

Lorna James-Cervantes, President
Dr. Alain Bengochea, Secretary
Jamie Gonzales, Treasurer
Nicole Thompson, Officer
Dachresha Harris, Officer
Dr. Alee Moore, Officer
Astrid Angulo, Officer
Meli Pulido, Officer

Miriam Benitez, Executive Director



Strong Start Academy Elementary School Board Meeting Minutes November 9th, 2023 5:00 PM

CLV Strong Start Academy Elementary Schools, Inc. Board Meeting – November 9th, 2023

Lorna: Good evening, everybody. This is Lorna Cervantes and I will call this meeting of the Strong Start Academy Elementary School at Tony Hsieh Elementary School board meeting to order. It is 5:15 on November 9th. Welcome, everybody, and thank you for joining us tonight. Thank you also for your patience with the technical difficulties that we were having tonight. At this time, I'll record the attendance of the meeting. This is Lorna James-Cervantes. Jaime Gonzales?

Jaime: Present.

Lorna: Astrid Angulo.

Astrid: Present.

Lorna: Meli Pulido. Not present. Alain Bengochea?

Dr. Bengochea: Present.

Lorna: Nicole Thompson.

Nicole: Present.

Lorna: Dachresha Harris.

Dachresha: Present.

Lorna: Alee Moore.

Dr. Moore: I'm present.

Lorna: All right, thank you. We do have quorum for the meeting. We'll go ahead and get started now with item 1C. This is our public comment. Comment during this portion of the agenda must be limited to matters on the agenda for action. If you wish to be heard, come forward and give your name for the record. The amount of discussion as well as the amount of time any single speaker is allowed will be limited to two minutes, absent board approval.

Public comment may also be given by calling 1-415-655-0001 and entering the access code number 25996054045#. Is there any public comment at this time? Seeing none in the room and hearing none on the meeting, we will note that there was no public comment at this time, and move to item D. This is approval of the minutes from the September 14th board meeting. Did everyone have an opportunity to review the minutes? And if so, were there any corrections or additions to those minutes?

One thing I did note, this is Lorna Cervantes, is that on page 19 of the minutes, it said, "A student can spend," and it should be, "Should be suspended," not spend. So we need to make that correction to the minutes. Were there any other additions or corrections to those minutes? If not, we could entertain a motion to approve the minutes as amended.

Jaime: Jaime Gonzales for the record. I move that we approve the minutes from the September 14th, 2023 board meeting as amended.

Lorna: Thank you. Is there a second to that motion?

Dr. Bengochea: Bengochea, I second.

Nicole: Nicole Thompson, and I second that motion.

Lorna: Okay. Thank you. It's been moved and seconded. All those in favor?

All: Aye.

Lorna: Any opposed? Okay, so that motion passes. Thank you. At this time, we will move to a discussion for possible action to review and approve the fiscal year 2023 audit report conducted by CLA. And I know that we had Derrick DeBruyne and Jamie William here from CLA for this report. So we will turn the time over to them at this time. And you do have a copy of that?

Derrick: Perfect. Thank you. I'm sorry, can you hear me?

Lorna: Yes.

Derrick: Excellent. Thank you. Thank you. And I apologize, my camera does not seem to be working. Now I'm having technical difficulties, so I apologize. I have it on. I don't know what's happening. But my name is Derrick DeBruyne. I am the principal on the engagement for the school, for the audit. And with me is Jamie Williams. Together with the team, we performed the audit for the year and did provide drafts of the results.

We'll just go over the results of the audit with you tonight. I'll let Jamie first talk through the required communications that we're required to communicate to governance. And when we deliver the final

signed report, that will be one of the deliverables that you receive once the report is signed. Once you approve. So, Jamie, you can take it away with those communications.

Jaime: All right. Hello, everyone. My name is Jamie Williams. As Derrick said, I'm a manager here in the CLA Las Vegas office. So I will just briefly go over the governance letter with you all, and if you have any questions, feel free to stop me or just ask me once we get through everything. So, the letter just kind of highlights anything that we are required to communicate to you all each year. The first part of the letter just goes over the financial statements that we will be giving an opinion on, which will tie to the audit report.

And then it goes through any significant audit findings or qualitative aspects of the [inaudible 00:05:20] practices. And that first part of the letter is the accounting policies. There was one new accounting policy this year around subscription-based high-tier agreements that are longer than one year that did not have any sort of effect on the school for fiscal year 2023. But we did take that into consideration and reviewed the financial statements for any factors that would've needed to adopt that standard.

The next part just goes over accounting estimates. In any audit that we perform, there are always estimates. The one estimate that we listed in this letter is the PERS liability. So just one thing to note. Every year the school will be given a portion of the net pension liability that they're technically responsible for. That usually operates one year behind. So, the schedules that we used for this year were as of June 30, 2022. So, since fiscal year '23 was your all first year in operation, you all were not part of that schedule, but you will still see your PERS contributions listed out on the financial statements.

And then next year and the years to follow, you will start to see that net pension liability and the deferred outflows and inflows related to that as well. And the financial statements will include a schedule for up to 10 years that we'll just continue to build on each year that we do the audit. The next things that we are required to disclose to you all are any significant unusual transactions that we came across. There were none that we came across during our audit procedures.

We did not have any difficulties encountered while performing the audit. We did not find any uncorrected or corrected misstatements. As we did our audit procedures, we had no disagreements with management. And then a management representation letter will be provided to you all to sign once the audit is reviewed and approved by the board. We had no consultations with other independent accountants during our audit. And, let's see, no significant issues discussed with management prior to the engagement.

And then there's a section that goes over any required supplementary information, and that would be the financial framework information worksheet that will be included in the financial statements which is required by the state of Nevada. So we do include that. And that information isn't audited, but we do tie it back to the information that we did audit. And then the letter will just go over any upcoming standards for the next fiscal year that could possibly impact the school's financial statements. So that'll just be something to keep on the radar as we go through fiscal year '24.

And then we will work with you all to make sure that the standards are implemented if they're applicable to the school. And that's pretty much it for the governance letter. Does anyone have any

questions? And I will turn it over to Derrick, then he's gonna go over the audited financial statements, the draft of that.

Derrick: So, what I'll do is talk a little bit about the audit process and also just the results from the audit. The audited financial statements themselves will be about a 40-page document. There's a lot of information in there. Certainly, you know, if you don't already have that, you know, let me you know or let management know. We can get you that draft copy to take a look at. But I did want to just go over the results at this point so you'll understand, you know, what we did in terms of the audit, and what those results were.

Lorna: Derrick, this is Lorna. I'm gonna stop you for just one quick minute if you don't mind. I think you sent the audit report and the governance letter to Miriam, myself, and to Kristin, but I don't think they got forwarded to the board as a whole. What we have is the report of the audit that Kristin completed for us. So we'll have you go ahead and, you know, touch on the high points that you were planning to touch on right now. But just so you know, the board themselves do not have a copy of what you are going over with them. So, we need to make sure that that gets out to all the board members, and I apologize for that.

