MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SCHOOL DISTRICT 4J, LANE COUNTY, OREGON

September 17, 2008

The Board of Directors of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Eugene, Oregon, held a regular board meeting at 7 p.m. followed by an executive session on September 17, 2008, at the Education Center, 200 North Monroe Street, Eugene, Oregon. Notice of the meeting was mailed to the media and posted in the Education Center on September 12, 2008, and published in The Register-Guard on September 15, 2008.

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS:
Charles Martinez, Jr., Chair
Yvette Webber-Davis, Vice Chair
Beth Gerot
Craig Smith
Eric Forrest
Alicia Hays
Jim Torrey, Absent

STAFF:
George Russell, Superintendent of Schools and District Clerk
Tom Henry, Deputy Superintendent and Chief Academic Officer
Barbara Bellamy, Chief of Staff and Communications Director
Carl Hermanss, Assistant Superintendent and Chief Operating Officer

STUDENT ADVISORY PANEL MEMBERS:
Lizzy Monroe, South Eugene High School
Linda and Lisa Gai, IHS, All Campuses
Joe Kammerer, North Eugene High School
Joel Iboa, Sheldon High School

MEDIA:
KRVM

CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND FLAG SALUTE

Charles Martinez, Board Chair, called the meeting of the School District 4J Board of Directors to order at 7:00 p.m. and noted that Jim Torrey would be absent. Dr. Martinez led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA REVIEW

Dr. Martinez noted that board members and staff had no changes to make to the agenda.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Superintendent George Russell welcomed this year’s student representatives and noted they would soon have an opportunity to introduce themselves. Superintendent Russell passed
around a sympathy card for board members to sign for a student representative from last year whose mother passed away due to cancer.

Superintendent Russell reported that, due to a request by the executive director of the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators, a group had been formed consisting of the district superintendents of the six largest school districts in the state – Portland, Beaverton, Hillsboro, Eugene, North Clackamas and Salem-Keizer. Last week, at the first meeting of this group, the state’s funding picture and proposed budget were previewed. Superintendent Russell had a chance to ask questions regarding the economy, which has begun to negatively impact Oregon and other states with decreased revenue. He noted the state’s cash balance had decreased in the past months from $197 million down to about $23 million. Superintendent Russell predicted the remaining funds would be spent in the next few months and rainy day funds would need to be used for the rest of the school year.

Superintendent Russell said that until the last few months, the governor had talked about a 20% increase for the State School Fund and Education. That number had now decreased to about 10%, and could go even lower. He continued that school districts in the area of Washington County had grown substantially in the past few years, though both Beaverton and Hillsboro districts were seeing a decline in enrollment this year.

Superintendent Russell also reported that in a meeting of the Chalkboard Advisory Committee the day before in Portland he learned that Sue Hildick would be starting maternity leave next month. Kate Dixon will be filling in as the interim director for the Chalkboard Project for about 4-5 months. As some of the ballot measures and other issues were being considered, positions for legislative items were being discussed. Their agenda has had a strong emphasis on early childhood education, which was now being looked at to see how that fits in with the agenda around graduation requirements and a focus on high schools.

**COMMENTS BY STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

Dr. Martinez welcomed the new student representatives to the board.

Linda and Lisa Gai introduced themselves as representatives from the IHS program at Sheldon High School. Lisa explained that IHS was an alternative college placement program with an international focus, located on high school campuses.

Joel Iboa from Sheldon High School invited everyone to Sheldon’s first home football game of the season on Friday night. He noted that he is also on Sheldon’s water polo team.

Lizzy Monroe from South Eugene High School, also an IHS student, reported that South Eugene was opening the school year with freshman elections and planning for homecoming.

Joe Kammerer, a senior at North Eugene High School, said he has played varsity basketball throughout his high school career. He reported about the Arts program, in which he participates, where students were feeling considered as less important than students in other programs. He did not share this sense, feeling that artistic students had an opportunity to excel with their unique talents.
ITEMS RAISED BY THE AUDIENCE

Al King, Springfield School District board member, presented a proposed resolution and official literature from Lane Community College regarding Bond Measure 20-142. He identified himself as Co-Chair of the Endorsement Committee, stating he was seeking endorsement of the bond by as many Lane County school boards as possible. He hoped that the board might be able to vote on this measure at tonight’s meeting.

