



*Draft to approve*

**ALBANY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday, September 12, 2023**

1000 San Pablo Avenue, Albany, CA 94706

Closed Session: 6:15PM | Open Session: 7:00PM

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**CLOSED SESSION:**

**1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 6:16pm.

**Present:** Trustee Ron Rosenbaum, Trustee Sadia Khan, Trustee Becky Hopwood, President Veronica Davidson, Superintendent Frank Wells, Ed.D.; Vice President Melissa Boyd, Esq. arrived late

**Staff:** Marina Gonzalez, Chief Human Resources Officer

**2. DISCLOSURE OF ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION / ADJOURN TO  
CLOSED SESSION**

There were no public comments. The Board adjourned to Closed Session.

**2-A.** Superintendent's Evaluation (2023-24 Goals & Objectives)

**2-B.** Personnel Matters

**3. ADJOURNMENT OF CLOSED SESSION at 6:55pm**

**OPEN SESSION:**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:02pm

**ROLL CALL:**

**Present:** Student Trustee Ayush Deodhar, Student Trustee Yunelly Garcia-Bustamante, Trustee Ron Rosenbaum, Trustee Sadia Khan, Trustee Becky Hopwood, Vice President Melissa Boyd, Esq., President Veronica Davidson, Superintendent Frank Wells, Ed.D.

**District Staff:** Jackie Kim, Chief Business Official; Anne Shin, Ed.D; Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, Deb Brill, Executive Director of Student Services; Brian Biggs, Ed.D., Senior Director of Special Education; Marina Gonzalez, Chief Human Resources Officer; Michelle Sinclair, Senior Director Professional Development; Julie Sen, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

## **2. READING OF AUSD MISSION VISION STATEMENT & MEETING NORMS**

Student Board Members read these out loud.

## **3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

President Davidson led in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **4. REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN IN CLOSED SESSION**

President Davidson reported that the Board approved the District Goals and Objectives for 2023-2024 school year.

## **5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Trustee Ron Rosenbaum requested to move item 10-B to Review and Discussion as it was requested at the last Board meeting. He would like the Board to have an opportunity to discuss this further.

**Motion:** Trustee Rosenbaum made a motion to approve the Agenda of September 12, 2023 with item *10-B Independent Contractor Services Agreement Between Albany Unified School District and the Los Angeles County Office of Education for the TK5 Grade Literacy Professional Development Program: Getting Reading Right* moved to Review and Discussion (item 9-B on the agenda). The motion was seconded by Trustee Hopwood. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

## **6. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

The Board heard public comments on matters not on the agenda (2 minutes each):

- 1) Chris Knight, Albany Teachers Association (ATA) representative, topic: housing in Albany; then he introduced other ATA representatives to speak to the Board regarding their ongoing negotiations.
- 2) Christian Feuerstraeter, Elementary teacher, read a statement representing ATA:  
*My name is Christin Feuerstraeter and I am a second grade teacher at Cornell Elementary. I have taught in Albany for 26 years and have always been very grateful to work with such dedicated colleagues and such a supportive community. I am here tonight to express my concerns regarding our ever increasing class sizes.*

*Sadly, it was about ten years ago that I stood before a different superintendent and school board in this same boardroom packed with teachers and parents outraged that Albany was packing 26 children into kindergarten classrooms while our neighbors in Berkeley had a cap on class sizes. As educators and proponents of education, we all knew that children's emotional and academic needs can not be met in such large classes. At that time the board was quick to act and make sure our class sizes were reduced, understanding that families came to Albany because of its great schools. Our district chose to reduce class sizes and maintain its reputation for being able to provide its students with some of the best education in the area.*

*After COVID, I thought packing 26 children into our 2nd grade classrooms was a short term decision due to the upheaval of COVID. However, the trend seems to be continuing. This year the district is once again starting the year with 24-25 students in kindergarten through 3rd grade, and based on experience the numbers are more than likely to increase as the year goes on.*