Miriam: Yeah. Do you guys have a device that I can forward it now?

Lorna: I mean, I have to have my laptop.

Colleen: This is Colleen McCarty, board counsel. When does this have to be approved and submitted?

Miriam: Approved by December 1st.

Lorna: Do you want us to print copies? [crosstalk 00:10:08] will print copies? Derrick, if it would be okay with you and Jamie, perhaps what we could do is hold just a few minutes. We can make copies for the people here, email it out to all those who are online only so that they can look at a copy of what you are presenting to us. And I apologize again because I thought it had been forwarded out to everybody and it was not. Would that be acceptable for...?

Jaime: Lorna, I do have it pulled up on my computer. If I have the ability to share my screen, I'm happy to do that as well, if everyone would be able to see that.

Lorna: Yeah, if you could share a screen, that'd be perfect.

Miriam: Thank you, Jamie.

Derrick: Thank you. Thank you, Jamie.

Jaime: No problem.

Lorna: I just think we need the visual. Thank you.

Derrick: Yes, yes, absolutely. Thank you for highlighting that. I appreciate that. I'll just pause here and just wait. While Jamie's bringing that up, I'll go over some of the introductory stuff, and talk a little bit about the process. Is that okay for me to go ahead?

Lorna: Yes. This is loading. Go ahead, Derrick.

Derrick: Okay, thank you. So, the audit itself starts pretty early. It starts before the end of the fiscal year of the school. And we are auditing the financial statements as of June 30, 2023, which is the end of the fiscal year. But we start before that because an audit is a risk process. So we use a risk-based approach to auditing, and all audits are that way. So we start with a risk assessment and we look at, where could the financial statements be misstated? And we design our procedures accordingly, to address those risks.

And every single audit, whether you're a public company, whether you are a school or nonprofit or anything, starts with a presumption that there are two significant risks. Now, you can always add to that depending on the organization, but every single organization starts with two. And that's revenue recognition and management override of internal controls. So, as we're working through our procedures, we could find a situation that we're able to reduce that significant risk.

But most of the time what we do is we design our procedures to address those as significant risks, and design procedures accordingly. So, we start with looking at, again, where could the financial statements be misrepresented, design procedures, and then we go through testing, looking at internal controls and looking at what sort of controls are in place. And then we also do the compliance procedures. Identifying those areas that the state has asked us to look at, and some of that is like average daily enrollment of reports, as well as certain other areas.

And then, when we get to the end of the year, we get the final financial data and we perform procedures upon that. And so, that could be anything from looking at the bank reconciliation process and understanding how that was done and confirming those accounts, all the way to looking at supporting documentation for revenue and other transactions. I think I see the draft up on screen. Can you all see it as well?

Lorna: Yes, we can.

Derrick: Perfect. Jamie, if you wouldn't mind just going to the table of contents. And just as Jamie had said earlier, if ever there's an area that you feel like I'm going too quickly over or you need more information on, or the opposite, if you're like, you know what we really need to move on and not take our whole agenda with this, you know, please let me know and I'm happy to make sure to go quickly. The financial statements are broken into several different sections. And you can see here we actually have two different reports that are auditors' reports.

There's one that's the independent auditors' report at the beginning, and that's over the financial statements. But we also have government auditing standards that the school is subjected to. And that covers internal control over financial reporting, and it covers compliance. And so, you really have two different layers of audit standards that you're subjected to. At the point that you get a certain amount of federal funding of \$750,000 spent in one fiscal year, you then add a third layer. And that is what's called single audit.

And you weren't subject to that this year, but the state of Nevada does require, if you get the CSP funding, which is the Charter Schools Program, that you do have certain procedures performed on that grant. So, we did those procedures as well. so, when we look at the financial statements themselves,

you can see you've got pages 15 through 22 there are your basic financial statements. There's four financial statements and there's two reconciliations, and then there's the footnotes. And the financial statements are prepared for governmental acquaint.

And so, that means you have government-wide financial statements, which are the first two that are listed there. And you also have fund financial statements for the major funds and the aggregate non-major fund information. And then, we can keep scrolling down here, and I won't go through every page in this much detail, but I'm just trying to kind of show you the layout and what's included here. Jamie talked a little bit about the supplementary information that's included.

And then you can see here, scroll down a little further, Jamie, at the end there, the independent audits report on internal control, very long title there, but that's the government auditing standards report. So that also contains information from us about what we, you know, the results of the audit essentially. Let's go ahead and flip, Jamie, to the statement of that position. And I just wanna show that that's [inaudible 00:16:46] for the school.

So the statement in that position is essentially the balance sheet for a governmental entity. You can see it shows your assets, liabilities, and net position. The deferred outflows there, that's right in the middle of the page, that is the contributions to PERS that were made during the school year. They are showed as deferred outflows because, as Jamie mentioned previously, PERS is a year behind on the valuation. There's actuarial valuation that has to be done on PERS in order to distribute the liability amongst the various entities that participate in PERS.

And just due to timing, you can't value that until... So that valuation's always a year behind. And since this is the first year of the school, you know, we don't have anything for '22. So next school year, you will see some of those. You can see ending that position, so that's excess of your assets over your liabilities is ending at \$1.7 million. So a very strong reserve, especially for first year of school starting out. Very strong reserve balance. Pretty good starting position. So, Jamie, can we go to the next page here?

Here you can see the statement of activities, which is, again, this covers all funds, the entity-wide financial statements. You can see your expenses there in the first column. And then revenues or income are broken out in a couple different places. It's the third column for grants that are specific to specific purposes. So federal grants and also nutrition monies are gonna show up in that third column there. And then general revenues, which are down in the next section below are going to be your state and local grants that are not restricted to specific purposes. So that's gonna be your state funding for pupil funding as well as the grant money from the city of Las Vegas.

The next few pages show the fund statements and reconciliations between the fund statements and the government-wide statements. I won't go too much detail, but I just wanna point out the difference between the fund statements here. So, fund statements really show, again, you have assets, liabilities, and fund balance, but no long-term liabilities, no fixed assets are gonna be shown on here. So pension liability wouldn't be shown on here. So as the school continues, what you'll start to see is differences and the reconciliations between these statements and the organization-wide statements that are included as well.

So, Jamie, if you go to the next page, we can just show the revenue and expenses by fund here. I'm sorry, that's one more page. Yeah. So this is the fund, revenue, and expenses. And you can see here it's a little different ending fund balance at the very bottom there than the ending that position. And again, that's because of just some of the differences in how items are treated versus the organization-wide statements. But still, very strong ending fund balance. Good reserves for the school entering into its second year here.

If we could just jump to the back, Jamie, just to show the findings and results. You know, we'd like to show the financial statements themselves and certainly want you to, you know, take time to go through this. But we could spend hours going through the pages of this report, and I won't subject you to that on this meeting. But this is one of the results here. And you can see this is a very clean letter. This is a standard language but it's essentially saying that we didn't have any issues of note to report in internal control or compliance.

