

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 February 8, 2024 5:00 PM

Lorna: We'll begin the meeting at this time with roll call. This is Lorna Cervantes. Jamie Gonzalez?

Jamie: Present.

Lorna: Astrid Angulo?

Astrid: Present.

Lorna: Meli Pulido? Meli Pulido?

Female: They can't hear.

Lorna: Chief [inaudible 00:00:24], I see her online. Dachresha Harris?

Male: [inaudible 00:00:33]

Female: I saw Alee, but I don't know if I saw Dachresha.

Lorna: Alee Moore.

Female: There she is.

Female: There she is. Yeah.

Lorna: Yeah. Dachresha Harris is present. Alee Moore, present. And Alain Bengochea?

Alain: Present.

Lorna: Okay. At this time, all board members are present, and so we will move to the next item on our agenda, which is 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 access code number 2599 605 4045, followed by the pound sign. Is there any public comment at this time?

Female: No. We're not sure who the caller on is.

Lorna: We see that there's a caller online. Could you identify yourself, please?

Female: It looked like they're trying to talk for...

Male: [inaudible 00:01:57] turn green.

Female: Turn green. See, Alee's talking and we can't hear her either.

Female: Hold on. We're trying to...

Lorna: Yeah. We can see that you're talking Dachresha, but we can't hear what you're saying. But I think you're saying that that's you as the caller. Is that correct? No? Okay. Just guessing.

Male: [inaudible 00:02:27]

Female: [inaudible 00:02:31] Check the sound on the bottom right also.

Male: [inaudible 00:02:45] Is that the same sound [inaudible 00:02:51]?

Female: Okay. [inaudible 00:03:03]

Lorna: While we're waiting for the sound, why don't I recommend that if anyone didn't get a chance to look at the minutes for the meeting... Hopefully you all did ahead of time. But why don't you take a minute to review the minutes of our last meeting while we are waiting just a minute on the sound for online. There's no public comment in the room, but we're not sure who the caller is. So we wanna hold off for just a minute to see if that is somebody trying to call in for public comment.

Female: I can't get the sound to work.

Female: [inaudible 00:03:43]

Female: Okay. They can hear us but we can't hear them. Okay. They're rescuing. We're being rescued. I'm sorry. [inaudible 00:04:10]

Male: [inaudible 00:04:11]

Female: Can we try a different speaker other than the default? Like where the mute button is? That little arrow?

Male: Oh, yeah, I tried that.

Female: Did you try a different speaker?

Male: Yeah, it doesn't give another option for us. That's the microphone.

Female: Oh, that's the microphone.

Male: That's the microphone.

Female: Just joking.

Male: When you click "switch on," does it give you...

Female: Any options? [inaudible 00:05:07] call.

Female: This one is...

Female: The chat is available. Can...

Female: If they call back. I

Female: It would be miserable to try and do that that way.

Female: But they hung up.

Female: I wonder if [inaudible 00:05:23].

Lorna: For the record, I did miss one person as I was doing roll call. I did not call Nicole Thomas.

Female: I'll text her to see if it was her.

Lorna: We're going to check to see if she was the one who was the caller at this time. Is that who it was, Dachresha? Yes. So, Nicole Thomas was present as a caller. So, at this point in time then, we know that it was not a member of the public wishing to make comment, but it was board member, Nicole. So we can go ahead then to item D of part one. This is to approve our minutes from our last meeting. I hope you all had the opportunity to review the minutes from our last meeting ahead of time. I did note one correction that needs to be made before these minutes are posted if we could, Angela. And that is that throughout the discussion of the pay increases for staff, I noticed that multiple times instead of saying CCEA, it said CCDA, D like dog. So that does need to be corrected before we post these minutes. Were there any other corrections or additions that anybody saw to the minutes?

Female: Hi.

Female: Hi. Save us. [inaudible 00:06:53] They can hear us. We can't hear them.

Female: We can't hear them.

Female: [inaudible 00:07:01]

Lorna: I do not see anybody showing that there were any other corrections or additions to the minutes. If not, at this time, can we have a motion to approve the minutes as amended?

Jamie: Jamie Gonzalez for the record. I move that we approve the January 11, 2024 board meeting minutes as amended.

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

Male: [inaudible 00:07:37] abstaining because I wasn't there.

Lorna: Astrid, would you like to second?

Astrid: Okay.

Lorna: Astrid seconded that motion for us. So, at this time we can take a visual vote on that amendment to approve the minutes as amended. All those in favor?

Audience: Aye.

Lorna: Okay. That motion passes. Thank you.

Male: [inaudible 00:08:15]

Female: [inaudible 00:08:16]

Lorna: So, those of you who are online, so you know, we now have our sound echoing but I don't think we hear you. Would one of you guys speak for a second so we could check?