*During the past few years, I have also sat through many meetings addressing the needs of our most disadvantaged students and how we can provide equity to all our students. The irony is that small class sizes are exactly how to offer equity to our most disadvantaged students. Teachers simply cannot meet the demands of all students with large classes.*

*So, I am asking the board once again, to please reduce our class sizes and keep them low, so that all children in Albany and future generations have the opportunity to receive the excellent education that Albany prides itself on. Thank you for taking the time to listen to our concerns, and I hope you can find a permanent solution to large class sizes.*

3) Sara Backowski, teacher, represented ATA, read a statement:

*My name is Sara Backowski and I am a 6th grade teacher at Albany Middle School. I'm here to speak to you tonight about class size reduction.*

*Currently, our 6th grade classes have anywhere between 28 and 30 students in them. There are many challenges when we have this many students in a classroom. One challenge is the increase of student needs and being effective in meeting those needs. We recognize that the opportunity gap has become an issue in our classrooms, and even more so since at-home learning during the pandemic. Having a large number of students only magnifies this gap. We simply can not meet all students where they are and do our part to reduce the opportunity gap. It's ineffective to have large class sizes.*

*With smaller class sizes, we as 6th grade teachers can have a greater impact on a student's learning. One of the ways we can do this is by collaborating with our staff who support students in positions outside of the general education classroom. Collaboration with our Special Education and Counseling Department will further support our students with IEPs and 504s. Collaboration with our Cobra Study and Cobra Tutoring Teacher will impact our general education students as those students learn to navigate their time management skills and daily assignments. Collaboration with our mental health and counseling departments ensures that we can approach our most fragile students with great care and sensitivity. This type of thoughtful and intentional collaboration takes much time and strategizing to meet our students' needs. We can do this sort of work when we have fewer students in our classes.*

*One aspect that is very special about 6th grade is that it is a student's first year of middle school, a major transition year in the life of an Albany student. Getting all students and families to buy into all of the "new" school systems and expectations takes repeated teaching, communication, and patience. Onboarding students and families is a priority for 6th grade teachers that impacts all students and is most effective when class sizes are smaller.*

*These are just a couple of ways smaller class sizes will positively impact 6th grade and beyond. Feel free to chat further with me or any of my 6th grade colleagues about the benefits of smaller class sizes. Thank you.*

- 4) Ben Richeda, represented ATA to ask for several needs in the Special Education Department in the negotiation
- 5) Randolph Martinez, parent; topic: requested that the use of the term "Latinx" in Albany Unified School District be removed in communication and to include "Latinos" when addressing masses; Dr. Wells asked Mr. Martinez for clarification on what he wants AUSD to use "Latino/Latinx" or "Latino and Latinx." Student Trustee Garcia-Bustamante asked for further clarification and if the term "Latine" works better? Mr. Martinez said most preferred to be called "Latinos."
- 6) Oscar, a student of Cornell Chinese school (3rd grader); asked for Chinese school to be expanded to 4-5th grade at Cornell and stated that if it could be expanded he would be very happy..
- 7) Scarlett Zuo, parent: asked to expand the Chinese School program at Cornell. She submitted a petition/proposal for Enhancing the Cornell Chinese Program was submitted (see attached at end of Minutes)
- 8) Diana Wong, parent: shared her family's story related to the Chinese School Program at Cornell and stated her support for the expansion of this program
- 9) Hui Chang, parent of a 2nd grader at Cornell, in support of expanding the Chinese School program at Cornell. He stated that the Ocean View Elementary Chinese School program goes through 5th grade, so Cornell should as well.  
Superintendent Wells responded to this and stated that Staff will review all language programs, not just the Chinese Program but the Spanish Program as well.
- 10) Aaron Webber (via zoom), parent of Cornell; asked when the 2024-2025 school year will begin? Superintendent Wells stated that this is part of negotiations with our bargaining units but hopes to have this ready before winter break.
- 11) Nery Castillo-McIntyre (via zoom), parent; stated support of the Chinese School expansion at Cornell; stated support of ATA's negotiations request for planning time for Special Education department, and increase in compensation for teachers

## **7. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT CALENDAR**

### **7-A. Board of Education Meeting Minutes: August 29, 2023**

The Board requested the following edits to the Minutes on pages 6 and 7:

#### **Page 6: CHANGES TO CONSENT CALENDAR:**

Trustee Rosenbaum referenced the Board Governance Handbook, Board Policies 3100, 3312, and 3314, and stated that all contracts commented that the Consent Calendar should be used to expedite the handling of routine business. Only contracts that are routine, standard, and renewed should be on the Consent Calendar, and items that are not recurring, ~~routine, and non~~-controversial, and/or first time contracts should not be listed under Consent.

