didn't see that authorization in the code section. The student board members are appointed or elected by the students, the high school students. They're not appointed by administration. However, the board does have a right to terminate the student board member by a majority vote of the board. And that would be an open session, would be agenda'd, and the action would take it pursuant to the agenda item. So that's just a brief summary of student board members, and I'm happy to answer any questions that you might have.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] So Mr. Lozano, thank you for putting this together. And I know that you referenced Ed Code in this. I don't have the Ed Code right in front of me. What is it?
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] 35012. So but I think just for clarity and where we've maybe had a little bit of confusion. So I think what you're telling us is that for all intents and purposes, when we have a student member join our body, that they are an equal member and they are entitled to participate in discussions and they can make motions and they can give preferential votes, but the vote doesn't count. In terms of the final vote count that influences the decision. But other than that, they're for the most part an equal member. The only areas where they cannot vote on are things that are subject to closed session. And I think that that would include personnel matters. But it sounds like maybe where we've had some confusion in the past is that we had said that they couldn't vote like where we're going to be spending money. And I think that they can. It's just that, again, it's a preferential vote. It doesn't ultimately count.
- ▶ [**Mr. Lozano**] They can do their preferential vote on any item that is an open session with the one exception of employee-employer relations. They do not have a right to attend any closed session, nor do they have a right to indicate a preferential vote on any closed session item which would include the negation direction, might include property issues, could include student issues. They would not be privy to that information.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Okay, perfect. Okay, so are there are there questions from the board? Member Thomas?
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Yes, I have a question Lou. The Ed Code 35012 says that any pupil selected to serve as a member of the governing board of the school district shall be enrolled in a high school of the school district, may be less than 18 years of age, and shall be chosen by the pupils enrolled in the high school or high schools. So that's a process we use right now. The student board member is elected by through the ASB process at the high school. And we, of course, as a board, can dictate or can create a procedure that we would follow as to how that board member will be chosen. When we have multiple schools, and one of our multiple schools is our continuation high school, Then you have a little bit different situation where you may have more than one high school, especially in a joint high school district or in a large district. And so there's pupils that make the vote for representatives from their high school, but you can't have five student board members. And so the question I have for you is, How do you get around choosing a student board member when there's up to five? In our case, we would only have two. We can either have them share, or we can have two members, or we can have one of them be seated the first semester, the other the second semester. So ours is only two, but I'm curious about when you have five high schools in a district. How did the pupils select those students?
- ▶ [**Mr. Lozano**] Yeah, it's within the discretion of the board whether you have one or more student board numbers. If the students petition, and that petition is signed by 500 students or at least 10% of the students at the school, right to have a student board member. But the board can limit the number of student board members.

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] And I think the other thing that's contained in that in Ed Code is, I think as you're mentioning, Mr. Lozano, that the students can put together a petition to have a board member join a board if they don't already have that. And that petition would be a one-time deal. And once that petition has been signed, then the board member would be participating on an ongoing basis. But the part that I think maybe we've glossed over a little bit is that although future board members that join the board, although Ed Code specifies that they should be elected by, their fellow students, but there's language right after that that says, based on guidance and protocols, and I'm summarizing here, that the book, accordance with procedures prescribed by the board. And so although we currently have, we have one high school and one ASB, but obviously we're not necessarily tied to that process just according to Ed Code, But also, if we expanded to more than one high school, we would probably need to make a different process. And I will tell you that where I teach, we are a high school district. And so we do have a high school board member on our board. But that person is elected across all five high schools. And so I can find out the details around that. But I think the important thing to understand is that, that we, the board, ultimately can provide guidance around how that process looks. And we do have some oversight responsibilities as well if things aren't working out correctly. Am I summarizing that correctly, Mr. Lozano?
- ▶ [**Mr. Lozano**] You're absolutely right. The election is in accordance with the policies and procedures that the board has adopted. And your current policy pretty much follows the Ed Code consistently. But you can provide greater detail in what that process might be. The term I should also mention that's provided in the Ed Code is a July 1 to June 30 term. And I noticed in the policy or bylaw that is before you next, it says August 1. But under the Ed Code, it's July 1.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] One additional clarification, Mr. Lozano. because you had talked about how potentially the student board member is eligible for compensation. And I think that that's maybe something that we might want to consider as we revisit this and we talk about it in the next upcoming board meeting. But I think that you also mentioned that you didn't see in EdCode any type of discussion around course credit. And it seems that maybe we're offering that. Is it an issue that we're offering that? Or is that something that's also at our discretion?
- ▶ [**Mr. Lozano**] Yeah. I suspect under the instructional minutes provisions of the Ed Code, you could make it part of a leadership class or a governance class. And you would have some discretion there. But the Ed Code sections pertaining to student board members does not speak to course credit.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Great. Thank you.
- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] I have a question. So member Thomas alluded to the fact that we could have more than one student board member possibly if that's what ultimately the board decides on. So given that we do have Bridgepoint, could that be a possibility for us to consider a representation from that school? And the reason why I'm asking is because just at our last board meeting, We had a group of exemplary gentlemen from Bridgepoint that were here, and they are in leadership positions. And I feel that, at least for equity's sake, that even opening up that door and having that discussion to allow for a representation from Bridgepoint also, in the role of student board member, I think that at least it begs a discussion around the possibilities of that.
- ▶ [**Mr. Lozano**] You have discretion in having more than one. You don't have discretion to not have one. If there is that petition presented to the board, you have to have at least one. But whether you choose to have more than one, that is totally within your discretion.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] And so I think that that would be something that we would discuss in the December 2nd meeting. And it would be an option, right? We could have a representative from each high school. Or we could have like the way that my district has it, where we have five high schools. And all five high schools, everybody can nominate. And the student members, student body members of all of the high schools can vote for whoever they think is the best person. So I think those are things that we could talk about in the next meeting.

