NEWS RELEASE
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4J School Board Names New Superintendent

Dr. Sheldon Berman will lead the Eugene School District

The Eugene School Board announced today that it will hire Dr. Sheldon Berman as the next superintendent of Eugene School District 4J.

A school superintendent for nearly two decades, Dr. Berman has led both larger and smaller school districts. He is currently the Superintendent of Jefferson County Public Schools in Louisville, Kentucky.

School board chair Craig Smith says, “Dr. Berman is a visionary educational leader and has engaged both staff and community members in moving schools forward through difficult conditions. We believe he is an excellent fit for Eugene. As we traverse financially trying times, we need to find new ways to serve our students, increase student achievement, and continue our tradition of excellent schools. Dr. Berman brings both strong leadership skills and educational expertise and he is deeply dedicated to students.”

Dr. Berman will begin work on July 1, however, he will be consulted this spring on budget planning for 2011-12. He will also return to Eugene for an April or May planning session with the school board and current Superintendent George Russell to plan for the transition.

“I am very excited to join the 4J team. Throughout my visits and interviews I experienced the district’s commitment to quality and innovation as well as the positive educational environment that staff have created for students. I was equally impressed by the community’s support for the district. I look forward to working with the board, staff and community to build on the district’s long-standing tradition of excellence,” says Dr. Berman.

Dr. Berman has been the superintendent of Jefferson County Public Schools in Louisville, Kentucky, since 2007. As the 28th largest school district in the United States, Jefferson County serves nearly 100,000 students in more than 150 schools.

For the previous 14 years, from 1993 to 2007, Dr. Berman served as superintendent of the Hudson Public Schools, a district of 3,000 students outside of Boston, Massachusetts. During his time in Hudson, Dr. Berman guided a school system with declining enrollment and poor academic performance to become recognized statewide for excellence. He was named the Massachusetts Superintendent of the Year in 2002.

Dr. Berman began his education career as a social studies teacher in 1975. He holds a Doctor of Education and a Master of Education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, a Master of Education degree from the University of Maine, and a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Wisconsin.

Dr. Berman has published numerous books, articles and curriculum materials on critical thinking, service-learning, the development of social responsibility, and innovation in math, science and technology. He serves on the boards of numerous educational and community organizations, including Educators for Social Responsibility, the Muhammad Ali Center, Fund for the Arts and KentuckianaWorks.
The search for a new superintendent began in September 2010, after Superintendent George Russell announced that 2010–11 would be his 13th and final year at the helm of Eugene School District 4J. The district launched its nationwide superintendent search in October. Three finalist candidates returned to Eugene on March 7-8 to talk with school staff and community groups. The board selected Dr. Berman from about 30 qualified applicants.

The board will approve a contract with Dr. Berman in April. According to board chair Craig Smith, the contract terms will be within the parameters set by the board in October, when the district began its search.

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**Eugene School District Quick Facts**

*Enrollment:* 16,500 students

*Schools:* 22 elementary schools, 2 K-8 schools, 7 middle schools, 4 high schools campuses and 3 small alternative high schools. School programs include Spanish, French and Japanese language immersion, international high school programs, and strong and varied neighborhood schools.

*Academic excellence:* 4J students consistently surpass state averages and all 4J schools receive positive ratings based on Oregon’s state education standards.

*Staff:* 1385 full-time equivalent positions in the general fund. 75% of teachers hold masters degrees. Over the past 27 years, 4J has had only two superintendents.

*Budget:* $142 million general fund, $296 million total budget for 2010-11.

*Location:* The school district spans 155 square miles including most of the City of Eugene and areas outside the city boundaries. Eugene’s has a population of more than 140,000 within the city boundaries; population in the metro area is more than 200,000. Eugene is home to the University of Oregon, the state’s largest university.