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**Page 7:**

**8-I. Independent Contractor Services Agreement Between Albany Unified School District and Los Angeles County Office of Education for the TK-5 Literacy Professional Development Program, *Getting Reading Right***

**Motion:** to table this item and bring the contract back at a future meeting for review and discussion ~~action~~ by Trustee Rosenbaum ~~and discuss~~; seconded by Trustee Hopwood.

**7-B. Personnel Report**

**7-C. Job Description: Wellness Specialist**

**7-B. Personnel Report**

**7-C. Job Description: Wellness Specialist**

**7-D. Independent Contractor Services Agreement Between Albany Unified School District and 10 Points, Inc.**

**7-E. Master Contract between Albany Unified School District and Every Special Child  
Recommendation: Ratify the Master Contract with Every Special Child**

**7-F. Independent Contractor Services Agreement between Albany Unified School District and Discovery Education Specialists**

**7-G. Resolution No. 2023-24-02: The Adoption of Annual Appropriations Limits (Gann Limit)**

**7-H. Independent Contractor Services Agreement Between Albany Unified School District and AAA Business Solutions**

**7-I. Independent Contractor Services Agreement Between Albany Unified School District and NV Construction, LLC for Construction Services at 1216 Solano Avenue**

**7-J. Independent Contractor Services Agreement Between Albany Unified School District and Southern Energy Services Inc.**

## **7-K. Amendment #1 to the LeaseLeaseback Agreement with Marina Mechanical for the Cornell HVAC Improvement Project**

## **7-L. Independent Contractor Services Agreement Between Albany Unified School District and AquaSource**

### **DISCUSSION ON CONSENT CALENDAR:**

Trustee Rosenbaum requested more information on item **7-C. Job Description: Wellness Specialist:** He asked what is the need and where will this position be filled. Chief Human Resources Officer Marina Gonzalez responded to this and stated the Albany Middle School S3 Space was previously staffed with a Wellness Coordinator who has been relocated to the high school, and this position will fill that role at the middle school. This Wellness Specialist position is replacing that Student Support Coordinator position with a bit of an adjustment, since at the June 28, 2023 Board meeting, a Student Support Coordinator position was reduced FTE due to grant funding.

**MOTION:** Motion to approve the Consent Calendar by Trustee Rosenbaum. Seconded by Trustee Hopwood. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

## **8. STUDENT BOARD MEMBERS REPORTS**

The Student Board Members Ayush Deodhar and Yunelly Garcia-Bustamante reported on the following:

### **Student Advocacy Committee (SAC)**

- Held their first official Non-Leadership Student Advocacy Committee where they discussed the following:
  - student survey results that were sent out to high school students last year and the year before
  - improving active-shooter preparedness in the high school
  - improving bathroom cleanliness and increasing supplies at the high school
  - Junior SAC at the Middle School; they tried to get this started last year but it did not take off, so they are working towards that this year as their main priority

### **Albany High School**

- Tomorrow is back to school night! Come to the highschool between 7 and 9pm.
- Financial Aid Night is Oct 25th from 7-8:30 pm via Zoom

### **Albany Middle School**

- 2nd Annual Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration on Saturday Sept 16th in AMS courtyard from 2:30pm to 6:30pm

## **9. REVIEW AND DISCUSSION**

### **9-A. Agreement with TeamCivX, LLC. for Parcel Tax Consulting Services (40 mins)**

Dr. Wells acknowledged and thanked Trustee Rosenbaum for requesting to move this item to a discussion item.