Female: Can you hear us now?

Lorna: Yes, we can.

Female: Yes. Yay.

Female: Lots of feedback.

Lorna: Are you still getting feedback?

Female: I hear lots of feedback.

Lorna: Okay, we're trying to fix that right now.

Female: It looks like we need to mute one of Angelo Rose's logins and I think if we mute one of those, it will help.

Female: Okay, that's done.

Female: Now, try to talk.

Lorna: Okay. Has the feedback reduced now for you?

Female: The echo is gone.

Lorna: The echo is gone in this room.

Female: [inaudible 00:09:14]

Male: Oh, they're both muted now.

Lorna: Okay. You muted both guys so we need to unmute one.

Female: [inaudible 00:09:21]

Male: [inaudible 00:09:30]

Female: [inaudible 00:09:32]

Lorna: Are you able to hear us now?

Female: [inaudible 00:09:41] weather because this is the internet version. WebEx [inaudible 00:09:48] had two videos.

Female: That's it.

Female: We gotta start doing this ahead [inaudible 00:09:52].

Female: [inaudible 00:09:54]

Female: Yeah. We gotta start doing that.

Lorna: So, I think as a rule moving forward, guys, if we could...

Female: No, just kidding. Do you need me to do it?

Lorna: This is Lorna Cervantes for the record. I just want to note that we're having technical difficulties with the online version. So we're gonna hold for just a minute while we get the rest of the group back into the meeting.

Female: [inaudible 00:10:37]

Female: Oh, they do?

Lorna: But they don't know that.

Female: Hopefully, they can.

Female: Well, because there are two instances there on your Webex.

Female: [inaudible 00:10:59]

Female: Can you hear us, Alee? Can you hear us?

Lorna: Yeah. Okay. Thank you.

Female: But we can't hear you.

Female: We can fix it. Go back to that CS. Dechresha or Alee, can you say something?

Alee: We're here.

Female: Are we echoing?

Alee: No.

Dechresha: It's much better.

Female: All right. So we got Kristen. We're just waiting on Meli.

Female: And then Nicole.

Lorna: And Nicole.

Female: Nicole is coming back. Did somebody text Meli?

Female: And Nicole you said?

Female: Yes. Thank you. [inaudible 00:12:09]

Lorna: We can go on. We've got enough people here to just move on?

Female: Well...

Lorna: We better wait.

Female: Well, Kristen's gotta do the financial so we can have the discussion about the teacher salaries. That's the most important thing we're doing today.

Lorna: Yeah. Exactly. Well, what I meant was how long we wait for those other two?

Female: [inaudible 00:12:53] what Dr. Porter. [inaudible 00:12:58]

Lorna: No, they didn't say anything because we couldn't hear them say anything. We did a hand vote, we did it. No, we don't need to restart because I said, I had them raise their hand they were here. I stated they were here. And then also, when we took the vote, I had them vote by hand. And then we reported that everyone had.

Female: Okay, maybe just review the minutes pretty thoroughly when they come out just because it's only gonna transcribe it. Just make sure it is an accurate depiction of what happened in the meeting.

Female: All right.

Lorna: All right. This is Lorna Cervantes again for the record. We do have pretty much all board members back in that are online at this time, and they are able to hear us and we're able to hear them. So we'll go ahead back in. For the record, Nicole Thomas was not able to yet to log back in. If she does, we will note that, but all other board members have logged back into the meeting and we're ready to move on at this time. Just as a recap, we did not have any public comment. And also, Nicole Thomas is back in the meeting now. I see her. She's logged on as a caller at this time and also we did approve the minutes as amended. So at this time, we will move to item number two. This is finance and a report by Kristen

Deeds [SP] from Ed Tech [SP] on the budget and the financial reports including the CSP grant. So Kristen, we will turn the floor to you at this time.

Kristen: Great. Thank you so much. Hello, everybody. This is Kristen Deeds for the record. Let me see if I can share my screen here. Apologies. It looks a little bit different right now. There we go. Okay. Hopefully, you can all see the financial presentation for December. Okay. So in these financial statements, we have the actual to date through December 31st in the updated forecast and we're currently forecasting...

Lorna: Kristen, would you hold just a second? It's not showing on our end. I'm not sure if everyone else is.

Female: Can you guys all see?

Lorna: No.

Kristen: Oh, interesting. Okay. It does say that it's sharing but let me stop share and see. I'll try it one more time. It looks like it is not sharing. I do see it sharing on my screen. But yeah, it just doesn't seem to be sharing. Would you like me to just go ahead and talk through it? Do you all have paper or electronic copies of it?

Lorna: We have a paper copy in the room and I think everyone online had access to an electronic copy as well.