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Lou, is the board able? There's nothing that prohibits the board from either like rotating like if they had multiple board members student board members Could they have one board member one month another board member another month?
- ▶ [**Mr. Lozano**] That's that's perfectly okay I Don't think so Because what the code says is that the board student board member has a right to attend all board meetings all staff briefings of board members in the same way so if you had more than one, I think you probably could not have a rule that says you'll alternate at meetings. Now, you certainly can talk to them and say, you don't need to come. But if they want to come, they would have a right to attend.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Luke, can I interject there? Yeah. Part of, I'm reading this right from 3051, whatever it is, 120, I guess. And it says that the term shall be one year, except that the term of the pupil member may be adjusted only in, oh no, I take that back. Or in order to provide more pupils with the opportunity to serve on the governing board. And I looked at several policies of other districts Some of them have a student board member the first semester and another one the second semester. Some of them rotate among three schools over two years, specifying the semesters. So I don't see why we couldn't have them alternate each month.
- ▶ [**Mr. Lozano**] What you could do is have a term of three months, six months, whatever. and have board members attend, or student board members attend, in order to give more student board members an opportunity. But once you're in a term, I don't think you can limit the attendance of a board member whose term is in effect.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] OK. I understand. So we have to have a specific term, be it three months or something like that?
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Yeah. Other questions? OK. So I believe, but I am deferring to the board for confirmation. So there were questions that were raised by the public and others about the role of our student board member. And we asked Mr. Lozano to put together a position paper on that, which he's done. And it's in front of us. And it's based on Ed Code. And I think that we have clarity, I feel that we have clarity around, particularly about what the student board member, what their roles and responsibilities are, and particularly in terms of voting. And so I think that we're, that we can put this matter to bed unless people feel that there's still open issues that we need to address here.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] I think that this has been a good discussion. I think we've learned, and when we have our discussion about In the next meeting, when we have our discussion about that section, about choosing school board members, the election part of it, I think that we've got some clarity from this that will help us guide that discussion better.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] OK, great. So moving on, we're going to skip 12.1. So we've taken that off the agenda. We're going to move that out to December 2. So 12.2, organizational meeting, recommended date change, Ms. Vackar. Oh, I'm sorry, Mr. Lozano. Thank you, thank you so much for all your help.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Thank you. Good night, everybody. Good night. All right. The organizational meeting is set for December 11th, and we are, I'm sorry, was originally set for December 12th, which is a Thursday. And after talking with the city and talking with a couple of board members, It was suggested that perhaps we may want to consider moving that because I believe there's a history of the board attending the city meeting in the past, from what I understand, for a group picture. Are you aware of that? No, we've never done that. OK, I'm making this up. It's late. It's OK. I thought I heard that from.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] No, I think Mayor Hannon was asking for us to do that, for us to be able to come And in order to do that, we need to move ours because otherwise it's the same night that they're seating city council mayor and we'd be seating school board members.