So, I believe there's a page, Jamie, of findings and questioned costs, or maybe not. Let me see on the next page. Yeah, this is the last page. Okay, perfect. So, essentially, the language here... Perfect, right here. The last set, the first paragraph, the results of our test disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters. There's similar language to the previous page talking about internal control. So, very clean audit, clean opinion. Again, Jamie described the required communications. We didn't run into any issues.

We appreciate the responsiveness and collaboration between both your financial provider, EdTech and and Kristin and her team as well as management, and Miriam and the board president, Lorna. We asked for information from everybody and interviews and other things, and everybody was super helpful. We appreciate that collaboration in getting through this process. As we mentioned, once you approve, we do have some final inquiries to make and to sign the letter as well as a final QC check from our team. And then we publish a final report.

So there's those steps to complete here before the end of the month. I know that was rather brief and probably talked a little fast, I apologize. But I'm always balancing, you know, trying to be conscious and respectful of people's time. So, at this point, if you have any questions, I'm happy to address them.

Lorna: This is Lorna. Do any of the board members have questions about either the audit process or the results or findings that were presented to us tonight? So, this is Lorna again. Derrick and Jamie, I just wanna make sure that I am understanding our next steps correctly. So what we as a board need to do tonight after reviewing this work is to make sure that pending a final review by each of the board members individually, Kristin and Miriam, is that we would need to approve the report that you made tonight and that the audit report pending that final review.

I know, for the board's sake, that Kristin did review this report in detail, along with the other reports. I think that's gonna be part of her report to us tonight as well. But I know she made recommendations back to Derrick and Jamie regarding the audit. Miriam had the opportunity to look over these reports in detail. I know that I read the 40-page report myself. So, next steps for us is to approve it as recommended, pending final review. Is that correct?

Derrick: Yes. So, you do need to approve it and we ask, or we are required to get actually a signed document from one of the board members, usually the treasurer or the board president. We can send you the template that you sign saying that the board approved. And at that point, we can finish kind of our final check for the signed reports.

Lorna: Okay. This is Lorna. Thank you for that, Derrick, and we would appreciate that template letter being sent out to myself and Jaime Gonzales. If you would, please as well as copying Kristin and Miriam so that we could double-check with them. So, given that information, then what we would need at this point would be a motion for the board pending that final letter being signed, that we would approve the conclusion of this final audit.

And I just want to make it clear to everyone that having a clean audit is what every school looks for. I know that from my experience in the schools. That a clean audit is like an outstanding rating to get on an audit. Many schools get, you know, normal or another outcome. So, a clean audit is what you're looking for.

Dachresha: Dachresha Harris for the record. I motion to approve the CLA audit report for financial year 2023.

Lorna: Thank you. Is there a second to that motion?

Dr. Bengochea: Bengochea, I second.

Lorna: Okay, thank you. It has been moved and seconded to approve the 2023 audit report by CLA. All those in favor?

All: Aye.

Lorna: Any opposed?

Nicole: Aye.

Lorna: Okay. Was that an opposition or It was a late chime in on the approved. Okay.

Nicole: I think it was maybe a late chime-in.

Lorna: Okay, I'm just making sure. So that motion was approved. The 40-page report has been emailed out or sent out to every board member and those in the room received a physical copy of it as well. And so, we will wait, Jaime and myself, to sign this final letter going back to CLA until next week. So, if anyone in the meantime has any questions or concerns, please let us know in that time. And Derrick and Jamie, we appreciate your work with this and if you have any further questions for us, please let us know.

And with that, at this time, we will move to the report by Kristin Dietz from EdTech on the budget and financial reports, including the CSP grant. And in Kristin's report that she brought to us, it does have the audit information as well. So, Kristin, we'll turn the floor over to you at this time.

Kristin: Okay, great. Thank you very much. Good evening, board members. This is Kristin Dietz for the record, and I'm going to share my screen. With that, let's see, make sure you all can see the

presentation now. Great. Okay. So, as was mentioned, there's a little bit of redundancy in my presentation. CLA did a great job of giving you guys a little bit more detail. This slide here just gives you kind of an overview of how things panned out in the audit. As noted, it was a clean audit with no findings, no weaknesses. It was really great. And your financials are very strong moving into your second year of operations, so that's great.

I did include a slide here just to give a little bit more of a visual of the difference between the government-wide and the fund-based financials. And for your school, there were really only a couple of adjustments. And as Derrick mentioned, that first adjustment is the biggest change between the two. So, we'll continue to share this information out as we go from year to year. And as more information and more things happen and you become a more mature organization with more things going on, these adjustments can get quite large. So it'll be good to have a good understanding of the difference between the two formats of financial statements.

I included a couple of slides here as well, having to do with how SPCSA looks at a charter school and measures the financial health of a charter school. They have eight metrics and it's called their Financial Performance Framework. Four of the metrics are near term and they look at your near-term financial health, things such as current ratio, how much cash you have on hand, whether you've met your enrollment targets, and if you have any debt defaults.

So, the color coding that I've got here, if it's green, it means that you have met their standards or exceeded their standards, and it's looking really good. If it's yellow, it means that it's an area that we would wanna work to improve. And I will mention, at this point, you are a first-year charter. Typically, they look at this on like a three-year rolling average across the history of the school. And because you're brand new, some of these metrics really haven't evolved yet. So it's gonna become more important as you move forward and you have some history as a school, but I thought it would be helpful for the board just to have an understanding of how they look at you guys.

So this yellow one here, this just had to do with enrollment and what you had budgeted versus where you actually ended the year. And I have to say, many of the first-year schools did not meet this metric. It was a really tough one to get there. But you were really close. You were at 94% of the budgeted enrollment, so that was not too bad. And we're looking at this closely this year and what we'll want to do, and I believe we've discussed this in past meetings, is we will want to have the board approve and amend the budget in the next couple of months, that is more in line with where you actually are in your enrollment. Because our original budget was based on 180 students, and I think our forecast is currently at 140.

So, if we adjusted your approved budget to be more in line with where you are and where you expect to be for the rest of the year, then that becomes the baseline that we measure against, and that makes it more possible for us to meet this target. So that's something that we'll talk about in the next couple of months. And then the next slide here is how they're measuring your long-term financial health. So this is looking at things like debt and your debt to asset ratio, what your net income is historically over the course of three years, and if you're consistently having increased cash flows.

So, for you guys, it was year one. As I mentioned, you actually met all of these, which was really great, and we will want to continue to look at this as we move forward each year. I will say that the margin

one, it's important that they look at average across previous years, because there will be years where you don't have positive net income because you're utilizing reserves. And this current year is actually one of those years because you had quite a bit of revenue that was recognized last year, and there are definitely some expenses that are utilizing some of those reserves this year.

But overall, looking really good. So, I'll continue to share this out from time to time just so that the board is aware of, kind of, where it looks like we're gonna land at the end of the year. Any questions on the audit or those metrics before I move into the forecast?