Kristen: Okay. Very good. I will just go ahead and talk through it then. I am on slide four of the presentation. Included in the [inaudible 00:16:31] column is the current forecast. We're forecasting \$416,049 of net income at this point for the year. This is an increase from the board approved budget of \$369,000. The main changes, I'm moving to slide five now. The main changes were we did do some updating to the timing of the CLV grant.

I had some conversations with Amanda and we were able to look over the total amount of the grant, the components of the grant and the anticipated timing that would make the most sense for the school. So that did push some additional grant revenue into this fiscal year. So we've included that additional amount. There also was some staff turnover and we had a position that was unfilled that we removed from the forecast, which created some savings. And we did increase the enrollment from 140 to 143 and that is in line with actual enrollment. And your quarter two enrollment just came in from the state and it was at 143.5. So this forecast is in line with your actual average daily enrollment at this time. And we also received some additional nutrition funding under the supply chain assistance grant and some additional exceptional needs special ed funding that was not previously budgeted.

So those changes resulted in a nice increase in our bottom line, bringing us to \$416,000.

The next slide which is slide six includes all of our restricted grants. At this point, we have our largest grant is the CSP grant and all of our other grants are the titles one through four and the special ed and a couple of other one time grants. Those have all been included here and the school is spending down on those grants. Some of it is happening a little bit slower, a little bit slowly given that we're already halfway through the year, but we do not anticipate any issues with spending down all of these funds.

The next slide which is slide seven is a spotlight on the CSP grant since it's so large. It does show the total amount that has been spent to date through December, which was \$519,000. We have just over 31% of the grant remaining, about \$230,000. And I know that the plan is that it definitely should...there's no issue with it getting spent by the deadline. We anticipate there will be no problems there. The grant ends on July 31st.

In terms of cash flow that is on slide eight, we do project continued strong cash balances. We're projecting to end the year with over 170 days cash on hand, which is very strong.

This slide here also includes the total of three months of payroll and three months of expenses as those blue and purple lines just so you can see what those dollar amounts would be. So the school has sufficient funds for all of their operating expenses over the next more than three months at this point.

The next slide is the balance sheet on slide nine and this shows all of the assets and liabilities and the fund balance of the school. This is the government wide format. So it includes the deferred first asset on the balance sheet as an asset and we'll have some very interesting balances at the end this year when we have our year two audit, which I will be explaining when we get to that point. But overall cash balances of \$1.4 million, we had accounts receivable of just under \$128,000 and our total assets were just under \$2 million at the end of December.

The next slide, slide 10 is just a little bit of a visual on the timeline of the budget process because we are getting to that point now where we're looking at next year's budget. So a couple of things that are going to happen over the next few months, we're going through the process of collecting assumptions for next year at this time and we'll continue to do that through the next month or so. We will present to the board a draft of the budget at the... should be at the April meeting. And then that draft is a tentative budget that will go to the state and to SPCSA. And then for the next month or so after that, we'll continue to refine the assumptions and get updated information and then we will have a final budget for the board that will need to be approved in May and the beginning of June at the very latest and that needs to go to the state by June 8th. That is the deadline for the final budget. So we will have a lot of work to do and we'll be sharing drafts with you along the way over the next few months.

And beyond that, there are some exhibits with the detailed budget versus actuals for the school year to date. And for the annual forecast, we have the cash flow by month, and then at the very back, we have the check register for the month of December. Are there any questions on the December financial presentation?

Lorna: Are there any? I do not see any at this time? This is Lorna Cervantes. Thank you, Kristen for that presentation. And, it looks like we're on track with our budget at this time. We also ask, Kristen, while you're here and this is under Miriam as well, to bring back information for us regarding possible salary increases so that we could really have a good understanding of the salary increases over time and whether or not it would be fiscally responsible for the board to approve these salary increases as we spoke about at our last meeting and if we could support that over time. So, I will leave that to either Miriam or Kristen if you could speak to that at this time. I know that also in your backup documents, there was a document from Kristen called City of Las Vegas Strong Start Academy Elementary School multiyear projection with fiscal year '24 retro pay. So, that will help those of you online to know where we are.

Kristen: I don't know if Miriam would like to talk about it or would you like me to talk through the document?

Miriam: Please do.

Kristen: Okay. Sure this is Kristen Deeds for the record again. So the schedule that we prepared for this agenda item is a multiyear budget. Basically, what we did is we took that December forecast and we created a scenario where the retro pay was incorporated into the model. So if you look at that schedule on the left hand side is the fiscal year '23-'24 forecast with salary adjustments included.

So, rather than the forecasted net income that I just presented of \$416,000, this is now showing a net income forecasted of \$260,000, \$261,000. And then it plays out through the next five years. So you can see what that would do to your long-term [inaudible 00:24:25]. So you can see that every year it does look like it's affordable until we get to year six. Then we do start to see a deficit.