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] OK. I thought there had been some sort of a group picture in the past that had been done the night of that swearing in at the city council. No. I think this is a new.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] They just invite us to come watch the swearing in ceremony.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] I misunderstood.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] But yeah. And it's informal. I mean, they have their families there and stuff like that. And there's no reserved seatings for us board members.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] OK.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] So we just come if we want to. So I think he's inviting us to come.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] The question I have about it is that we usually have our meeting on the first and third Tuesdays. And the third Tuesday is after the 15th, and isn't it the 15th that we have to have our organizational meeting? So why aren't we having it on the 2nd? I mean, we already moved the first meeting in December to the 2nd, right?
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] For a couple of reasons. One, this is a weird year where the Thanksgiving holiday is the last week of November. In order for us to prepare for the second agenda, we would have to have everything ready by the 25th. And I don't know that we will actually have everything from the registrar of voters to be able to do the organizational meeting there. This meeting was preset pre-me coming here, I believe. And it is my understanding that you have two meetings. You have a regular scheduled meeting of the Board of Education that's currently sitting in December. And then you have the second meeting where you need an organizational meeting. That's been, I think, historic of what you've done here in the district.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Well, I think we have had to move it. But I think for many times, it was on the first December meeting. And maybe because Thanksgiving is late, that's why it's not being held on the first. And then I think doing it by the 15th happened later, too, that requirement. So doing it by the 15th means we can't do it on the second Thursday or Tuesday, I mean. So I'm fine with it.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Which is now on Monday.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Yeah, I know. I'm fine with moving it. I'm fine with moving it.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] Well, I guess the question is, does anyone plan on attending the city's swearing in? And if so, then maybe we consider moving this. If nobody is planning on attending, then we don't have to move the meeting. We can still leave it on the Thursday, which does allow for Monday to get the agenda out on Monday and post it by Monday night versus having to post it on the Friday before that. And we'll be at CSBA. So it makes a lot more sense to actually leave it on Thursday. OK. No action.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Have you seen your organizational meeting? It's pretty long. I guess you could extend it. Recess it. So moving on to 12.3. OK, so no action on 12.2. We're leaving the meeting as is. And 12.3, this is a name change for Crossroads Independent Study that's being requested. And so in looking at our WASC accreditation to ensure that students in Crossroads are able to, let me show you if I've got this right. Maybe you can help me out with this, Karen. Are you familiar with this item?
- ▶ [**Karen Allard**] Uh, no.

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] This is the one for Crossroads Independent Studies. The change is. They need to have a name change. So but it's an essential portion for the preparation for the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. And so in order to do this, we have to have the board agree to this name change so that we can then inform the California Department of Education.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] So given that branding is an important concept, and given that we have all of these signs that say, believe, around us, should we change it to be like the Crossroad Believers High School?
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Don't make them. Who do I picture Shrek with? I'm a believer. No, no, don't do that.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I mean, is the name going to be Crossroads High and then Alternative in parentheses as part of the title?
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] That is part of the title that they are requesting, yes. So Crossroads High, Alternative.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Why not Crossroads Alternative High?
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] This was a recommendation that was coming out of their group for their WASC. really speak to that. I'm sorry that Rochelle's not here this evening to tell you that. I don't have that question. It wasn't a question I asked them.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I think it's kind of strange, and I don't think I've seen other schools with alternative in parentheses. Could you go back and ask them if Crossroads Alternative High would work?
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] The issue is that this is actually time sensitive, that they have made this request so that they can get this put into the WASP report so that they can actually get this done in time.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] They also have to make that change at the Department of Ed. That's correct.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] It's actually pretty easy once the board adopts it, but it's pretty easy for us to get online and get this done.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] Well, if we adopt it as Crossroads Alternative High School, then that's what they would have to do, correct? I think I have it. Go ahead.
- ▶ [**Karen Allard**] Recommendation, however, emphasizes the importance of accurate naming for accreditation purposes. Changing the name to Crossroads High in parentheses alternative on the NUSDN Crossroads website could help clarify the institution's identity and align with accreditation standards.
- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] OK. I prefer Crossroads Alternative High. I mean, I don't know, but.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] I would think that having alternative in the middle is still equally clear, much more clear than Crossroads Independent Study. Because you don't know what Crossroads Independent Study is. It doesn't say that it's a high school.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Well, you know, we're the board, so we can do anything we want. So I think we should just call it Crossroads Alternative High.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I agree. I agree.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] I make a motion to rename Crossroads Independent Study to Crossroads Alternative High.

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] I'll second.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Ms. Lemus, did you get that?
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Is there any legal issue with that?
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] We'll find out. We've got Kennedy Elementary, and we've got something else, and Bridgepoint.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] Because Crossroads is the virtual, correct?
- ▶ [] It's actually the independent study now being done.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] So it's an independent study.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] I'm sorry.
- ▶ [**Toya Lemus**] I clicked off of the voting thing.
- ▶ [**Karen Allard**] That's OK. Well, then. She just says, again, it's changing the name to Crossroads High. Changing the name Crossroads High in parentheses alternative on the NUSDN Crossroads website could help clarify the institution's identity and align with accreditation standards.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] But can we call it Alternative High?
- ▶ [**Karen Allard**] She might be sleeping.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] So our Alternative high schools at San Mateo Union High School District would name their alternative high school like we have Peninsula. We just call it Peninsula High School. And that would be our alternative high school. But as far as for namesake, it's just Peninsula High School, period. I think you're going to have two alternatives, Crossroads and the other alternative high school there. Rich Point.
- ▶ [**Karen Allard**] Yeah, I think for branding purposes, it can't just be crossroads high.
- ▶ [] Yeah.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Oh, OK. Right. Just like we have bridge point high.
- ▶ [**Karen Allard**] But on WASC accreditation, it can probably be crossroads high in parentheses alternative. This is my guess. The person who did give the recommendation is the vice president of WASC. Oh.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] Well, then I think we should. Yeah. My friend just texted me. I'll remake a motion. I think it's Crossroads High. To accept Crossroads High.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] No, my friend. Alternative. My friend just texted me and said that the CDE has Robertson High, end quote. Alternative? Continuation. Yeah. OK. OK. Let's leave it the way it is.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] Crossroads High.