Mr. King explained that the bond measure would provide funds for maintenance and updating of equipment and facilities at LCC that had been greatly lacking for a long time. The nursing program would receive updated facilities that would provide necessary modernization for attracting much needed nursing students. He explained that the bond measure was requesting just under $81 million, and would continue at approximately the same rate as the current tax rate of the old bond, which would be paid off by the time the new bond would take effect.

COMMENTS BY EMPLOYEE GROUPS

No comments were offered by employee groups.

ITEMS FOR ACTION AT THIS MEETING

Approve Revisions to Board Policy IGBH, Alternative Schools

Barb Bellamy, Chief of Staff and Communications Director, noted there were four main changes to the existing Alternative Schools policy. One change deleted reference to the District Curriculum Council, which no longer existed. A second change added a definition for an alternative program, since the standing definition did not fit for the program in the district’s middle and high school alternative school programs. A third change revised the policy regarding the co-location of two schools in one building. The fourth change deleted a reference stating that student residents could not be given priority for enrolling in an alternative program.

MOTION: Board Vice Chair Yvette Webber-Davis, seconded by Board Member Eric Forrest, moved to approve revisions to Board Policy IGBH, Alternative Schools.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously; 6:0.

Approve Revisions to Board Policy JECC, School Choice

Ms. Bellamy explained that after revisions were made to Board Policy IGBH, a few minor changes were made to Board Policy JECC to clarify and align the language between the two policies.

MOTION: Board Member Beth Gerot, seconded by Board Member Alicia Hays, moved to approve revisions to Board Policy JECC.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously; 6:0.

Approve Middle School Alternative Program Review Process

The district currently has five middle school alternative programs. Three of the programs are language immersion programs that provide the opportunity for students in the elementary language immersion schools to continue their intensive language studies in middle school. The
French immersion program is offered at Roosevelt Middle School; the Japanese immersion program is offered at Kelly Middle School; and the Spanish immersion program is offered at Monroe Middle School. The fourth middle school alternative program, Family School, is also an extension of an elementary alternative school and is offered at Spence Butte. The fifth program, da Vinci, is a stand-alone middle school alternative program offered at Kelly Middle School.

Board Policy IGBH: Alternative Schools directs the district to regularly review alternative schools/programs “in order to ensure that alternative schools/programs continue to meet board and district goals, and perform consistent with board policy and expectations.” In accordance with that policy, the district’s middle school alternative school programs will be reviewed beginning in the fall of the 2008-09 school year. Staff will apprise the board of the proposed review procedures and timelines. A copy of the Middle School Alternative Program Review Process was included in the board packet.

The superintendent recommended approval of the review process.

Carl Hermanns, Assistant Superintendent and Chief Operating Officer, stated that in concert with the alternative schools policy, middle school alternative program reviews were being prepared to ensure that the alternative school programs were still meeting the board goals. The same criteria would be used as for the elementary program reviews, except for item #7, because the middle school programs were programs within schools rather than actual schools. The only additional change would be to conduct a preliminary assessment for both da Vinci and Family School to discuss whether they wished to proceed with the full review or consider merging – i.e., da Vinci could consider merging with Kelly similar to the way that Edgewood and Evergreen merged, and Family School could potentially merge with the elementary Family School program. The process would conclude in time for school of choice.

**MOTION:** Mr. Forrest, seconded by Board Member Craig Smith, moved to approve the Middle School Alternative Program Review Process.

**VOTE:** The motion passed unanimously; 6:0.

Mr. Smith clarified for student representatives that the process for approval of these items might seem perfunctory. He noted that this was the second time the measures were presented, with the primary background of the measures having been presented at an earlier meeting. Dr. Martinez added that the community and/or radio audience would also benefit by this clarification, since the processes of information and discussion before decision-making were often lengthy.

**Approve the Contract Between the Eugene Education Fund and School District 4J**

In February of 1994, the board and the Eugene Education Fund entered into a contract specifying how the district and EEF would work together and how donations given through EEF would be distributed. The board approved an addendum to the contract in 1997 that provided for an annual payment of $65,000-$75,000 to EEF for fundraising services including technical assistance to schools, coordination of fundraising, and administering the distribution of donations in keeping with donor wishes.