So there are a number of assumptions in here, of course, that could change. That's quite a ways away. But we just wanted to give you all kind of an overall visual of what this would do, you know, but in the longer term to your budget. So it does look like to me, it looks like it would be affordable for the school to do it.

Lorna: Thank you, Kristen. This is Lorna Cervantes. I do have one question. Do any of these assumptions include an increase in funding from the city of Las Vegas as discussed at our last meeting? My guess is no.

Kristen: This is only... Sorry about that. Kristen Deeds for the record. This only includes the grant funding that has been already agreed upon and is part of the schedule that we received from Amanda.

Lorna: Okay. Thank you. This is Lorna. I just want to remind everyone at our last meeting, there was discussion that the city may possibly be increasing the amount of grant or through an additional grant of about \$200,000 per year, but that won't be decided until at least their March City Council meeting. So this budget forecast does not rely on that additional \$200,000 per year funding for the school. It's what we have and know right now. And it's also without any increase in funding from the state, per pupil funding, things like that that are out of the ordinary like we had this past year. So I'll open the floor to discussion at this time. We had quite a while to think it through. Hopefully, you all took the time ahead of the meeting to take a look at these balance sheets that Kristen provided us. And so, please speak now and let us know your thoughts. Are we comfortable? Should we move ahead? Should we not move ahead at this time?

Jamie: It's Jamie Gonzalez for the record. I just had one question on the on the data. Kristen, on the operating income line that begins with year one of 260K, it remains pretty steady until you hit year five and six. As you said, year six, you go into a deficit. What precipitates or is there something in the numbers that precipitates the drop from year four to year five?

Kristen: Yeah. Kristen Deeds for the record. The main difference there is the city of Las Vegas grant funding partially goes away. So there are two components to the grant funding. One is the \$900,000 per year and the other is the additional operational grant funding and that additional operational grant funding goes away part way through year five.

Jamie: Thank you.

Lorna: This is Lorna. Are there other questions by other board members? I don't hear or see any at this time. One thing I'd like to have us consider as well as we're looking at this is many other schools and boards of schools have a group that works on fundraising on an annual basis where they seek additional grants, additional funding sources to help the school work through its funding. So, it's not unforeseeable that in the future, there might be a finance or even an outreach committee that would be focused on bringing in additional funds besides those grant funds from the city or the state funding to help to support and to grow the school in the future. So, that was one thought I've had over the last few weeks as I've been thinking about this and is it responsible of us to consider this at this time, is that that's a typical committee or typical operation of charter schools that so far we have not had to undertake it at Strong Start because we have had such strong support from the city as our, as a benefactor. So I'll just put that out there too. Is there further discussion? If no further discussion, is there a motion that anyone would like to put forward?

I know that at our last meeting, we discussed the fact that we felt we needed to be continue to be competitive with CCSD and the raises that teachers were receiving, that that is a retro-based raise. That's why we included retro as an option here. And we felt like it was necessary that if we did give a raise to teachers that it should be retro to the beginning of this school year. So I just wanted to remind you of that conversation in case you forgot it after you read the minutes.

Dachresha: Dachresha Harris for the record. I motion to approve the salary increases to include the retro for the current Strong Start Academy personnel.

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

Alain: I [inaudible 00:30:16].

Lorna: Okay. So it has been moved and seconded to approve the raises for staff at the school, including the retro pay. All those in favor?

Board Members: Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye.

Lorna: Are there any opposed? Okay. All voted in agreement and none opposed. So that motion passes. And so, Miriam, you can let the staff know to expect those raises for the coming school year and that it will be retro from the beginning of this year. And with that in mind, I hope that we can continue to retain the staff at the school and seek new staff members moving forward.

And just for the record, let me specifically state that what we agreed to was a 10% raise for the 2023-24 school year retro to the beginning of this '23-'24 school year with an additional 8% raise moving forward in the subsequent years. Yes. Okay. Got it straight. Thank you. I just wanted for the record to make sure that we were very specific in what that raise was.

Dechresha: Dechresha Harris for the record. When you say subsequent years, how many years did we agree on? Refresh my memory, please.

Lorna: One additional year. So, it's 10% this year, 8% next year and then we would look at it again moving forward.

Dechresha: Just making sure. Thanks.

Lorna: Thank you, Dachresha, for keeping us straight. Kristen does have her hand raised.

Kristen: Oh, thank you. I just had a clarifying question for [inaudible 00:32:16] for the record. I wanted to check in terms of the current forecast and whether the agenda is written in such a way that we could have a motion to approve the forecast with the salary adjustment as the approved amended budget? Do you know if that's something that can be done today?