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] So we need to remake the motion.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] Well, I actually did, but nobody seconded it.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] No, no. Oh, she's left it the same.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] No, she left it alone.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] OK, that's fine.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] So this is the correct one.
- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] Yeah, that's the correct one. Do we need to repeat the motion?
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] Well, I said a motion again, and I corrected it in my motion.
- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] Can we just repeat it? Sure. cover our bases.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] May I make a motion to approve Crossroads the naming of Crossroads independent study to rename it to Crossroads High alternative in parentheses.
- ▶ [**Toya Lemus**] I'll second. Online voting is open. Votes are in. Five ayes.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] OK. Snow Elementary School Firewatch and Superintendent, do we have Dick Van Dyke as a special envoy to describe this?
- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] How many hours of sleep are you lacking right now, Member Hill?
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Too much.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Sure Yeah The snow elementary school was closed in January 4th 2021 and on February 24th February 4th of 2024 the fire watch was initiated as that fire panel was malfunctioning at this decommissioned site and fire watch Was established then February 4th 2024 that went through June of 2024. So the fire watch panel, the fire panel was tested and passed inspection per NFPA standard 72 and per any kind of guidelines for fire watch usually need to have it if there's going to be anyone occupying the building. But if no one's occupying the building and the fire panel is active and it's been inspected You no longer have to have a fire watch there. So these were open purchase order number, actually a purchase order number amount to fund the fire watch experts. And we have these three invoices here. The last three invoices that we do have for fire watch for the site. On June 20th, 2024, VP fire watch experts were contacted for Vandewatch services to observe any trespassing and report any incidents to the police department. Unfortunately they have not been able to really apprehend or to see anything in action or observe any kind of vandal. Although we've had numerous reports of vandal sitting on fire some furniture destroying the site. Obviously we keep that site closed to the public and we do board up every entry point. Of course it's just an matter of trespassers going in there and destroying any kind of access and making a place that they can hide or have other, you know, just malicious intent on that site. So we are asking to pay for these voices, but not not only that, to to cancel the fire watch experts as it's no longer required there on the site. One of the things that we do want to do to move forward is to put a camera system where we do have power there, we still are paying for power at the site, to have security systems on there just for any trespassing that we can have that monitored. Those are other things that we're looking at aside from paying a monthly invoice here that is quite excessive at \$13,000 or \$17,000 per month. So

YouTube Links

we're asking that we cancel these services and look at alternative ways of monitoring that space, or even recommendations of what, and have further discussions for the future of Snow Elementary School.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] So could I ask a question? So on the 24th, we contracted with them again, right? It kept going.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] June 20th, 2024. When the fire panel was repaired on June 19th, it kept going from that moment on until I got here and was asked the question, why do we have Firewatch on a decommissioned site? Good for you.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] So we have literally \$48,000 that we didn't need to spend because it wasn't stopped at the time.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] That is accurate. But at the same time, I was advised that they wanted them as Vandal Watch as well, but you're not I mean, we're having all these break-ins. We're having fires being set. Obviously, the fire department responds because our fire panel is working. Our sensors are working. Our horn strobes are working. So our fire suppression is active. So that's a parameter in place that protects the site that's decommissioned. So I don't see the feasibility of having a vandal watch when the security company can't touch them, can't approach them they just have to call 9-1-1.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] At the end of June I was contacted by the Newark Police Department who informed me that over the Fourth of July holidays if somebody lights a firework on our campus that we are the ones that are fined. And apparently in the past Newark Unified School District was fined because fireworks were shot off on some of our sites. So we were asked to make sure that we had security out there to ensure this is happening. I'm not condoning this. I didn't realize this was happening this way. I would have expected it had been one of our security companies that we would have hired to come out and actually do security at a much lower rate than hiring a vandal watch like this for fire watch. This doesn't make sense to me. It's embarrassing.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] And well, another thing to think about is that it started in March or whenever, February, And it was continuing on. When you have a month-to-month contract that doesn't end at a specific time, but just kind of continues on, it needs to come to the board when it goes over \$50,000, right?
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Yes, it does. And so this is like an unusual thing. So the Firewatch, let me see if I can explain Firewatch a little bit. So Firewatch is actually something that typically the fire marshal orders that we have to do, because a system of ours is not working. Normally, it's a pretty quick fix that you have to either get the part or do something with it. I don't know why it took until June. I can't actually answer that question for you. This is when Bill would have been here. And I really have no background on this other than what Jose's been able to figure out that's happened and the fact that it continued under what was done as being Vandal Watch.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] This is part of that \$10 million savings.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] There you go. No, this is a nugget that's not good. I was kidding. It's all right. I'm just having fun. This is not one of those good things. No, this is not how we should be doing business. And this is the type of things that I would anticipate that our manager should be watching out for to make sure that we are controlling these things and that we are letting go of the service as soon as possible when it's no longer necessary.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] Absolutely. And thank you, Hope, Saif.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Absolutely. Member Thomas.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] Thank you for finding it. And I make a motion to definitely stop the service.