Jackie Kim, Chief Business Official, presented this to the Board. The item itself is for a contract for consulting services; however, an informative discussion with the Board on the parcel tax.

Ms. Kim reviewed the Parcel Tax presentation in the agenda packet.

Superintendent Wells reviewed the education goals for parcel tax revenue in the presentation. He stated that teachers' salaries are among the lowest in Alameda County as compared to other districts, and in order to recruit and retain top notch teachers and staff, and to be competitive, salaries need to be increased to at least the average rates. Additionally, maintaining and expanding critical programs for all students requires more revenue. The District cannot do these things without additional resources, which is why there is a need for a parcel tax that would benefit the students and entire AUSD community.

Ms. Kim continued the presentation. She stated that the contract with the TeamCivX does not commit Albany to place any parcel tax on the ballot. Should the Board approve the contract at the next board meeting (September 26), the following tentative timeline could look like this:

- Contract approved with TeamCivX for polling: **September 26, 2023**
- Regular Board meeting: Discussion for any additional questions: **October 10, 2023**
- Regular Board meeting: Consultant report of survey results, review and discussion of parcel tax exemptions: **October 24, 2023**
- Board meeting: Board discusses placing a parcel tax measure on a 2024 ballot: **October 24, 2023**
- Regular Board meeting: Board votes to place parcel tax measure on a 2024 ballot: **November 14, 2023**
- Deadline to submit ballot language for March 2024 election: **December 6, 2023**
- Election date: **March 5, 2024**

CBO Kim stressed that if the Board approves a parcel tax and it is placed on the March 2024 election ballot, funds would come to AUSD in December 2024. If the deadline for the March ballot is missed and it gets placed on the November 2024 ballot, then funds will not be available to AUSD until December 2025. Millions of dollars would not be available for an entire year.

Trustee Hopwood stated that although this presentation shows a projected decrease in enrollment, Albany currently has an increased number of students enrolled. She would like to revisit the conversation about enrollment at a future meeting. Trustee Hopwood stated for the record that there was a recent decision in a San Francisco Appeals Court about Alameda Unified School District. Parcel taxes don't typically depend on property size and after 15 years of litigation, they were successful in having that overturned. Is this something that Team CivX can explore - it seems Albany USD may not be restricted and there may be additional revenue to gain. Chief Business Official Jackie Kim stated that Team CivX can explore that. Team CivX worked with Albany USD for the last parcel tax Measure B and our Bond. They have also worked with Berkeley Unified School District and Alameda Unified School District. The Citizen's Bond Oversight Committee will be involved in the process as they were in 2020. The Budget Advisory Committee will also have opportunities to discuss this.

Trustee Rosenbaum stated that it is important that the District engage the public in as many places as possible to explain why AUSD is doing this so quickly, and to explain that it would be a split tax so that a lot of the new income would come from corporations instead of individual homeowners.

Trustee Hopwood stated that, given that a parcel tax proposed by a community member only needs a simple majority to pass, whereas a School Board proposed parcel tax needs a two-thirds majority, does it have to be the School Board to propose this? Superintendent Wells stated that at the next Board meeting on September 26th, an expert on this, along with our attorney will be available to address that question and any others.

No public comments. The Board reviewed and discussed parcel taxes and the need for it in Albany. The agreement with TeamCivX, LLC will come back to the Board at the September 26, 2023 meeting for approval.

**9-B.** *(moved from 10-B on the agenda)*

**Independent Contractor Services Agreement Between Albany Unified School District and the Los Angeles County Office of Education for the TK5 Grade Literacy Professional Development Program: *Getting Reading Right***

Michelle Sinclair, Senior Director of Professional Development and Assessment, reviewed the presentation on TK-5th Grade Literacy Professional Development Program: *Getting Reading Right*. The Board discussed the adopted and supplemental curriculum, FastBridget assessments, different modalities of learning, and professional development in Albany USD. **To listen to the presentation and discussion:** <https://youtu.be/1V5FJWkZMCU?t=4057>

No Public Comments. Trustee Khan asked if the Board could move this back to a Review and Action item to approve the contract, since training is already in place, and the next session will take place before the next Board meeting on September 26, 2023. A formal motion was made for this.