Lorna: This is Lorna. I don't see any in the room.

Kristin: Okay, great. This will be a really quick report on the forecast then. So, we're currently forecasting a net negative of 193,000. And as I mentioned, what's really happening is we're just utilizing some of those very large reserves that we accumulated in that first year due to grants and revenues coming in in year one. So, overall, I don't see any concerns with you having the deficit this year because of the strength of your reserve. And really, the reason for the change from the approved budget to this current forecast was, number one, just the reduction of enrollment.

As I mentioned, our approved budget was based on 180 students, and we are currently forecasting at 140. So that was the biggest adjustment that was offset by some adjustments in the revenue rates, which we had budgeted an estimated increase. But then the final PCFP base rate came in at \$8,966 per student, which was higher than what we had originally budgeted. So that is offsetting some of the reduction that we would see due to the enrollment decrease. We also had some additional grant revenue that was not originally budgeted, and some shift in the CSP revenues and expenses.

So those are the biggest changes overall from the budget to where we are in our current forecast. And if we look at the information just from the last month's forecast to the current month's forecast, we had a pretty small change. It was about a \$14,000 change, very little adjustment on compensation. We had a little bit of movement in staffing, a very, very minor change. We did have some additional tech supplies that were needed that were a little bit over budget. And then the other change, which the biggest one, which was less than \$10,000, was the fact that the federal Titles I through IV grants have gone through amendment and we did get adjusted allocations.

And they came in lower than what we had in our preliminary allocations. And that was consistent across all of the schools that I work with in this state. They all saw a little bit of a reduction. So, those are the changes that we've got so far from last month to this month. And this slide here just shows us the summary of the grants that we have in place for this year. These grant amounts for Titles I through IV are the amended amounts, and we don't have any pending reimburses because they are all in amendment status. So we will have to wait for the state to approve those before we can submit reimburses on those.

And our CSP grant, we have spent over 60% of this grant. And on this next slide, you can see the details. We've got about \$275,000 remaining and we do have until the end of the year to spend down this grant. Cashflow is very strong. I don't anticipate any concerns with cash for the foreseeable future. And then in terms of the balance sheet, our total assets at the end of September was a little over 1.7 million. Of that,

1.1 million is cash. We had 223,000 in accounts receivable. And we have a little bit of accounts payable, but overall very, very strong financial results.

And as Derrick and Jamie mentioned, that PERS asset will remain on your balance sheet as an asset until the end of this year, at which point we will get new actuarial valuations and we will have an audit adjustment that will establish present value of your long-term liability since you will now have some history with the second year under your belt. So, that number will stay for the remainder of this year until we get into the audit. And that is if for the presentation. At the back, we have the budget versus actual detail report. And at the very, very back, we've got the check registered for the month of September. Should I answer any questions from the board at this time?

Lorna: This is Lorna. I don't see anyone's hands raised, Kristin, but we appreciate this report and having you review for us again, just those outcomes of the audit I think was probably helpful to the group as a whole. And I would appreciate it if you would just let me know if you've done your final review of the report that was sent out. I think you have, but just so we know that you feel comfortable with us moving forward on signing the letter that was mentioned.

Kristin: Yes, thank you. I did do a final review and we had no further changes.

Lorna: Okay. Thank you. Any other questions or comments for Kristin at this time? Okay. Seeing none, I really appreciate it, Kristin. Appreciate you being here with us tonight and hanging in through the technical difficulties and appreciate all of your help over the last couple of months. So, thank you, and we appreciate your time tonight. All right. With that, we will move on to section three, the executive updates. First is a report by the executive director regarding beginning-of-the-year student achievement data to include math and i-Ready. And I know that you all have a copy in your packets of the data that Miriam is planning to share with us tonight. So, we'll turn it over to you, Miriam.

Miriam: Okay. Miriam Benitez for the record. This isn't very exciting because it's beginning of the year. Kids have been off all summer, summer slide, and we see, and plus we receive new students. When you look at our overall placement in reading, 22% of the students are showing up as proficient. And when we met with a data expert that we hired for this school year, a consultant, the way that she told us to kind of look at this is when you have, let's say a third grader, when they take this assessment, it is measuring them on this child has not sat and learned any third-grade material all year. So kind of think about that when they're being assessed. You would expect them not necessarily to be on third-grade level and maybe end-of-year more advanced second-grade level.

So, looking at that, when we look at the breakdown of each grade, kindergarten's at 17% proficiency, first grade at 22%, which is great. Those were our kindergartners last year. The majority of them. Second grade, only 15% proficient. However, 40% of that class is new to us. So that makes sense that you see that little dip there for second grade. And then third grade, we're at 39% proficiency. So, we were, in talking with our consultant, she said that those are strong numbers to start the year with. We'll take this assessment again in December for our winter diagnostic, and we're excited to see the growth they've made so far.

On the next page is our math. And we see overall it's a 10% proficiency. And again, when we look at the breakdown, we see only 12% in kindergarten, 14% in first grade, 0% in second grade, and 9% in third

grade. So, again, this is testing like in third grade. They would be seeing multiplication for the first time. So, we would expect those scores not to be very high.

And on the following pages is the fall map data which was higher overall. And then considering that i-Ready, we took as soon as we started school in August, and then we waited four weeks before we gave the map. So, the other thing to consider is they've been in school for a while, starting to remember some of the stuff that they forgot through the summer. So, overall in reading, the school shows 24% at an advanced level, so above grade level, 26% proficient. And then only that 13% that is in the red and the orange, 16%. And then, overall, when you look at the grade breakdown, well, actually kindergarten didn't do so bad, 51%. But what they're expected to know at the beginning of kindergarten is very low.

And what we're seeing here is the advanced levels as well. So, the blue is the above grade level, so, more advanced. In first grade, 26% advanced and 22% proficient. In second grade, 16% above and 37% proficient. And then in third grade, 32% in the advanced category, and 13% proficient for reading. And then when we look at the math, overall 26% in the advanced category, 28% proficient. And then in kindergarten, 32% advanced, 27% proficient. First grade, 31% in the advanced category, 30% proficient. Second grade, we have 10% advanced and 21% proficient. And third grade, 14% advanced and 32% proficient. And then we also use these assessments to help with our RTI that we've started identifying small group interventions as well as our tutoring that started in October.

Lorna: Thank you, Miriam.

Miriam: No problem.

Lorna: Do any board members have questions about these reports? This is Lorna. I will say that one of the things that Miriam brought out is important to remember is that they, especially on the i-Ready, it's testing against end-of-the-year proficiency. So, it's very typical for us to see that students are not mastering end-of-the-year proficiency at the beginning of the year. But it is good to see that there's actually a little increase between the four weeks of i-Ready and math even though they test differently. Any other questions or comments?

Jaime: Jaime Gonzales for the record. So, another way of looking at this, this is sort of a baseline for the year. So, I think it is interesting how it continues through the second grade, you know, in each one of these and the 40% influx of new. So, as this could be retested or taken again in December, are there other indicators that you are observing that show that second grade is making progress or there are difficulties that you've had to address in order to help advance at all, at least since the beginning of the school year?

