Hello Leo, great points. I would like to ensure your voice is heard and for us to completely understand each other. We agree on many points—I would love to hear your suggestions on how we may tackle these challenges together. I hope these points serve as clarification and an opportunity for you to recommend what you would do if you were in ASB.

1. How would you measure spirit? I agree we can always have higher participation in school events. But spirit means a lot of things. If we define spirit as overall student engagement with the campus (this is Dr. Forsee’s definition), Arcadia has one of the highest levels. By the numbers, we have one of the highest participation rates in clubs, performing arts, sports, etc. (don’t have stats at hand but I can find them). Our Prom attendance frequently exceeds 1000 students. I agree many of our events could have higher attendance, but almost all students are connected to campus one way or another – ASB, clubs, teams, etc. – and this is a subject of envy from many other schools.
2. Absolutely, our designs can always be better. The design and voting process of most spirit gear (and all class merch ware) is open to the entire school for submissions and voting, the winner receiving a free issue of gear. However, even with this incentive, most students, especially our best artists, do not bother to submit anything because it is not important to them. Unfortunately, one could say it doesn’t affect them.
3. Unfortunately, the answer is usually yes, the underrepresentation of minorities does not affect the majority. I completely agree that we should have more representation in our student body, and wish more underrepresented groups would consider running for office.
4. Last year I believed Arcadia had over 90 clubs, the highest number of student-led clubs in the San Gabriel Valley. Since then, I believe the number, if considering hobbyist/unofficial groups, has grown. Many clubs are not about academic prowess or volunteering as you mentioned– chess club, esports, Rock Band, astronomy, art, poetry, etc..
   1. The reason we dechartered clubs was to give students more freedom and teachers less stress (additionally, these clubs often do not require ASB services such as an account). The increasing number of clubs combined with teacher layoffs meant we could not sustain 90 clubs (teachers were taking 4 clubs at a time, which is not allowed) , and clubs were fighting over resources. Unofficial/dechartered clubs are truly hobbyist in nature and have the benefit of no longer having to participate in bureaucracy, requests/forms/documents, and not requiring teachers to start. We do not want these variables to be barriers to you meeting others with shared passions.
5. I would actually argue that it is because ASB means something in our lives that we vote for our friends. We recognize that ASB has a significance in our lives and advocate for our close friends to find success there. I do wish people were more educated before voting and consider others more often. But voting for one’s friends is a conscious choice. Often, people are close to ASB precisely because many of their friends are in ASB. A meaningful ASB and an ASB with your friends are not mutually exclusive, but should coexist. Voting for the most connected individuals into ASB \*generally\* ensures that they will be able to represent the most people of the student body.
6. Your voice matters. It is because of this I advise against grudges because it means you are not communicating concerns to your grudgees. The best way to end grudges is to talk to them/us and we’ll work through it together.

I do not write any of this to sidestep your concerns; in fact I would like to know more. Your points are concerns I am sure many of us have had, because I have too. Feel free to dm me at any time. Thank you for your words, you are brave and righteous in doing so.