Lorna: I don't think it was written in that way on the... This is Lorna. I don't think that it was written that way on the budget, sorry, on the agenda because it said report of what our budget was and then a discussion to approve salary increases for Strong Start, but it did not include approving an amended budget that included the raise. We can make sure that that's an item in our next meeting or do we need to prior to the next meeting, is that something we would need to do, Kristen? With deadlines for the state?

Kristen: I believe that it would be okay to do it at the next meeting as long as we let the authorizer know that that's the plan. Yes.

Lorna: Okay. Thank you for that.

Kristen: Thank you.

Lorna: All right, I don't see any other questions or comments at this time. So we'll move to item number 3A. This is a report by 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 we are continuing with our campaign of ads on Facebook and Google. At this time, we've not been made aware of any tabling events, but usually those start up like more in the spring. But we are on the lookout. So if any of you are aware of any tabling events that we can go to, please share. Our current enrollment is at 143 students. We seem to, you know, be between 143 and 145. We just had two more students enroll today, so we'll be back at 145. So those are the numbers we seem to vacillate between since the beginning of the year. As we discussed last meeting, open enrollment has ended, which means anyone that applies now, they basically have a seat. If we have a seat available, it's theirs. We are not going into lottery.

So thus far, we've had 71 applications. Eleven of those are ineligible because of age. Two have not responded. Fifty-eight have accepted the spots. Of those 58, 23 have already advanced through completing registration in Infinite Campus. And regarding our own existing students, at the same time, we opened up registration for them to register for next year. And so far, we have 23% of our existing students registered. We have a parent-teacher conference date coming up and teachers are gonna help remind parents to register because we do have a deadline. So obviously, we need to know how much room we have, how many available spots. So, we're gonna use the opportunity when we have parents on campus next week to remind them, have computers set up so they can register right then and there. And then hopefully, we'll have a more accurate count on which of our existing students are returning and know exactly how many available spots we have from first to fourth grade for next year.

Lorna: Okay. Thank you, Miriam. Are there any questions or comments for Miriam regarding this report? Seeing none, we'll move to item B. This is a discussion for possible action to adopt a policy for appealing a suspension or expulsion. This is in compliance with AB194. I see we need to table that till the next meeting. I do know that the policy has been worked on and so we will bring that to the next...

Miriam: Miriam Benitez for the record. So, I started a policy based on work that's already in our handbook and our restorative justice policy and in the original plan that was submitted by the city and then we added the missing pieces. Then I sent it to Colleen. Colleen redlined it I forwarded it to the policy committee. So, we're tabling it, I believe, so that the policy committee has a chance to review it. And we will discuss it next time after all the red lines have been cleared.

Lorna: Thank you for that, Miriam. Yes, we'll bring it to the next meeting policy committee. What we'd like to do is when these policies are ready to be adopted by the board, we'd like to have that final written policy brought to the board so that it's ready in your eyes for us to adopt it as a whole and put it into place. So that's how we're going to try to do this work moving forward. So we will table that item for our next meeting. Thank you.

Next is a report by the executive director regarding the middle of the year student achievement data to include Map and i-Ready. You all have a copy of this data in front of you or in your online materials.

Miriam: So we'll start with the i-Ready data and you could see that in reading and math, we've shown students tremendous gains. We've decreased our students that are performing one, two and three grade levels below and we've increased our students that are proficient or advanced. So, and when we look at our Map data on the other hand, on the back, we didn't show...and this is consistent with what we saw last year as well.

And so last year, when we were getting this Map data, we weren't quite sure why. The teachers are working hard, the students are working hard. So we did end up contracting with a data specialist so she can help us kind of desegregate this data and look what we're doing and why aren't we showing the same growth on both assessments. They're supposed to be measuring pretty much the same thing.

And what the data specialists have told us is that while all assessments are valuable and we can gain information from any assessment, the inconsistencies that there are with Map data across not just our school, but across the state and the nation is because Map data, the last time it was normed was in 2020, so in the middle of COVID. So, I had to take notes to make sure I understood this. So we're comparing growth patterns for our kids today to the achievement from a different era, to before COVID. So we're not really measuring apples to apples anymore. And so that's why we keep seeing these inconsistencies in our Map data. So they advise us just to keep focused on our i-Ready data. They say it's much more reliable because it's been normed this year. It's normed every year. So that's the data that... We can use Map data to look at perhaps where our kids are deficient. But when we're measuring growth, we're comparing apples to apples because i-Ready has been normed in 2023.