Miriam: Miriam Benitez for the record. The difficulty is, remember that our second grade is dual language and the research recommends that new students don't join that program after first grade. We had openings and we had several people apply, and we would give them the research, but obviously we can't deny registration or enrollment to anyone. And there has been challenges because we've had several students enroll in second grade that have no previous Spanish and half of their day is in Spanish and they're already behind.

So, that has been a big challenge. For instance, one student came from homeschool into that second grade, no Spanish, and that student is very behind. And so, what we're hoping through tutoring and through other interventions, that we can close that gap. But that 40% has been a challenge.

Lorna: This Lorna. I would just add to what Miriam has said. She spoke earlier about RTI. And remember, RTI is response to intervention. So, these tests are used a lot of times to identify those kids who need that extra intervention or that extra help. So, those kids would be in tutoring, they might have more time where they're retaught or they're taken into a small group in a classroom. So I think those are some of the types of interventions we would see being given, especially at that second-grade level to help support those kids. Because going back and starting out over again doesn't help. We have to start where they are and then build on from there and still give them access to the grade level material, or they will never catch up with their peers.

That was a great question, Jamie. Any other questions or comments? Alain, were you commenting, or? Okay. No, I have to double-check. I don't wanna miss anybody who's online. Okay. Any other questions or comments for Miriam at this time? When the kids complete their next set of testing, she'll bring these reports back again. And what I asked also, Amanda's going to help us out with this, but I asked them to show where we are this year compared to where we were last year at the same time, as well as to include on that what our goal for the year is.

So, if our goal is to have 80% of our kids at proficiency, we wanna be able to know in January how far from that goal we are. So then we could help to brainstorm any shifts or anything like that that need to happen at that time. So that is a request that I made earlier today when speaking with Amanda. And she's going to help us out with that, so we have a really good understanding as to our progress toward academic goals. All right, thank you.

With that in mind, why don't we move to, B, this is approval of possible action to update the special ed policies and procedures manual and forms. And you all received a copy of that manual and those forms electronically today. And you also have...

Jaime: This is the one.

Lorna: Yeah. And also those in the room got a physical copy of it as well. So, at this time, Miriam, anything you'd like to say about these?

Miriam: Miriam Benitez for the record. Just that the Charter Authority back in September had required all schools to update their manuals, policies, and procedures with specific criteria. And we contract with a special ed support services and the director that we contract with, she created this manual and policies, procedures for all of the charter schools that they service. So, that's how this came about. And then, of course, from there, we gave it to our counsel to make sure that she reviewed it and approved it. And she, you know, made minor edits, but I believe I'll let her say it. I don't wanna speak for her.

Colleen: No, no. Colleen McCarty, board counsel. Yeah, I went through them both. For those of you who did enjoy this light meeting, as you see, they're very, very dense. I just made some just real minor changes to help improve the clarity of some of the things. And there were just some documents and things that didn't belong in there that also came out. So, just minor stuff.

Lorna: And this is Lorna. I can say that I have read through all of these policies and procedures manuals as well. And I thought that they seemed right in line with what our expectations should be. So, at this point in time, we need to, if the board is comfortable, we do need to approve both the special education policy and the procedures manuals and forms for Strong Start Academy. Unless there are other questions or comments from any board members first. I don't hear any questions or any requests for comments. Is there a member who would like to move that we approve the special education policies and procedures manuals and forms at this time?

Jaime: Jaime Gonzales for the record. I move that we approve the updated special education policies and procedures manuals and forms.

Lorna: Is there a second to that motion?

Dr. Moore: Dr. Alee Moore, I second.

Lorna: Okay. It's been moved and seconded. All those in favor?

All: Aye.

Lorna: Any opposed? That motion is passed. Thank you very much for all of your hard work on that, ladies. And at this time, we'll move to item C. This is a report by the executive director on the status of ongoing marketing efforts, open enrollment, recruiting, student population demographics, and student retention. Miriam.

Miriam: Miriam Benitez for the record. So, our recruiting campaign hasn't gone away, but it's more in, what is, Edgar, our person that we work with at Graphicka, likes to call a more maintenance phase. Because we don't have as much out there, but we're still out there. So it's slowed down quite a bit. And from all the data he has from the last year that we worked together, he was able to see, kind of pinpoint when our most active time is, when we really wanna up the campaign.

So, he had identified November through March where we can just, again, we're still out there and we have, I don't know if they're called commercials anymore, but we're on YouTube, Google, Facebook, and then starting in April is when he really amps it up through August. And we'll have increased ads on Facebook, Google, YouTube, and that OTT, which is on the streaming channels like Hulu, Peacock, all of those. So that's still going.

And our enrollment, even though the number 143 doesn't seem to change, but it's like we'll gain a student and then we'll lose one and then we'll gain another one. So it seems to just keep steady at 143. And the reason, again, that we continue to get for losing students is the drive and the distance. And this year, we hired our safe school professional and she's been really good following up with our kids that have excessive absences.

So, we have started to lose some students because I think the thought is, well, if I'm gonna get harassed here for absences, I can go back to my zone school for that. So we've had a little bit of that because we've had someone following up every absence, every absence. So we have lost some students to that. And those absences count against us, so even though we may lose some students, we need kids to be there.

Lorna: This is Lorna. I would agree with that. And I think as you were reporting, Miriam, I said we lost those parents because they were being held accountable for their child's education. And we know that it's part of our mission as a school to hold parents accountable for their children's education. So I would strongly recommend that you continue to do so because it should be a partnership. We also know that we're going to be adding fourth grade next year, so hopefully, our kids will roll right up into the fourth grade. Any questions or comments for Miriam regarding this report today? Go ahead, Dachresha.

Dachresha: Dachresha Harris for the record. During this maintenance campaign phase, what does that cost look like compared to the active campaign months in summer?

Miriam: It's way different. The active campaign month, so in August and July, if I remember correctly, it was like \$14,000 a month. And the more maintenance, I wanna say it's like \$2000. So it's a huge difference.

Lorna: This is Lorna. Thank you for that question, Dachresha. I think it was a good question to make sure that we're being fiscally responsible during this time. And I see Dr. Moore's hand. Go ahead.

Dr. Moore: You may have said this, Miriam. When are applications open for the school?

Miriam: The application opens in December. But even though applications open, the parents don't start applying until later. Last year, we had applications open in January, and what we learned is the sooner that they open, the better. Because after you open, you have to wait for that 45-day enrollment. And parents are kind of on hold waiting to see if they've been accepted. So what we learned is the sooner we get that process over with, the better, because then parents will know right away if their kids got in.

Dr. Moore: Okay. Okay. Good. So if applications open next month, the recruiting efforts are starting this month and they are only digital for now?

Miriam: Yes. Everything is digital. The tabling events that we all did last year, those all started mainly, like in the spring they start and there's all kinds of things that pop up that are offered for us to have a table at, but again, they won't start for a while.