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I'll second that.

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Is there action on this agenda item?

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] You don't want us to vote to stop the service?

- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Well, that is the intent is to close any further invoicing, having anything else monitoring at Snow Elementary School. It is a decommissioned site. It's not required only to have a fire panel that's active, and it currently is active. We have certifications for this. We have documentation that it is active. So I don't think we need to take action.

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] I actually think you do need to take action because it's over the dollar limit of what we were able to spend.

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] OK. So are you asking for approval to pay these invoices? Yes. Oh, because we haven't paid them yet.

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] That's correct.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I move that we pay the remaining invoices for Firewatch and take no further contracts with them.

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Actually, you can't stop taking contracts with them if you are ordered by the fire marshal. Let me be clear about that.

- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] But we can stop this contract.

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Absolutely. We can stop the invoice by asking for an invoice on this, yes.

- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] We do have final invoice, which is in here, so we have no further invoice to pay.

- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] I'll second.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Member Thomas moves. Member Plancarte seconds.

- ▶ [**Toya Lemus**] Can do a manual roll call vote. Go ahead. Member Thomas? Yes. Member Nguyen? Yes. Member Plancarte? Yes. Vice President Jones. Yes. President Hill.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Yes. Motion carries. OK. Moving on to personnel or personnel items. Does anybody want to pull the PAL? OK. So.

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] One of the personnel items?

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] OK. So we're going to pull the PAL. So, member Nguyen.

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Just a quick question. Just a quick question. I see here, earlier I had asked about the six management positions and that you stated that the MOT, the purchasing manager, accounting tech, and assistant sup HR, and then one that's a technician or assistant that's currently filled by one of our staff members, another HR, is this the HR manager position that we're filling, that we're approving tonight? Yes. So we're down to four positions that needs to be filled? No.

YouTube Links

- ▶ [Tracey Vackar] No, we've already filled two, three.
- ▶ [Phuong Nguyen] Of the six management positions that we were speaking about with MGT earlier?
- ▶ [Tracey Vackar] Yeah, we filled the CBO, we filled the fiscal director. We filled the position that Miranda's in.
- ▶ [Aiden Hill] We filled this position. Aren't you talking about different things? I thought there was a different list. Yeah. So we were asking earlier, so MGT was going to be covering certain positions. So purchasing manager was one of them.
- ▶ [Phuong Nguyen] And MOT, the director. OK, that's what I have. Director. I have to go back and go take a look. OK, never mind.
- ▶ [Jose Quintana] Yeah, MGT is not covering MOT. That's going to go out again. We've interviewed for that, but we have not found a qualified candidate to take that role.
- ▶ [Phuong Nguyen] OK, thank you. With that, I move to approve.
- ▶ [Carina Plancarte] I'll second.
- ▶ [Aiden Hill] Member Nguyen moves. Member Blankhart takes seconds.
- ▶ [Toya Lemus] Online voting is open. Votes are in. Five ayes.
- ▶ [Aiden Hill] Great. Motion carries. So moving on to consent agenda and non-personnel items. Do we want to pull any items here?
- ▶ [Phuong Nguyen] Yes, 14.8, please.
- ▶ [Aiden Hill] Any other items? So can I get a motion to approve 14.2 through 14.7 and 14.9? So Vice President Jones, would you like to articulate?
- ▶ [Kat Jones] I'll make a motion to approve 14.2, 14.3, 14.5 through 14.7. 1410 through 1423. I'll second.
- ▶ [Aiden Hill] Vice President Jones, Member Blunkard, two seconds. Member Nguyen, sorry.
- ▶ [Toya Lemus] Online voting is open. Votes are in, five ayes. Great.
- ▶ [Aiden Hill] And I'm sorry, number one, which item were you pulling?
- ▶ [Aiden Hill] 14.8. OK, so you have the floor.
- ▶ [Phuong Nguyen] Just a quick question. I know that this is in regards to the track and field. And since I've been there every day after school for coaching, I noticed that there has been stop work on the field. Can we get a little bit of update? And why is this required? Why is this testing required?
- ▶ [Jose Quintana] Absolutely. Great.