Lorna: This is Lorna. Thank you for that. That helps, Miriam, to know that when the last norming was because Map is based on the national trends. So is i-Ready. Also, I know that i-Ready is really much more highly correlated data to [inaudible 00:41:35] test that our students in third grade and up take every year. So if we're seeing tremendous growth on i-Ready, we should be able to see that same type of

performance when our kids in third grade and above begin taking their [inaudible 00:41:49]. So, this is positive growth and we appreciate you sharing it.

Does anybody have a question for Miriam with regard to this academic data? No, I don't see any. All right. Thank you so much, Miriam.

Alain: I have a question about other data, related to this though. So has there been any consideration of Spanish assessments?

Miriam: Oh. We have... Miriam Benitez for the record. We started our students at the beginning of the year in the fall. We gave every student LAS Links in Spanish. So we're waiting till the end of the year obviously. And then, we're gonna give them LAS Links, the form B, to show growth. Then moving forward, we're only gonna be testing at the end of the year. So kindergarteners will get both so we have baseline. And then we're gonna giving that LAS Links at the end of the year to show growth, year to year. So yes, thank you for that. We started that. We were waiting for the [inaudible 00:42:55] that we were promised it would be ready this fall. We waited all last year for it. It never came. So we, that's when we decided this year to move on to LAS Links.

Lorna: Miriam, thank you for that. This is Lorna and that makes a lot of sense. So we will expect to see a report on both English and Spanish assessments at our June meeting or at our summer retreat when we come back together as a board at that time. And it only makes sense to give the LAS Links two times a year at the beginning and then again at the end of the year because it is not the same type of test as i-Ready where it's a progress monitoring tool, but rather it's more of a summit of assessment, meaning you give it at the end of learning. So, we appreciate that information from you today. All right. And thank you, Alain, for continuing to remind us that we have asked for Spanish assessments on the children as well.

All right, at this time, we can move on to the governance section of our agenda and these are regarding steps or information from our committees. I can say with regard to the Executive Director evaluation, Jamie and I have been working with Miriam this past month. She's gathering any type of data she has or other artifacts she has for where she is and her goals at this time this year. By the next meeting, we will return to you with kind of a mid-year report on whether or not she's on track to meet those goals as well as we should have at that time, the surveys that we would like to give to staff members and parents, that will be used on that evaluation as well. Anything you need to add, Jamie?

Jamie: Just I think we need to have a meeting before the next board meeting. We will on just that there. I discovered a lot of stuff on board on track has plenty of information on this.

Lorna: Yes, we will meet again before the next meeting. This last month went too fast. All right. Thank you, Jamie. And policy review committee, Alain, you and Nicole and Alee, correct, were working on this committee? Go ahead.

Alain: Yes. So, I guess I'll speak on behalf of our team. So, yeah. Nicole Thompson took the lead on the ready by grade three policy and she began to draft something that I guess I just shared today. So I don't know if you want to talk about that today. It's still a work in progress.

Lorna: So, you could just let us know it's a work in progress. That's fine.

Alain: Yeah. A work in progress at this time. So, I think I personally need clarification. So, this read by grade three policy is for home exempt. Is it for families or is it for staff? Is it part of the handbook?

Lorna: This is Lorna. So, it's really required by law to have a policy of the board for read by grade three, but also based on the law, but also then it would be part of the staff handbook that they know what's expected of them. And then also, it's always good with any of our policies to make sure that parents are aware of what the policies are and what their role is in that. So, for example, with the read by grade three, parents have to be notified if their child is reading below grade level, and if they're significantly below grade level, and then they also have to be given a plan that says what is it that the school will be doing to help their child to then improve or to move toward grade level? So that's just an example of the types of things that would be in that policy that we would want to make sure parents understood.

Alain: Okay, so the policies have to be written in a way that's uniform across...so it's understandable across different stakeholders.

Lorna: Either that or... This is Lorna again. What we do, sometimes there's the board policy that's in more legal or technical terms. And then, for parents, sometimes what we'll do is we'll help maybe with an interpretation of what that policy is so that they can better understand exactly what that means to them. So you can refer to the board policy but then give it to them in more parent friendly language.

Alain: Got it. Okay. Thank you.

Lorna: You're welcome. Thank you, Alain. And that's true of any of the policies. So I know you were working on read by grade three. Miriam already reported to us that you're gonna be bringing back the appeal for suspension and expulsion policy. Are there any other policies you're working on?

Alain: We have four.

Lorna: Okay. Go ahead.

Alain: There's a retention policy. The expulsion and suspension and enrollment and attendance. Is that correct? Enrollment and attendance?

Lorna: That was one of the ones that we talked about at the board retreat last year that Colleen let us know that that was an expectation that we have a policy with regard your kids have to come to school, basically.

Alain: Sorry to interrupt. So, Bengochea. So, it's an attendance policy. It's not an enrollment policy, so it's not to get them enrolled. Right?

Lorna: Right.