Dr. Moore: Okay. I know the treasurer's office is going to have an event in the next month, so in the winter. So I will try to connect you to that because that could be a recruitment effort. They're having a kind of like a prepare for the spring drive, similar to what we see for back-to-school drives in the summer. They're preparing for the spring. So that may be something useful for Strong Start recruiting efforts during this phase.

Miriam: Yes, yes. So, I'm glad that you mentioned that because anybody that knows of anything going on, even, I think it was the housing authority, I stumbled upon something that they were doing and we were able to call them and get a table there. So, anything that anyone knows of, please let us know, because we're always happy to attend those tabling events.

Dr. Moore: Okay. Great. Thank you.

Miriam: Thank you.

Lorna: Thank you for those comments, Dr. Moore. We appreciate it. Are there any other questions or comments at this time? Hearing none, we will move on into the governance section of our meeting tonight. And the first act, I know that Dr. Moore and Dr. Harris worked together on this. It's a discussion for possible action to approve the board member agreement. And remember, this is the agreement that we discussed at our retreat, and they worked together to create this. So I will turn the floor over to Dachresha and Alee at this time.

Dachresha: Dachresha Harris, for the record. I'm just a Ms. Harris

Lorna: People always call me doctor too. I'm the same.

Dachresha: I'm not taking on any titles I haven't earned.

Lorna: All right, thank you.

Dachresha: But just to refresh the board's memory, during our board retreat in August, Dr. Alee and I volunteered to look at the member agreement. And I believe the other document was just the rules and responsibilities for the board members. Basically, we just married the two documents to make it a little more clear and concise and all in one clear outline. So, hopefully, everybody can take a couple of minutes just to look over it. I think for the most part, it's pretty standard language of just our responsibilities as a board and what our commitment will be as we're participating on the board. And if anyone has any questions, or Dr. Alee, if you wanna add anything to that.

Dr. Moore: And it's been a while since I've taken a look at this and made revision. So, I can say that I see a couple of things that I think are in need of revision or clarification. So, I'm not sure this is, like, completely ready. I'm looking at page one. When we talk about the onboard expectations and we have here, etc., I would like to be more specific about what that, etc., is so that onboarders are aware of exactly what we are expecting for them prior to. Etc. is a little bit too vague for me. And I probably put that as a placeholder.

So I think we can maybe figure out what exactly that is and then put that in here so we can be explicit about that. And the section beneath it with board member responsibilities number two, where it says provide my personal professional resources, I just would rather not use the language my, because that's not really consistent with the rest of those there. It's not really first person there in that section. But those are minor things and I think we can just clarify and tidy up. Before we move forward with the exact document.

Lorna: Go ahead, Dachresha.

Dachresha: Dachresha Harris for the record. With those changes, I would welcome everyone to just take a stab at reviewing this and provide feedback because we could probably make it a lot stronger and get to hold everyone accountable for their responsibilities.

Lorna: Thank you for that. This is Lorna again. And, Nicole, I see your hand.

Nicole: Sorry. I did look at the agreement. I think it's very sound. I did make note to the page one on the outboarding expectations and, you know, I thought the etc., could be replaced with the board retreats because I think we are going to need to continue to have those board retreats annually. And that was

something that was, you know, made note of this year that, you know, it is mandatory for all of us to be able to be on board and being present for those retreats. So maybe you can put annual board retreats in place of etc.

Dr. Moore: I think the onboarding expectations may be retreat may not go in that section, but definitely in the second section about responsibilities, I think that's a good place to add retreats.

Nicole: Okay. I agree. Thank you.

Lorna: This is Lorna. Thank you for that input. Is there other input by the board? So, what I think we can do at this time, if it's okay with everybody else, let's take time between this meeting and our next meeting to review one more time, send any other recommendations that we may have to Alee and to Dachresha for that final drafting. And if we can bring back that final draft at our next meeting for approval, then we will keep this item on the agenda for next month and bring it back at that time for final approval, if that's okay with you. Okay. That's what we'll do then. Thank you, everybody.

Dr. Moore: Quick question. Quick question. Other than the open meeting law and governance standards, were there anything else that onboarders need to do in advance of securing their position on the board?

Colleen: Colleen McCarty, board counsel. There are a couple of forms that they need to sign, and I can pull the exact titles of those when I get back to my office and we can include those there.

Lorna: Yes. I remember one's a disclosure form.

Colleen: Yeah. There's a disclosure form and a financial and a conflict of interest form. A couple of forms.

Lorna: Yeah. Let's make sure we include those there. That's a great idea.

Dr. Moore: Thank you.

Lorna: Thank you for that. And I think, if I remember correctly, you had put in the board member responsibilities, attending ongoing training. But if we didn't, I think maybe that should go there too, is that everybody's responsible for attending board training throughout the year, especially those that, you know, come to us through BoardOnTrack or through the Charter Authority. We wanna make sure we include those as well as the annual retreat that Nicole had mentioned. All right. Thank you, everybody for your input with this.

Dr. Moore: Okay. Thank you.

Lorna: You're welcome. So, we'll look forward to that updated document for our next board meeting. We appreciate you both working on this and bringing it back to us as a whole. All right. We also, at the board retreat, had discussed looking at the BoardOnTrack assessment results and really coming back to our meeting with some ideas of what maybe should be our priorities for this coming year as a board. And Amanda has pulled up for us those results for the BoardOnTrack assessment for this year in case anybody wants to look at anything in particular. But I'd like to know, first of all, did everyone take the time during these last couple of months to kind of maybe look at these results and think about what

they would recommend we use as our priorities for this coming year? And I'll open the floor to whoever would like to go first.

Dachresha: Dachresha Harris for the record. I apologize, I did not have a chance to look through it, but I remember when I took the survey that there were some of the questions that we were asked that I think that there were a lot of opportunities for us to have more goals throughout the year and to make ourselves more accountable with some of the business side of everything. I don't remember what those were, obviously, but I will make sure that I go back in there and be a little bit more specific. But just from taking it up, it just felt like there were quite a few opportunities where we're such a new board that we haven't probably gotten to that part, but we could have it at least on our goals as we continue to move through our meetings.

Lorna: Go ahead, Alain.

Dr. Bengochea: Bengochea for the record. I remember that there were a series of questions relating to the formation of committees and I think that's something that we might want to prioritize.

Lorna: This is Lorna. Actually, I thought along the same lines. I thought under governance we talked about committees to do different things. And I know that BoardOnTrack has a very formalized system, which maybe we're not there yet. Because a lot of boards are big, like, they have a lot of board members and we do not. But one committee was what Alee and Dachresha did by just taking on this board member agreement as one of our things that we'd work on.

I thought about a couple of others, like we need to make sure that our Read by Grade Three policy and our retention policy, our enrollment and perfect attendance policies, discipline and restorative justice is done. Because we knew that had to be done. But these are a few policies that have to be done every year. So maybe setting those as some important committee work that needs to be done moving forward and maybe assigning a couple of members to each of those, were two things that came to my mind.