Since 1997, the contract has been renewed each year with no increase in the annual payment amount. Over that 11-year period, cash contributions generated by and through EEF have increased from approximately $350,000 to more than $780,000 annually.
Recognizing that EEF’s expenses to support fundraising activities have also increased over that time, the district and EEF are proposing new contract terms that would increase the district’s annual payment to EEF for fundraising services. As proposed, the base annual payment will increase and the incentive for reaching higher donation levels will be on a sliding scale. This incentive structure recognizes that EEF’S expenses increase in relationship to an increase in donors and contributions.

The changes in the financial terms of the contract are shown in the chart below; all other contract provisions are essentially the same.

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Contract Terms Since 1997</th>
<th>2008-09 Proposed Contract</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annual base payment</strong></td>
<td>$65,000</td>
<td>$85,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annual “incentive payment</strong></td>
<td>$10,000 payment for raising $500,000 or more in a fiscal year</td>
<td>$2,500 payment for raising up to $750,000; $2,500 for each $50,000 increment above $750,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maximum annual payment (base+incentive)</strong></td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
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Since 1994, EEF has raised more than $5.6 million in donations for school district programs plus an additional $1.4 million in development funds that go to support fundraising efforts. Over $1 million has been given to schools in equity grants, which help schools maintain educational programs. Direct donations to schools have been increasing each year. During the last campaign cycle alone, January through December 2007, the EEF raised $781,462.

A copy of the proposed contract for 2008-09 was included in the board packet. The superintendent recommended approval of the contract between the Eugene Education Fund and School District 4J for 2008-09.

Ms. Bellamy said that each year the board approved a contract with the Eugene Education Fund, a nonprofit foundation providing fundraising assistance. She noted this contract was slightly different from past contracts, and she had discussed the differences at the last meeting.

**MOTION:** Dr. Webber-Davis, seconded by Mr. Smith, moved to approve the contract.

**VOTE:** The motion passed unanimously; 6:0.

**Vote on a Region 6 Representative to the Oregon School Boards Association Board**

Ms. Bellamy noted that OSBA’s board consisted of representatives from all school boards in Oregon, their job being to assist school districts and to participate in state legislative processes regarding school policies. She continued that a 4J School Board member, Beth Gerot, was currently the only candidate for election from Region 6, so that it seemed appropriate for a roll-call vote to occur.

**MOTION:** Dr. Webber-Davis, seconded by Mr. Smith, moved to put forward Beth Gerot as candidate for Region 6 Representative to the OSBA board.
**VOTE:** The motion passed unanimously; 6:0.

Dr. Martinez thanked Ms. Gerot for her very important role with OSBA, and for bringing legislative issues and state policy direction back to the district.

**CONSENT GROUP – ITEM FOR ACTION**

**Approve Personnel Items**

The superintendent recommended approval of the personnel items included in the board packet. These cover employment, resignations, and other routine personnel matters.

**MOTION:** Mr. Forrest, seconded by Ms. Gerot, moved for approval of the consent item.

**VOTE:** The motion passed unanimously; 6:0.

**ITEMS FOR ACTION AT A FUTURE MEETING**

**Adopt the Board’s Goals and Annual Agenda for 2008-09**

Superintendent Russell noted he had several issues to discuss. He continued that Board Policy BA required that the board adopt an annual agenda to demonstrate how the board would provide “leadership and direction for the district.” Each year those goals would be drafted by staff and discussed by the board at their annual retreat.

Superintendent Russell said he had prepared a draft of the proposed 2008-09 Annual Agenda and Goals for 2009-2012. He mentioned that something a little different would be done this year, with a focus on results and outcomes rather than solely on activities, since results were proof of success. This new approach would be based on a commitment to tackle a central performance challenge. He identified the central performance challenge that this board had been attempting to achieve for many years as improving student achievement for all students and closing the achievement gap. He said that data showed the district had not been as successful as was desired.

Superintendent Russell stressed the great importance of the challenge of improving student achievement. He realized this was a national challenge, and that the whole school system and community must be willing to work toward the success of this goal. He further suggested the importance of setting a high standard, even if achievement of the goal might not be total or perfect, stressing that the time is right for this work.

Superintendent Russell posed the challenge as having several components, including whether an identified goal focused on the appropriate goal area and if it was aspirational. He stressed the importance of creating goals that required stretching, and that the board would want to ask a number of times why it was important and for whom.