Alain: Or should we have both, I guess?

Lorna: You know what? The committee could discuss if we think that it needs to be both or not. And we can also seek any kind of legal help we need along the way as we're going, but it was supposed to be definitely, there should be an attendance policy and I think the enrollment policies are already included.

Alain: Yeah. The lottery.

Lorna: Yeah, we've already got our lottery process and those things are already adopted by the board.

Alain: Okay.

Lorna: I think what it is too is it was mentioned, they have to have a yearly review. So we just yearly, we have to review the policies by this committee as well. Does that make sense?

Alain: Yep.

Lorna: Thank you. And as mentioned earlier, what we hope is that when any of the policies or other things are brought forward that when they come to the whole board, that they're really pretty well ready that we should be able to adopt them. Or if we have feedback to take back, maybe for one correction or one edit as we did with the board member agreement that we did last time, then that way it becomes public at that time. All right. Thank you for that.

Community outreach. I know Meli, you said you were going to start thinking about this a little bit. Have you had time or would you like to maybe kind of bring that back to us at the next meeting?

Meli: Yeah, if you allow me some time, I know you and I just talked about it, what, two weeks ago. I would love to be able to assist with the community outreach, but I would need a little more time to discuss with you the scope and what you had in mind with that.

Lorna: This is Lorna. That would be just fine and I'm not sure that I had anything specific in mind. It was one of the committees that we talked about at the board retreat being maybe that need to reach out to the community, whether that means maybe working with parental engagement. So maybe Astrid would want to be a part of that work too or if it could be, how are we reaching out to the community to let them know that we're here in a way that they might want to support this school. So it could be maybe either of those things. And so we've kind of let you lead the vision on that, but I'm available if you want to reach out to me anytime between the next meeting, here and the next meeting. I'd be happy to talk it through a little bit with you.

Meli: Meli Pulido. Yes, I would love that and I should have something drafted for the next meeting.

Lorna: Perfect. Thank you very much. All right, I also had included on here maybe everyone could start thinking about a board meeting calendar. If somebody wanted to think about that, maybe to support Miriam and I know that's one of the documents we have to turn in every year. But start thinking about if you would like to support in that way with creating our calendar for next year and what that could look like. I don't know it has to be very difficult, but more than just taking out a calendar and saying what dates would fall on the second Thursday of every month if that's when we're going to continue and maybe start throwing out dates for a summer retreat. So is there anybody who'd like to kind of take a lead on that? This is Lorna. I don't see any hands at this time. So what I will do is just keep it here and we will bring it back again at our next meeting.

Jamie: Jamie Gonzalez on the record. Maybe in bringing it back for the next meeting, if we have a statement as to what the assignment is, what...just for that added clarification and we can volunteer or make a decision at that time.

Lorna: That sounds perfect. We'll do that. All right. Thank you, Jamie. All right. Well, with that in mind, I think is that the end? Any other committee reports at this time? We are going to make committee reports a standing item on our agendas. Not all committees will necessarily have a report at every single meeting. So, but I want to leave it here so that if you do have a report, then you have the opportunity to bring that report forward.

Now, if we have policies that are ready to adopt, we do need to list those policies as an agenda item for adoption and vote. But if it's just a discussion of where we are in the process or you want to get some feedback from the group, then we just leave it under this area. Or say if we have something ready to adopt with the evaluation, we would list it as a separate item. Alain?

Alain: So do we send...would the policy committee send the policy to Colleen for review prior to bringing it, putting it on the agenda? Would that be [inaudible 00:53:18]?

Colleen: Yeah. Colleen Macari [SP], board counsel. If you send it to me, I can just look it over, make sure that there's nothing, you know, we're missing or that's conflicting with something else we already have. And probably send it to me and Miriam at the same time and then we can clean it up and have it ready.

Alain: Okay. Thank you.

Lorna: Thank you for that, Alain, and thank you, Colleen. All right. At this time, then, we will move to item number five on our agenda which is a facilities report from Angela Rose from the city of Las Vegas regarding the status of renovations and new construction at Strong Start Academy.

Angela: Lots of repeat from last meeting, so it's gonna be great. As far as renovations go, we are still on track to finish the church floor building project end of February. We were under a like, five to seven days stucco work on the outside of the building. The rain has significantly delayed that for a couple of days, but working on making sure that stays on track. Just a couple more inside tests to get done, then our City of Las Vegas team will take over for finishing touches, but we're still expecting end of February to have that project finished, which is gonna be great. The tenant improvements on the second floor. Those are still on track. They are currently out to bid. The project went out to bid two weeks ago and so it takes about 30 days to be out to bid for city processes once we can secure an award. We are slated to begin that work the day after school releases. The teachers on the second floor will clear the rooms on the last day of school and we'll be ready to start working the next day after that. We have a very short window of time over the summer to be working on that project and everybody is aware that the time constraints are imperative. We meet those deadlines or we will not be able to open on schedule.