**MOTION:** Trustee Khan moved to move this item back to a Review and Action item as it was originally listed on the agenda (10-B). The motion was seconded by Trustee Rosenbaum. A roll call vote was taken and all voted in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

**MOTION:** Trustee Hopwood moved to approve the Independent Contractor Services Agreement Between Albany Unified School District and the Los Angeles County Office of Education for the TK5 Grade Literacy Professional Development Program: *Getting Reading Right*  
Second by Trustee Khan. A roll call vote was taken and all voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

## **10. REVIEW AND ACTION**



## **10-A. 2022-2023 Unaudited Actuals Financial Report**

Chief Business Official Jackie Kim presented this annual report and reviewed the presentation in the agenda packet. This report includes actual numbers, so there will not be any changes.

The Board discussed committed funds that were released, reserves for the future, decline in enrollment, Our Ending Fund Balance is \$3.9Million, which is 6.4%. We must have a minimum 3% in reserves for 2023-24, 2024-25, and 2025-26. **Chief Business Official Kim explained that the dramatic decline in the last two years** (between 2021-22 and 2022-23) was due to personnel expenses (85% of budget is personnel; 15% is for other expenses that have increased due to inflation (example: gas and insurance). She stated that the 2022-23 deficit of \$2.8 million in the General Fund does not include any contributions to Albany Children's Center and the Albany Aquatic Center, otherwise that deficit could have been a lot more (over \$3M). It is important to make every effort to not contribute any funds to these programs in the future to avoid further deficits. Additionally, Health and Welfare benefits increased 11.78% in 2023-24. Due to the COVID pandemic, support in mental health services has been increased, and since the pandemic one-time funding is gone, those services are being paid for with the General Fund.

No public comments.

**Motion:** Trustee Khan moved to **approve and accept the 2022-23 Unaudited Actuals Financial Report**. Motion seconded by Trustee Ron Rosenbaum. All voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

## **10-B. Independent Contractor Services Agreement Between Albany Unified School District and the Los Angeles County Office of Education for the TK5 Grade Literacy Professional Development Program: *Getting Reading Right***

This was moved to 9-B on the agenda for discussion, and then back to review and action. See above.

**MOTION:** Trustee Hopwood moved to approve the Independent Contractor Services Agreement Between Albany Unified School District and the Los Angeles County Office of Education for the TK5 Grade Literacy Professional Development Program: *Getting Reading Right*  
Second by Trustee Khan. A roll call vote was taken and all voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

## **12. SUPERINTENDENT AND BOARD MEMBERS REPORTS**

### **Superintendent Frank Wells:**

- In July he traveled to Houston, Texas for a conference where he met U.S. Navy Captain/NASA Astronaut Victor Glover, Jr., who is originally from California. Mr. Glover agreed to visit Albany Unified School District in the future to speak to students.

- Last weekend (September 8-9, 2023), Dr. Wells spoke at the CAAASA conference and met with State Superintendent of Schools, Tony Thurmond, and was able to discuss some issues and initiatives with him, including funding for mental health.
- Golden Gate Fields race track in Albany that will be closing at the end of this year. He suggested that AUSD needs to be involved with conversations with developers and the City; if they are planning to build high-rise apartments/condos there, perhaps a new school could also be built. They also want to discuss teacher housing. There is a need to re-establish 2x2x2 meetings with the City of Albany, UC Berkeley, and AUSD to discuss these issues.

**Vice President Melissa Boyd:** Albany Middle School PTA met for the first time this year - it was extremely well-attended. There is a push to join PTA; they have a lot of interesting parent education nights planned and student activities planned.