He continued by noting it was not as easy as it sounded, that there were some areas when talking about results where it would be hard not to focus on activities rather than results. Further, it would be important to think about how success would be identified. He said that in
the past the activities had been accomplished, but it had been unknown whether the outcomes were successful.

Outcome-based goals were not activities, Superintendent Russell said. He asked several times, how would we know if we were successful? He gave an example to show the difference in past goals and outcome-based goals. The old way might say, “Develop a strategy for serving emerging racial and ethnic populations in our schools.” An outcome-based goal might challenge, “Increase by 40% the number of bilingual/bicultural staff in schools to better serve the emerging racial and ethnic populations in our schools, by school year 2010-2011.” The latter had real measurements that could be assessed.

He continued that the student achievement area was the main focus identified in terms of urgent performance challenges. The results desired to be attained must have an accountability factor built in. Superintendent Russell pointed to the blue and yellow handouts describing the 2007-08 and the 2008-09 Board Goals and Annual Agendas, noting these were for preparation for the upcoming board retreat.

Superintendent Russell began reviewing the 2008-09 Board Goals and Annual Agenda, pointing out key results and outcomes that would be discussed before final decisions would be made. Once the board adopts its goals and key results, Superintendent Russell will work with staff, district departments and at the school level to develop outcome goals that will help achieve the key results. He stressed that a balance must be found between stretching to attain aspirational goals and identifying realistic levels of accomplishment with the resources at hand.

He went on to identify three main goal areas:

A. **Student Achievement.** The goal here would be to increase achievement for all students and to close the achievement gap. Key results would include:

   1) By 2011, develop and implement content and performance standards to be expected of students by the end of elementary, middle and high school while providing resources for those students struggling academically;

   2) By 2012, increase the percentage of 4J students meeting the OAKS benchmarks in reading and math and cut gaps by 50% for racial subgroups; and

   3) By 2012, increase the graduation rates for 4J students to 95% from 90%, with accelerated rates for students in the racial subgroups.

Superintendent Russell admitted that these proposed goals would require stretching and perhaps prove to be unattainable, but felt that making the effort would be the right strategy. The key results in most cases would need to be met by 2012, when the new graduation requirements would take effect.

B. **Stewardship of District Resources.** Three key results were identified to support the goal of providing prudent stewardship of district resources to best support student success, educational equity and choice:

   1) By 2010, the district will have fully implemented the adopted recommendations and board direction from Shaping 4J’s Future;
2) By March 2009, the district will have completed the district’s workforce diversity plan and have increased the representation of minority teachers to 10% of licensed staff by 2012; and

3) By 2010, the district will have developed updated plans and priorities to improve central service support to the instructional core and implement administrative, financial and operational efficiencies reflecting best practices and demonstrating fiscal accountability.

Dr. Martinez remarked how difficult it was to differentiate between outcomes and activities. He hoped that at the retreat it would be possible to find ways to clarify the outcomes even further. For example, he described how in terms of diversity of the workforce it was not diversity as an end, but as a means to an end, related to critical goals in terms of what students experience and what needs to be accomplished in terms of equity and choice.

Mr. Iboa described his understanding that the relationship between teachers and students was one of the most important factors contributing to student achievement. For this reason, he wondered if there might be some kind of training made available to all teachers to help strengthen those relationships.

Dr. Martinez responded that increasing workforce diversity needed to be connected with desired outcomes, such as educational excellence and choice and equity that really matter to 4J.

Superintendent Russell described his struggle regarding this discussion arising year after year without attaining measurable progress.

Dr. Martinez replied that he only wanted to be as clear as possible about what the actual desired outcome would be.

Mr. Forrest expressed appreciation for the simplicity of Superintendent Russell's presentation and the direction of the proposals.

Dr. Webber-Davis thanked Superintendent Russell for the draft presented, saying she would be especially interested in discussing the increases in benchmarks for student achievement at the retreat. She wanted to be certain that the specific goals to be set would be research-based and not arbitrary goals.

Superintendent Russell responded that as the superintendent's goals were developed and the background data was presented, Dr. Webber-Davis’s concerns would be addressed. He continued that even when the research was provided, he believed in shooting higher. He felt that in terms of setting a goal of 90 or 95% for graduation rates, community members might wonder why the goal would not be 100%.

Dr. Martinez agreed, saying he had a similar question about the goal to cut the gap for AYP racial subgroups only in half. He said it would be important to understand what this would mean, given the instructional practices that would fall behind it.