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Thank you.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Yes. So part of, you know, Opening up the ground for any construction is finding what's underneath that surface, what we call unforeseen conditions. What we discovered there through construction testing services for the initial services is to prod the field and the track for any compaction, any type of saturated conditions, which they did find on the actual track itself. basically took a rod, a three-foot rod, and almost when you drop it, it almost disappeared into the ground. So there are some areas like that. Not all areas were like that. But there was definitely saturated conditions that do not have a consistency that's required. So these are what we call unforeseen conditions of the site. The field itself had more compaction to it. And it's more of a beveled. water that can dissipate on the sides. But we had asked them to go out there and do some soil testings to gauge what the compaction rates are and if we need any kind of next steps. And those next steps would be lime treatment. Lime treatment can come as just lime itself or adding some cement based to it or a combination of the two. And so we took, I believe, five different areas, apologize, six different areas of samples throughout the field and the track. And we are currently waiting on those test results. We would hope to have some kind of direction by tomorrow or Friday to give a report to the architects and the construction management firm and have that dialogue with our contractor on the field. So we are currently holding off for any type of earthwork until this Testing is completed. It's currently in the labs. And once the results come out, we can move forward and decide what type of line treatment is being recommended by the testing labs to say, is it just lime? Is it lime or cement based or a combination of other treatment? So as far as the earthquake is concerned, that's why it's currently on pause. But the work is not on pause. We have asked the contractor to continue on construction schedule with other like ADA paths, the restrooms, modernizing those and completing that scope of work. So for the most part, usually you can see the construction when earth is moving, but we're currently waiting on the testing engineers to bring back the test lab results.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Okay, thank you. And then on the original, on the original proposal that was submitted on 6-12, were those tests
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Those tests are ongoing when so those those are for the duration of the project So it's not for the actual special testings for saturation or lime treatment Or any other unforeseen conditions? I think that's the key word here is unforeseen conditions in a construction project that you find these anomalies and for winterization Typically, projects like this, you want to start right before summer as you're going to experience favorable weather. But we're going into the rainy season and starting this project. If we have saturated conditions currently, then we are going to experience further delay in the construction completion of the project if we don't treat it to an extent that the testing labs give that recommendation.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Thank you.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Other questions?
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] I just would like to say that I'm glad that this got done. It was actually something that I brought up in the very beginning of what kind of soil testing was being done because of the water table underneath us. So I'm really glad to see that this is happening and that we're addressing it.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Thank you. Yeah, that's another component I didn't mention, obviously, the water table and having those geotechnical reports. And really, really tells the legend story that We're a bay city. I mean, we have that clay, we have that mud, that mud bay that really affects us and that overly saturation. Obviously, we've had atmospheric rains for the last two continuous years. We don't know what we're expecting this rain season, but every rain day is a non-compensable day. So that means we don't compensate them and they don't charge us for it, meaning the contractors doesn't charge us. But the fiscal impact really truly lies in when is the project going to be completed. If it's 30 days of rain, 40 days of rain, non-compensable, the construction schedule just got pushed 30 or 40 days from completion. We have an athletic program that's been generated by Coach K out

YouTube Links

there. And obviously, she's asking every day, what's the status of these testings? What are we going to do? How are we moving forward? Because we also have to consider her programs that have to start on time or finding facilities for that. Graduation as well. Where are we going to hold graduation? Do we start looking for something else if we do not? So these are key components in getting this treatment done. That will be a different board item on that change order, what that would look like from the contractor. So that's for the discussion forthcoming.

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] With that, I'd like to make a motion to approve 14.8.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] I'll second that.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Member Nguyen moves, Member Talmadge seconds.

- ▶ [**Toya Lemus**] Online voting is open. Votes are in, five ayes.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Great. Motion carries. We already covered in the prior meeting the student expulsion. That's my understanding. So moving on to 16.1, Board of Education Committee Reports, Announcements, Requests, Debrief, and Discussion. Member Thomas.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] OK. I asked for the master schedule a while back. I'm wondering if I can get that spreadsheet of the master schedule. A community member brought to the superintendent's and my attention how difficult it is for people at home to see the presentations that we actually take a videotape of it. And so one of the suggestions that came up was could we possibly use the chambers at the city for our meetings. So I think that would be a fantastic idea. I can't think of any reason why we might not, especially if we contemplate moving from here to another location. So that's just something I'm wondering if we can talk to the city about that and how the rest of us would feel about it. Anyway, I guess my request would be to broach a subject with the city because their facilities are so perfect for projection. And we wouldn't have the problem we had today not being able to hear someone speak. Their system is state of the art, and if we move this location to somewhere else and have to build that, I don't see any downside to using the city hall chambers for our meetings.

- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] I don't know. Is there any charge to that, Member Thomas?

- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] I think we had to explore that with the city. I don't think we know those answers, but I think it's worth exploring at this point.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] It's just every time something happens with our system in here, and I know it's It's temporary, but it's not very professional. At one time, and I was thinking about this in terms of the student board member, but at one time, once a month, we had reports from Bridgepoint students' leadership and Newark Middle School leadership. And I would love to see that come back. every meeting we hear from the high school, of course. It's only a few minutes at each meeting. Just a thought. Then there was, we approved AR 3516.3, Earthquake Emergency Procedure System. And part of the new wording that's there that I'm not sure our district is following is it says that, drop procedures have to be practiced once each quarter at the elementary level and once each semester at the secondary level. So I just thought I'd bring that up to make sure we are doing that. Or do you know if we are?