**Trustee Becky Hopwood:** Tomorrow, September 13th from 6-7pm is the first PTSA at the Albany High School, in person at the Library right before the Back to School Night which is 7-9pm. Also, Emily Surowitz, teacher at the high school, is setting up a cafe outside of her classroom and is in need of some outdoor furniture. If anyone has any outdoor furniture to donate for this please contact the high school or Trustee Hopwood.

**Trustee Sadia Khan:** she thanked Superintendent Wells for the *Accountable* Book Club. Ocean View Elementary PTA will be meeting on Thursday, September 14th at 6:30pm. There is a large push for people to join the PTA; they are planning a lot of events such as the Book Fair, which has a large goal to put a book into the hands of every child this year. She visited the AHS Transition Program classroom and helped them work on a new mural for their space. The Special Education Advisory Committee met; they worked through some of the goals for this school year.

**Trustee Ron Rosenbaum:** He missed the Marin PTA meeting that was held last night, September 11th, but he will be spending some time with Principal Pfohl in the near future. He attended the Solano Stroll on September 10th and gave a shout out to Craig Bryant for all the amazing work he has done with the music program over the last 17 years.

#### **President Vonnice Davidson:**

Cornell PTA meeting was held on September 7th; they are also needing more people to join and help with events this year. She is hearing a lot of positive feedback from students in the after school programs, particularly Cornell, and she expressed her personal appreciation and community appreciation for these programs.

### **13. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

The Board requested the following items to be agendaized on future meetings:

1. Trustee Khan requested to work on a resolution on what is going on in the State regarding the exclusion of transgendered students; she wants to be able to stand in solidarity and make a joint statement in opposition to what is going on at the State level..
2. Trustee Rosenbaum requested a report on Physical Education program at the high school

#### **14. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

The meeting adjourned at 9:08pm

#### **FUTURE BOARD MEETINGS:**

- Tuesday, September 19: Special Workshop: School Plans for Student Achievement
- Tuesday, September 26, 7:00 PM, City Hall Council Chambers

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

Proposal for Enhancing the Cornell Chinese Program (submitted during Public Comments)

Subject: Proposal for Enhancing the Cornell Chinese Program

Dear Education Board Members,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing on behalf of the Cornell Chinese Program community to address key challenges and propose solutions to ensure the continued success and quality of our after-school program.

**\*\*Background:\*\***

Albany's school district is renowned for its commitment to excellence, and its diversity enriches the educational experience. Seventeen years ago, in response to the community's diverse need for language programs, the district introduced Spanish learning at Marin Elementary School, Chinese at Cornell and Ocean View. These programs, along with the courses in middle school and high school underscores the district's dedication to offering a variety of language programs that reflect our community's interests.

We are immensely grateful to the district for providing our community with the Cornell Chinese Program—a truly exceptional offering. For the past 17 years, this program has been instrumental in exposing our students and community to the richness of Chinese culture through activities such as Chinese poems, festival celebrations, Asian dancing, and many more. What makes this program stand out is not only the cultural exposure but also the high quality of teaching it provides. With educators like Ms. Hong and Ms. Betty, who bring a wealth of experience and expertise to their roles, and a comprehensive curriculum that includes listening, speaking, reading and writing, we knew that Cornell was the right place for our children's Chinese education.

Our survey results indicate that a significant 73% of parents enroll their children in the Chinese program primarily for language learning and cultural exposure. The satisfaction level among parents is remarkably high, given the program's quality. However, we have encountered a limitation—currently, the program only extends up to the 3rd grade.

This limitation is why we are motivated to propose an expansion to include 4th and 5th graders. We believe that the remarkable foundation established in the earlier grades should continue to enrich our students' education as they progress through elementary school.

**\*\*Challenges:\*\***

1. Space Constraints: Our present classroom spans roughly 650 square feet and is currently accommodating two teachers and 24 students, with an additional four students set to join soon. While California's education standards prescribe a minimum of 960 square feet for new general classrooms (hosting 30-32 students K-3)<sup>1</sup>, it's important to note that these standards are indicative of human space requirements. Given our program's commitment to safety and quality, we must reassess the capacity of our existing space to ensure the safe and effective accommodation of our students.