We also have been working on the design for the third building. This one is where the pastor house currently is. Once we can properly open the church building with the new flooring, relocate Safe Key and some of the things that are happening at the old pastor house right now, once to relocate everything out of that building and over to the church building, we'll then begin getting a permit to demo that building. We are hoping that that will be smooth. I'm in the design meetings weekly and those, we're on track. We have to submit all of our information to the planning commission next Tuesday. We have a presentation next week. We don't anticipate any hiccups. It's a planning commission meeting for the city. They will probably ask about parking. So I'm working with our parking enforcement and public works and streets team to look at all available options of parking for the '24-'25 school year. Right now

we're like, just barely making it with parking and we still have to look at the number of spaces for staff. So, that's the current work that we're doing for the planning commission meeting. End of April is when all of our documents are due from the design team to the city. So that's still a slow process and a little bit of ways away, but I wanted to update you on that third building.

[inaudible 00:56:50] new dates. I think that covers the main things for the three projects.

We did get approval from the Historic Preservation Committee to move forward with the design for the third building and we had to go to that commission because of where the school sits. It is not a historic building, but it's in a historic district. So there are certain things that we have to abide by and not slide past that commission. So we feel like we are on track at this point. But I think if you have any questions, if there's any facility or renovation questions from the group?

Lorna: Are there any questions from the group? I don't see any at this time. This is Lorna. So we will move on to the second part of facilities which is a report by the City of Las Vegas regarding the status of security review at Strong Start Academy. So, Angela for that.

Angela: Angela Rose for the record. We are still in the same status of last month's report out, but we are getting closer to knowing a timeline of when they're going to approve those expanded requests. We're being told spring which could be March, April, May. Amanda, our administrative officer, she has started scheduling budget meetings for the next couple of weeks. So we're hoping for a mid-March date. I hope to be able to report out at the next board meeting when we'll finally get those approvals. We've been told that it looks good for our request. So we're hopeful. Should there not be an approval of the extended request for the security improvements then we will be seeking external funding through other pots of money to the city and/or grant funding.

So we still have it on our radar and a top priority to get that done. We're just hoping that we can use the current funding that we have, ARPA dollars, unrestricted funding that we've got in different sections of our funding to be able to do that. So we're hopeful to have more solid deadlines by next board meeting.

Lorna: Thank you, Angela. Are there any questions for Angela with regard to the security updates? Okay. Seeing none, we want to thank you for being here and thank you for your support and continuing to drive these issues forward. I know it's important to all of us. It's important to you that we have a safe environment for our children to learn in and our teachers to teach in. So thank you.

All right. At this time, we'll move to item number six on the agenda, which is public comment. During this portion of the agenda, you 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, 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 be given by calling 1-415-655-0001 and entering access code number 2599 605 4045, followed by the pound sign. Is there any public comment? This is Lorna, I would just like to just ask maybe as we continue moving forward if members are using the online format for the meetings, if we could and you're probably already doing this, but if you guys can be online like five to 10 minutes before we're supposed to start and then we'll turn on the online five to 10 minutes before the

meeting is supposed to start so we can make sure we can all hear each other and all we have to do is push record.

Hopefully, that'll stop any of the technical problems we've had tonight and us having to kind of break in the middle of the meeting. Is that okay with everybody if we try that? I see heads shaking yes. Okay. Let's try that then moving forward. Yes, hi.

Nicole: Nicole Thompson for the record.

Lorna: Go ahead, Nicole.

Nicole: I don't know if you guys can hear me. I was having a problem joining Webex tonight. I'm not quite sure what the issue was. I've never had a problem joining it online, so I'm not sure if anyone else had a problem with that as well.

Lorna: This is Lorna. The others all seemed to get on in Webex, but I know Alain had the same problem last month. But you were able to participate via phone, correct, Nicole? We had you on throughout the meeting.

Nicole: Yes, [inaudible 01:01:18].

Lorna: Okay. Thank you, Nicole. We'll continue to do our best to make sure it's available to you. Did you have another comment?

Nicole: No, thank you.

Lorna: All right. Thank you. All right. So with that, I see no other public comment. So we'll adjourn the meeting at this time. It is 6:04 p.m. Thank you everybody and have a good evening.

Male: Thank you. [inaudible 01:01:48]

Male: Thank you. You too.

Female: You said she needed three years in CC as a teacher.

Female: Yeah.

Male: Is that what they told her?

Female: Yeah, they told me she had to pay for her masters if she left, the whole thing. So she said, [inaudible 01:02:01]. So this was year three, I believe.