- ▶ [**Karen Allard**] Yes, those are taking place, and we actually have the dates of those drills.

- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] OK, thank you.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Number one.

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Thank you. We had a meeting with the city of Newark and NUSD liaison committee on the 28th. And the topic of discussion was how children are getting to school and enrollment of student projections and FAQs on measure LL and measure O. And I just wanted to thank member Jorgens stepping in because I did come to the meeting late and he ran the meeting and he did a fabulous job so thank you member Juergens. And in regards to the bond parcel tax committee just again I really wanted to thank our community for embracing Measure O and to Bonnie Moss and her staff for the tremendous work that they have done in support of us past or currently a high probability of passing Measure O. So we want to say thank you. And then to my fellow board member, Member Thomas, which I did give you accolades earlier. But I just really wanted to stress how amazing you have been and generous through the whole process. And in partnership with other OAUDC Democratic group, I just really wanted to thank them for giving us some feedback on how to proceed with Measure O. And then also the campaign candidates who were out not only canvassing for themselves, but also canvassing for Measure O. And I just really want to appreciate Jacinta Arteaga, Lucia Gutierrez, Elisa Martinez, Austin Block, Gabriel Aguilano, Jessie Gunn, and Lupe Lopez for walking and knocking on doors in support of the bond. They did a tremendous job. And also, I just really want to express my sincere appreciation for Coach K, because she came out on two weekends to canvass just to observe on the first one. And also we did door knocking together before we got the students involved. And they came out for a huge canvassing effort along with Assemblymember Alex Lee and Elisa Marquez, supervisor of Alameda County. And we're so appreciative of all of their help, and I think we are favorable because of all the efforts that we had. And then also, thank you to Dave Fink for helping with the Treasury reporting, and Kat Jones, Member Jones, for also helping Dave. So this is a huge team effort, and thank you to all of the, I forgot the other list, but the signatories, Ms. Parks, you're part of that. Al Nagy, Mayor Nagy, for also doing a robo-call for us. I mean, the list goes on and on, and I can't thank everybody enough. I know I miss so many people, but I will have that list, and I will make sure that everyone is appreciated when we officially pass the bond.
- ▶ [**Nancy Thomas**] But again, she's like, it's passed. Let's give Phoung a big hand. Because you just led it all.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] No, but it was amazing. And I'm very proud of it. And this one right here, also my partner in crime, Kareena, member Plancarte, thank you so much for your support. I know that we also had breakdowns in the middle of it and consoled each other. So I really appreciated that. And also to Superintendent Bekar, I know that. I scared you guys a little bit for breaking down. But I think it was just overwhelming.
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] We all had moments because we were passionate about it.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] Yeah, it was overwhelming, just the process and trying to wrap our heads around it. But I don't think that we deterred from the collective goal, and that was to support the students and our staff and the teachers. So it's a big win for the district. So I'm really excited about it. Thank you.
- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] I don't have any updates. I just did want to go ahead and just continue on with the thank yous. I want to thank every individual who's worked and continues to work on Measure O. Those include my fellow board members, our staff, our community volunteers, and the many that helped spread the word, and those who donated their skill sets, time, and money. I know that the results are preliminary at the moment, but I believe in a positive outcome. And from the very beginning, the focus has been on the need and the right for all kids and staff to have safe sites. So I really do want to thank everyone from the bottom of my heart, because it has been a very long and quick, almost seemingly quick journey. It's worth it and I hope that we can really have high numbers with our voting rates. And then also just to finish off, I'd like to address that at the last board meeting, my fellow board member Aiden Hill brought up a statement and I just wanted to say that I went back and I rewatched the meeting and I watched your statement and I think that it's a duty that I feel that I have to ensure and to uphold academic integrity and to do right by our kids and their families and we have to hold each other accountable and we have to ensure that academic achievement is always at the forefront of decision-making and I promised you that I would come back with it with an answer and I think that at least these claims regarding academic testing should be looked into. Thank you.

