

Lopez, Maria [COB]

From: Jin Suk kim <jinsukkim0502@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 3, 2026 12:48 PM
To: COB_Response
Subject: Board of Supervisor meeting September 15th line item #10_Support for the Continuation of OCAPICA/KCS Project FOCUS

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Board of Supervisor meeting September 15th line item #10.

My name is Jin Suk Kim, and I am the mother of a 14-year-old Korean American, bilingual son who has received services through KCS Project FOCUS for approximately over 3 years. I am writing to express my strongest support for the continuation of Project FOCUS and the culturally and linguistically responsive mental health services provided through OCAPICA and KCS.

During the past three years, Project FOCUS has provided ongoing support not only to my son but also to our entire family. As a bilingual Korean American adolescent, my son has needs that cannot always be fully understood or addressed through conventional mental health services alone.

Language, culture, family relationships, immigration experiences, and the challenges of navigating multiple cultural environments all affect how a young person understands and communicates his thoughts and emotions.

Project FOCUS has recognized and responded to these interconnected needs in a way that no other therapy or program has been able to do for our family. The program's cultural understanding and bilingual communication have made it possible for my son and our family to feel genuinely understood, respected, and safe. This has been especially important when discussing sensitive emotional, behavioral, educational, and family concerns that can be difficult to express accurately in English or to explain to providers who are unfamiliar with Korean culture.

Our therapist has consistently demonstrated compassion, professionalism, patience, responsiveness, and a sincere commitment to my son's well-being. She has taken the time to understand my son as an individual rather than viewing him only through his challenges. She has listened carefully to our concerns, responded when our family needed guidance, and worked collaboratively with us to identify practical ways to support his emotional well-being and continued growth.

One of the most valuable aspects of Project FOCUS has been its ability to help us address the difficulties my son experiences at school. Rather than treating school concerns as separate from his mental health and family life, our therapist has helped us understand how these areas affect one another. She has provided active, practical, and effective strategies for connecting support at home with the challenges he encounters at school. This coordinated approach has helped us respond more consistently to his emotional and behavioral needs and has contributed significantly to greater stability in his school life.

Project FOCUS has also provided meaningful parent education and coaching. Through this support, I have developed a deeper understanding of my son's needs and learned more effective ways to communicate with him, respond to difficult situations, and support his development. The program has helped me continue advocating for and supporting my son even during times when the challenges felt overwhelming. Rather than feeling helpless or alone, I have gained greater confidence and effectiveness as a parent.

The positive impact of this support extends throughout our entire family. It has contributed to my son's emotional growth and stability at school, strengthened my confidence in raising and advocating for

him, improved communication among family members, and helped create healthier and more stable family relationships. The benefit to our family has been so profound that it is difficult to fully describe in words.

For our family, Project FOCUS is not an optional or easily replaceable service. It is an essential source of support for my son's continued development, his stability during adolescence, and the well-being of our entire family. The trust that has been built over approximately four years, together with the therapist's understanding of my son's history, school experiences, cultural background, language, strengths, and needs, cannot be recreated through a short-term or culturally disconnected service. My son is now in adolescence, a developmental period that brings increasingly complex emotional, social, educational, and family challenges. The continuity of trusted mental health support is especially critical during this time. The support we receive through Project FOCUS is so important that I cannot imagine my son successfully navigating his adolescent years without it. Losing this service would remove one of the most important sources of stability and guidance available to both my son and our family.

Project FOCUS also addresses a significant gap in Orange County's behavioral health system. Many Asian American and Pacific Islander families encounter language barriers, cultural stigma surrounding mental health, difficulty navigating educational and public service systems, and a shortage of providers who understand their cultural and family contexts. Without trusted community-based programs such as Project FOCUS, many children, adolescents, and families may delay seeking help, struggle to engage meaningfully in treatment, or lose access to care altogether.

It is therefore critically important that Orange County preserve and continue investing in OCAPICA/KCS Project FOCUS. Its culturally responsive, linguistically accessible, family-centered, and community-based approach enables it to reach families who might otherwise remain underserved. The program does more than provide therapy. It builds trust, strengthens families, supports coordination between home and school, empowers parents, promotes early intervention, and helps prevent children's and families' needs from escalating into more serious crises.

Based on our family's direct experience, I strongly urge Orange County Behavioral Health Services and all responsible decision-makers to ensure the continued operation and adequate funding of Project FOCUS. Any reduction, restructuring, or discontinuation that limits access to this program would create a serious gap for our family and for many other Asian American and Pacific Islander families throughout Orange County.

Project FOCUS has made a meaningful and lasting difference in my son's life, his school stability, my confidence as a parent, and the overall well-being of our family. I sincerely hope that my son and other children, youth, and families will continue to have access to the same culturally respectful, compassionate, and effective support that our family has received.

Thank you for considering our family's experience and the important voice of the community as you make decisions regarding the future of these essential services.

Sincerely,

Jin Suk Kim

Parent and Orange County Resident