The other thing that's really been on my mind has been our CEO evaluation and support. So, for Miriam, you know, we have to do a yearly evaluation for her. And I'll just, out of all transparency, just say that I wrote an evaluation for her last year based on what we knew because it had to be done by a lot. So I just wrote it. I think it goes back to that one... No, it's okay. But I wrote with our input from the group.

Dachresha: Board member jail.

Lorna: Yeah. But we need to have at least a committee that would come up with, you know, what are our thoughts, or a format for input for doing this moving forward. We knew by law we had to get it in and had to take care of it. And so, I kept in mind the input given by board members throughout the years I wrote it. I have worked as a principal supervisor in the past, so that made it a lot easier to do that work. So that's an area that's been on my mind.

Dachresha: Dachresha Harris for the record. Miriam, when is your eval due?

Miriam: When is mine due? I believe it's in the summer in June.

Dachresha: Dachresha Harris for the record, I recommend that we form a committee maybe around the month of April. We say who's gonna be the two or three people from our board that evaluate Miriam.

However, I think part of that process should be Miriam evaluating herself and providing that to the committee.

Jaime: I think she does do it.

Dachresha: And that way we can make sure that we don't have board jail.

Lorna: We'll have it. You just won't have to go there.

6 Well, just to have some, some organization for it and to make sure that we're meeting the deadline and evaluating her fairly.

Lorna: This is Lorna, and I agree with that. One of the things I think just from past experience that you usually want to do is have her do maybe like a self-evaluation at the beginning of the year. There should probably be a mid-year. Like how do you feel like you're going toward any goals that were set last year? We did, between Miriam and myself, set some professional goals for her to accomplish on that evaluation last year. So we can take a look at that and see if those goals are still appropriate.

And then by April, really have a group of people start maybe writing out what that evaluation should look like. It really can be a narrative. It doesn't have to be like a big rubric or something like that. Like, a lot of teachers and administrators in the state use the Nevada Educator Performance Framework, which is a huge framework of rubric, and it doesn't have to be that complex. So, I like that idea. And so, if there are other people who would be willing to serve on that, I think it's an important committee to get moving forward. So, I don't know, if anyone wants to step up today and say they want to be a part of that committee?

Jaime: Jaime Gonzales, for the record. I will.

Lorna: Okay.

Dr. Bengochea: I think it depends on the other committees. Bengochea for the record. It depends on the other committees are available.

Lorna: Well, we do have a Read by Grade Three and a retention policy that needs to be written and also an enrollment perfect attendance policy. So, maybe judging by those ideas because a lot of those are things we have to have in place, I think, or at least review annually. So, with that in mind, do you have a preference?

Dr. Bengochea: Bengochea for the record? I will sign up for the Read by Grade Three committee.

Lorna: Okay. So let's see from Alain, Nicole, I know Nicole helps with the discipline and restorative justice, but are you or Astrid willing to serve on any of those other committees, even looking at the enrollment perfect attendance, giving your expertise or your opinions in those areas?

Nicole: No, I can serve on the enrollment perfect attendance. I'm trying to still hear the options, but that is something that's in my area that I do right now as a student success instructional facilitator.

Lorna: That would be great if you would be willing to take on the review of that enrollment and perfect attendance policy with Miriam and another board member. Is there somebody else who would be

willing to serve with Dr. Bengochea on the Read by Grade Three policy or to serve with Nicole working on the enrollment and perfect attendance committees? We also need to review our retention policy. That's one other policy as well.

And you can do more than one thing if you want. I mean, or maybe it's all one committee. Maybe Nicole and Alain work together, you know, looking at the academic parts. So, really, the main ideas are to just review Read by Grade Three, retention policy, which actually is highly associated with Read by Grade Three. And also, the enrollment and perfect attendance, they all really kind of go hand in hand. Would that be acceptable to the two of you to work together on that? I see a thumb up for Nicole.

Dr. Bengochea: Fine by me.

Lorna: And Dr. Bengochea as well. And Jaime, I'm willing if you want me, to serve with you on the evaluation committee as well, but if you don't want me that's okay too. Astrid and Alee are gonna complete the work on the board member agreement. One other thing that people brought up was looking at community outreach committee and I don't know if there's a desire to tackle that at this time or maybe we hold that for later, but that did come out of our board retreat as well.

Dr. Moore: Tell me what the outreach committee looks like.

Lorna: We don't have any definition of it. Somebody just mentioned, you know, outreach to the community. Maybe that comes along the lines of some of what you've been bringing up with like our tabling events and things like that, or just getting out to the committee. It could also be bringing the community into our school. It could be whatever the committee wants it to be or thinks it should be. Or maybe do we hold on that and we bring it back in the future and say, is there still a desire to move forward with something like this?

Jaime: Jaime Gonzales for the record. Perhaps as part of the minutes obviously and then our next agenda, we can just sort of firm up that... We've got these two or three that are starting to be created. We've got this one outreach that's a possibility. Perhaps between now and next month if we can give some thought to what that might look like or we wanna bring some ideas, or is this something where we don't have any ideas but we table it for six months, what have you? I think that that might be a way of at least keeping it on our radar screen and perhaps generating some ideas by the time we meet next.

Lorna: This is Lorna. I like that recommendation. Is everybody else okay with that?

Dr. Moore: Yes, I'm okay with that and I'm happy to join Nicole and Dr. Alain in the other committee until we firm up what we decided about outreach.

Lorna: Okay. Thank you. Dachresha, you were gonna speak?

Dachresha: Dachresha Harris for the record. I was just gonna speak up that I agree with Jaime because we have board members who aren't here too that may want to participate on some of the committees as well. So, I think we got a good start. So just as we continue to proceed with and see who else is interested in participating.

Lorna: This is Lorna. I think that's a great suggestion. Maybe what we could do is bring this item back, but instead, maybe we just reword it and say that we review progress by committees. And we could list

committees being an academic or a policy committee. I guess we would call it a community outreach or we'll hold on that, the CEO evaluation committee, and then we can say then other possible committees could be added at that time. So that's a great suggestion. Is that acceptable to everybody? Okay. I see thumbs up. Thank you, everybody. This is a good start, I think, and I do know that, you know, forming committees and starting to think in this way were something that we were kind of pushing ourselves towards.

So I think it's a good start. All right. At this time we'll move to section five of our agenda. And this is facilities. So I think Amanda's giving these reports tonight. First is a report by the city of Las Vegas regarding the status of renovations and new construction, followed by the status of security improvements at the school. So, Amanda, if you would like to just start first with the construction updates, we'd appreciate that.

Amanda: Absolutely. All right, Amanda Kuhl for the record. City of Las Vegas. So, we'll start with some construction updates. We have three ongoing projects right now at the school. They're all at various phases. We have the concrete slab in the church building. It's still currently under construction and the current completion date is projected to be within the first quarter of the new year. So, hopefully, February. We know how these projects go, unanticipated issues that come up.