YouTube Links

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Vice President Jones?
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] I actually also was going to come back and say that I told you that I would think about what you said. And I did. I went back. As Carina said, I did go back and view the video as well. And I think it is really important that we do look into the situation at the high school with Apex and really see what is going on. You brought up some really valid, important pieces and documentation that shows that we do need to have this, there be an investigation into it. So I, too, support that request that you made last time. The next thing I had was a really quick what's going on with track and field, but that was actually covered. And then I also want to thank staff for all the hard work that has been done on the bond. You know, you guys all worked really super hard, and I very much appreciate, you know, Phuong, I know you did a tremendous amount of work on Measure O. And I really appreciate the fact that you kind of headed up and spearheaded a lot of that. So thank you for that. And everyone's work, Carina, Nancy, Dave's, any staff members in off hours, community members. I mean, it took a village to help the village school. And so I'm really pleased with that. I wanted to, I had something on my, I'd like to mention that staff has requested an extension for the audit report to be able to produce the documents for a thorough report. And so just to bring that up, that you guys would like to, that you're asking for that and that I'm in support of that with whatever you need to do in order to make sure that this report is to its best, top notch.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] No, absolutely. Thank you, Member Jones. And we wanted to acknowledge that so we can forward this letter of extension to the county office of education for Alameda. And that we would include this documentation, have this as a board meeting. So we appreciate the time extension to make sure that every, Every line item is thoroughly explored. And being part of that committee, member Thomas and Jones, you'll be part of that conversation. Thank you.
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] Yeah, I know. I think we have a tentative meeting next week we'll talk about. That is all I have on my docket. Thank you. Yes, go ahead.
- ▶ [**Phuong Nguyen**] I actually want to extend one more thank you to a couple of my students who I coach. Because the list of names that we came up for the endorsement, we were asked to produce an additional 250 within like two days. And I couldn't have done that without them. And so I just really wanted to appreciate Juliana Barbosa and Alexa Fernandez for, you know, doing a tremendous job. Huge. And we had a huge list. So thank you so much. You guys are amazing.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Great. Thank you. And yeah, just echoing my fellow board members. So great job to everybody for all the work on Measure O. And our schools certainly need it. And now, it looks like we're going to get it. So that's wonderful. And then just following up on what Member Nguyen had said just a minute ago about the liaison meeting. So one of the topics was the whole Safe Routes to School and the school district where I Teach has a really good partnership with the city of Cupertino And I reached out to my contact at the school and got a name and so and I forwarded that on to our administration And so, you know doesn't hurt to benchmark with what other people are doing.
- ▶ [**Jose Quintana**] Absolutely, and we're doing that President Hill. We're just compiling it with our own Taking that template and running with it.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] So, thank you. Great. Sure. Okay Okay, so superintendent final remarks Just a few
- ▶ [**Tracey Vackar**] Over the last few months, I know you've asked me for a variety of reports that you're concerned about, especially for some of the specialized programs that we have that are running at the high school. I took the remarks that were made at the last board meeting very seriously when you start talking about academic integrity. It's not something that we ever want to shy away from. And as soon as there's ever something that's called out with regards to that, we must make sure that we follow through with that staff that's already looking into. what our current practices are, and also maybe what some past practices are. We've been gathering some information. And we will be working with the high school to produce a documentary report back

YouTube Links

to you. With that, I just want to wish everybody a good evening. And we were not going to see you before Thanksgiving, so happy Thanksgiving. And enjoy all the festivities in November. Fall is one of my favorites, and so I hope you have time with family and friends and loved ones that you can spend time with fall. It's a nice crisp air that's up here. It's perfect right now for fall. I love seeing the trees turn colors. So get out, take a walk. There's been a lot of hard work during the last couple of months with trying to get this bond pushed through. And so many great efforts made by so many people in our community that have come out to champion, to make sure that our kids have the very best for the future. I just can't say enough and thank the community for all their hard work and all their support. It was challenging. I think we need to continue to challenge ourselves and ensure that we bring integrity to whatever it is we do for projects and that we communicate this in a very clear way as to what we're spending the money from from Measure O for the projects that we need to produce for our kids. Some of it is just based on just overall health and safety items. But other things will actually produce 21st century learning opportunities which are so important to our kids to be able to have facilities and infrastructure that will allow them to have some incredible learning by incredible teachers. With that I want to bid you goodnight. Thank you staff for all your hard work this evening. I know these were some difficult reports and some difficult conversations to have. The conversation around our CASP results and how we move forward in the future and how we inform instruction and how our LCAP can help support that is going to be an important conversation. I know Mrs. Allard is going to be working on that tomorrow with the LCAP committee, the conversations around our physical health. I am proud of the work that's been done here in the last few months. And I am hopeful that because of that work, it will allow us to be able to move forward in the future with a better idea about what we need to do for planning as we move forward to be able to bring stability to this district. There will be some future recommendations, and they will not be easy recommendations that come forward that the board will have to make some future decisions on so that we can create that stability. And that concludes my remarks.

- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Great. Thank you, Superintendent. Can I get a motion to adjourn the meeting?
- ▶ [**Kat Jones**] I'm sorry. I'll make a motion to adjourn the meeting.
- ▶ [**Carina Plancarte**] I'll second.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Vice President Jones moves, Member Plancarte seconds.
- ▶ [**Toya Lemus**] Online voting is open. Five ayes.
- ▶ [**Aiden Hill**] Motion carries and happy November, happy Thanksgiving everybody. See you in December.