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<sup>1</sup> Title 5, California Code of Regulations. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/fa/sf/title5regs.asp>

2. **Diverse Student Needs:** Our students vary in their level of interest and proficiency in Chinese. Maintaining an engaging learning environment for all can be challenging.

3. **2-Teacher Rule for Outdoor Activities:** To ensure student safety during outdoor activities, at least 2 teachers must be present.

**\*\* Balancing Student Enrollment and Teaching Quality:\*\***

We understand and support ACC's desire to serve as many students as possible, and we share the goal of expanding our program to include 4th and 5th graders, which would naturally increase our total student population. However, we believe it is crucial to strike a delicate balance between the number of students served and the following needs:

**1. Maintaining Teaching Quality:** Our program's success has been built on the high-quality teaching it offers. As evidenced by our survey, 77.8% of families have emphasized that maintaining the current quality of teaching is "Very Important" when considering program expansion. To uphold teaching quality, we kindly request ACC to establish a cap on the total student-teacher ratio at 12:1. Although roughly half of the families may accept a larger class size, potentially at the cost of teaching quality, a remarkable 84% of families are willing to pay higher tuition fees to maintain smaller 12:1 classes and teaching quality.

**2. Admissions and Priority for Quality Education:** Ensuring the highest quality of education is a top priority for us. Our survey results show that 55% of families prioritize language skill development as their primary reason for enrollment, with an additional 16% ranking it as their second reason. In comparison, only 27% designated daycare as their primary reason, and 22% as their second reason for enrollment. Therefore, we earnestly urge ACC to consider teacher input in the admissions process to ensure balanced classes. Priority should be given to students who highly value language skills and cultural components over mere daycare services. By doing so, we not only maintain teaching quality but also align enrollment with the core values of our program.

**3. Space Requirements:** Additionally, we trust that the Education Board, the Cornell principal Catherine Floresca, and the ACC director Mr. Josh Reed can find a solution that satisfies the following needs:

- Sufficient space, both within the existing classroom and additional space if we were to expand, ensuring compliance with human space requirements.
- A designated area for teachers to set up materials and a whiteboard for teaching, particularly if we were to expand to another area.
- We kindly request that you consider permitting Ms. Hong and Ms. Betty to collaborate with the Pines in fulfilling yard duty requirements. This would enable teachers to conduct indoor lessons while some students engage in outdoor activities, which in turn ease the tension on limited classroom space, and interference between learning groups.

In closing, we wholeheartedly believe that the Cornell Chinese Program has been a beacon of cultural enrichment and high-quality education in our community. We are immensely proud of its achievements and the impact it has had on our children's lives. Our proposal to extend the program to 4th and 5th graders stems from our unwavering commitment to providing an exceptional educational experience to our students. We trust in the wisdom and dedication of the Education Board, the Cornell Principal Catherine Floresca, and the ACC director Mr. Josh Reed to collaborate in finding innovative solutions that can accommodate our growth while preserving the core values of our program—quality teaching, cultural enrichment, and the development of language skills. Together, we can ensure that this program continues to thrive, fostering the growth of our students and contributing to the rich tapestry of education in our district.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and continued support.  
Sincerely,

please sign your name if you support it.

- |                             |                                |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. <u>Tan Mandy</u>         | 10. <u>Ansa Le</u>             |
| 2. <u>Wayde Huns</u>        | 11. <u>Diana Wong</u>          |
| 3. <u>Nergui Gantsetseg</u> | 12. <u>[Signature]</u>         |
| 4. <u>[Signature]</u>       | 13. <u>[Signature]</u>         |
| 5. <u>[Signature]</u>       | 14. <u>Aju sniwatoti</u>       |
| 6. <u>Tiajia He</u>         | 15. <u>Doreen Lau-Cheney</u>   |
| 7. <u>Scarlett Sun</u>      | 16. <u>[Signature]</u>         |
| 8. <u>Dan don Tu</u>        | 17. <u>Ben Rubin</u>           |
| 9. <u>Stt Kao</u>           | 18. <u>Michael [Signature]</u> |