But we are hoping we don't run into any more of those. That way we can complete this project and have access to that multipurpose space. I think it's gonna be a great space for those kiddos once they can use it, have their lunch in there, all the fun things. The planning for the upstairs expansion project in the main building is also continuing on. The permit application was submitted early this week and the project is expected to go up to bid in December.

The bid process is usually, like, two to three months just depending. And then we're still on track to meet our deadline of beginning actual construction literally the day the kiddos get out of school. We wanna have construction crews in there. We're still anticipating having that construction completed by the new school year. So the 2024-2025 school year. And then lastly we have the new build that is still in the design phase, but moving along. We have been having weekly design meetings. We've looped Miriam in. We're making sure that we're not just making decisions in a bubble. That we're including Miriam so she can say, hey, I don't know if this is gonna be the best learning environment for our students and families, and she's keeping us accountable. So that is the construction updates. Do you guys have any questions?

Lorna: Are there any questions by the board members? This is Lorna, for the record.

Tammy: Tammy Malich, city of Las Vegas, for the record. I just wanna add on to what Amanda said. Also for the new building construction, it's CIP Capital Improvement Projects, submission time for the city of Las Vegas, and we did get a pretty accurate bid from on the A&E, the architecture and engineering of the new building. And so, we're looking at about \$6.5 million for that new construction. And so we did submit a CIP project to the city of Las Vegas to secure the funding for that new building as well.

Lorna: This is Lorna. Thank you for that, Tammy. We appreciate that update as well. Any other questions or comments by any of the board members? Thank you, Amanda. Go ahead to the status on the security improvements, please.

Amanda: Okay. So we applied for the Department of Justice grant back in May this year. We just received news on Tuesday that we did not receive the grant. It's not the news we wanted to hear, but we are still going to be working diligently to find other funding sources for the security improvements at the school. We're looking at other grant opportunities, internal funding sources, just needing a little bit of time to weigh our options because we just got the news this week. Safety and security remains top of mind for all of us and so we're definitely looking forward to prioritizing some of the asks that we had.

We'll work with the board and Miriam to make some decisions on what we feel like needs to happen first. And the reason that they provided was just that the demand for funding was so high. It was a nationwide opportunity. And, of course, I think security safety is top of mind for a lot of people right now and we were not selected. So, it's unfortunate, but we're definitely gonna move forward. We'll have more information for you guys in December at the board meeting. We're just needing a little bit of time to do some fact-checking and get some concrete plans to move forward. Any questions?

Lorna: This is Lorna. Any questions from the board? Okay, we will look forward to that update at our December meeting and if you need any assistance in the meantime, if you'd just let us know, we'd appreciate that.

Amanda: Absolutely.

Lorna: All right, thank you.

Amanda: Thank you so much.

Lorna: All right. Thank you, Amanda. At this time, we are moving on to item number six. This is citizen participation. Public comment during this portion of the agenda must be limited to matters within the jurisdiction of the board. No subject may be acted upon by the board unless that subject is on the agenda and is scheduled for action. If you wish to be heard, please come forward and give your name for the record.

The amount of discussion as well as the amount of time any single speaker is allowed will be limited to two minutes, absent board approval. Public comment may also be given by calling 1-415-655-0001 and entering access code number 25996054045#. All right. With that and seeing no public comment in the...

Tammy: I have a public comment.

Lorna: Sorry. I apologize. I did not see that.

Tammy: Public comment. Terry Malich, city of Las Vegas for the record. So Amanda just handed out, Miriam is very humble and I understand the reasoning behind it.

Jaime: Okay, you're good. Thanks.

Tammy: Thanks. I understand the reason behind it. So, Strong Start Academy was not evaluated this year in the normal format because they didn't have third grade, I'm sorry, last year, because they didn't have third grade and that's the testing year. So, their indicators, for the most part, are N/A as you can see throughout the report. However, the school and Miriam were rated on the student engagement

indicator, scoring a 9.5 out of 10. The index score at the top center, NR, meaning not rated, but she had an index score of 95.

If you see on the right, the little blue stars, at or above 84 or higher is a 5-star school. So, Miriam even called the Charter Authority to verify, just to make sure she wasn't getting credit for something that wasn't due. The full report, if you go into Nevada Report Card, you can see it. It's actually nine pages. It's a whole lot of NRs throughout. Amanda will send it to you. But it also does show the target areas for growth on the chronic absenteeism for two student groups.

But I think a couple of things jump out at me. If you look at additional student groups, her economically disadvantaged group is at over 80%. And Amanda and I were looking at Nevada Report Card earlier and just as a point of contact and she'll work with Lorna to get you guys some more comparative side-by-side, but the student growth data for CCSD was at, do you remember? Or for Clark County?

Lorna: Yeah. She's checking. So we give you an accurate number.

Tammy: So they have 60... Read that? So, for Clark County, 32% of their students are above the 65th percentile in the spring assessment. And for Strong Start Academy, 46.3% were above the 65th percentile. The growth indicator...

Miriam: it says the district.

Tammy: Okay. The growth indicator for spring for Clark County, 48.6% and for Strong Start Academy is 69.7%. So, almost 70% versus 47% if you round. So, again, just complementing and accolades to Miriam and her staff and the work they are doing. Because it's not easy work. It's important work, but changing these babies' lives forever. And one little final tidbit of good news. The former parent board member from this board, Heather Nay, you all remember Heather? She became an AmeriCorps member and now works at the school so she can't serve on the board.

Michael Smith, who is the executive director for AmeriCorps at the national level, he used to be the head of the Obama Foundation for My Brother's Keeper initiative. Michael came out and visited our AmeriCorps program at the city because we have a really strong AmeriCorps program, and we had several of our AmeriCorps members there. Several of them shared their story with Michael and the group, and kind of their trajectory. So Heather shared her story.

Many of you have heard Heather's story. Michael reached out last month and has invited Heather to their national convening in D.C. next week. And Heather was invited to go to the national convening and share her story as an AmeriCorps success story. And so, she'll be going to D.C. to share her story with AmeriCorps members from all over. So, yay.

Lorna: That's great. This is Lorna. Thank you, Tammy, for sharing this information. I didn't see it and I didn't realize there would actually be an SPF for Strong Start this year. One of the things we'll look forward to is, besides this student engagement indicator, we should have an English language proficiency indicator this following year. We will not have all the growth measures, because you have to have two years of academic achievement on the SBAC in order to have those growth majors. But we will on the English language proficiency because we had students who took it last year. Now, this year, we'll

be able to see are our kids making adequate growth in their English language development alongside their academic scores. So, thank you for sharing this.

Tammy: No problem.

Lorna: Any other public comment at this time? All right, thank you. And please pass along our congratulations to Heather. And at this time, we will adjourn our meeting. It is 6:44. Thank you, everybody, for your participation and hanging in with us tonight.

Tammy: Thank you for your patience. Bye.

Dachresha: Bye.

Dr. Bengochea: Bye.