(Statement read to the Eureka City Schools Board of Trustees at their Tuesday, 6/25/2024 regular board meeting during “Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items”)

Dear Trustees;

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization. We are nonpartisan in that we do not support or oppose any political party or candidate; we are political in that we take positions on selected governmental issues after member study and agreement.

One such member study was conducted by the League of Women Voters of Humboldt County in 2016. The study, entitled “Civic Engagement”, specifically concludes that

“All governmental bodies and organizations should:

* Ensure that sufficient input from citizens is allowed at public meetings and recorded in the minutes, and
* Ensure transparency for citizens about all policies, practices, evaluations, and decisions of the organization.”

We feel very strongly about the need for full and open transparency, related to the actions of elected governmental boards and governmental decision-making.

For this reason, we were shocked and concerned by the actions of this Board on December 14, 2023 when it approved a major real estate transaction with **minimal public notification or community input**. Our concerns were validated by the recent Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury Report released on June 12, 2024.

We strongly agree with the Grand Jury’s summary (page 1): “While apparently literally complying with the technical requirements of the California Government Code (Brown Act) with respect to a real estate transaction, the Trustees violated the law’s general intent for public participation and transparency in decision-making.”

In terms of the Grand Jury report’s statement regarding Due Diligence and Decision-making (pages 10 and 11), we agree that: “The public has a right to be informed about pending decisions, to be involved, and to fully participate.”

The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County therefore strongly suggests that the ECS Board of Trustees **take the following actions** to address the concerns raised in the Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury report and restore transparency and trust to this important transaction between ECS and AMG Communities-Jacobs, LLC:

1. **Immediately make the details** of the Jacobs property negotiations and ongoing status of the transaction **known** to the public,
2. **Fully disclose the names of all partners** in AMG Communities-Jacobs, LLC to establish the bona-fide identity of its members and disclose its financial integrity,
3. Fully explain the need felt by ECS Board of Trustees, the Superintendent and advisers for the **“secretive, last-minute, quick judgment, in an intentionally compressed time-period, without public knowledge, behind closed doors”**. (Grand Jury Report Conclusion, page 12)
4. Now, and in the future, “provide the public with an opportunity to be informed and to question the details of this decision and its potential relationship to other local public policy issues.” (Grand Jury Report Findings, page 13)
5. **Delay the close of escrow on this transaction** to allow adequate time to address Items 1-4 above.

Sincerely, The League of Women Voters Board of Directors

Signed by

Dr. Sharolyn Hutton, LWVHC Co-President

and Anne J. Hartline, LWVHC Board Member