Mr. Forrest added that while cutting the gap in half is not great, it would be much better than what had been accomplished in past years.

Dr. Webber-Davis commented that she felt the role of expectation needed to permeate all that was done within the district, in order to affect change.
Superintendent Russell responded that along with expectations, he felt urgency was important. He felt that urgency had not been reflected in the board’s earlier activity-based goals. Having goals with actual numbers could shock people awake, he continued, providing a yardstick for measurement of success.

Dr. Martinez added that accountability was also important, emphasizing the consequences for not achieving the goals.

Superintendent Russell re-emphasized his earlier point that stretching toward high goals was very important, since each student still not achieving certain standards was important. Also, he remarked, attainment of goals needed to be celebrated, while figuring out how to go higher in the next round.

Mr. Smith emphasized the need to look at the “whys.” He noted that Superintendent Russell had touched some on the whys, pointing out external pressures such as state and federal legislation.

Ms. Hays voiced frustration that the board tended to accept responsibility for closing the achievement gap. She felt rather that it was the community’s responsibility. When the high school drop-out rate was considered, she said, consequences could be such things as crimes being committed and prison time served, large issues for cities to face. Ms. Hays said the community needed to participate in other ways than giving money and needed to be offered more ways in which to engage with the process. She wanted to see more about community engagement in the goals.

Ms. Gerot noted that at a City Club presentation the year before several people from the audience asked how they could help and the board was not prepared to respond. She further felt that accountability needed to be understood as across the system and for the board, not just the teacher in the classroom. As results were looked at, it would be important to not get into blaming.

C. **Stakeholder Engagement.** Superintendent Russell summarized the key results identified for the goal of engaging all stakeholders in supporting students and schools. He said that one result would be tied to the local option levy, a second related to the 2009-11 biennium, and the third was expressed very broadly, needing more fleshing out at the retreat.

**Approve a Revision to the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook Regarding Education Records**

Ms. Bellamy explained some revisions that needed to be made to the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook to include criteria for identifying school officials with legitimate educational interest who could examine student records without consent of students and parents. If approved by the board on October 1, the text would be revised in the Handbook, posted on the district web site, followed by a mailing to all 4J families with the annual school report cards in October or November.

Dr. Martinez noticed in Section 4, Release of Education Records, that Section 4.a. had been struck, which had authorized school board members “during an executive session to consider the expulsion of a student or to examine confidential medical records.” He wondered if this would unduly limit the school board.
Ms. Bellamy said she would follow up on Section 4.a. and report back to the board on this item.

Dr. Webber-Davis noted some wording in Section 2, Inspection of Student Records, that sounded awkward -- the use of “he or she” rather than “him or her.” It was suggested that the wording be changed to “the custodial parent.”

COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS BY INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Hays reported that there had been a media kick-off for the local option levy. She presented a half-page flyer that would go with the candidates canvassing for Mayor and County Commissioner. She noted that funding was still needed for the mailing.

Mr. Smith said there had been a good turnout for the Yes for Schools campaign rally, that kids were there who had made signs, and the co-chairs were also there.

Mr. Forrest had a small task to get business people in the community to express support of the measure, and was gratified that everyone offered support and positive comments, particularly about Superintendent Russell.

Ms. Gerot reported meeting with the two co-chairs of the Local Option Levy, along with Anne Williams and Jack Wilson from the Register-Guard Editorial Board. She hoped there would be a good write-up from both of them. She announced a forum at the University of Oregon School of Law Friday, September 26, 2008, at 1:00 p.m. on Measure 58, the English Only initiative. She said the “No on 58 and 60 Campaign” did a kick-off two weeks ago, and would return to Eugene to do a Speaker’s Bureau training on Monday, September 22, 2008, from 6:00–7:30 p.m. at the OSBA office, offering background on the two measures.

Also Ms. Gerot reported there would be a day-long event on Saturday, October 4, 2008 at Community Alliance of Lane County from 9:00–3:00, titled, “Everywhere I Go, I’m White: Facing the Responsibility of Privilege.” She offered to bring a cheat sheet on the ballot measures to the board retreat. She mentioned having notified board members by email about the OSBA fall meeting, which would focus on legislative action, giving an opportunity to view legislative priorities and receive some messaging training.

Dr. Webber-Davis reported about a meeting of the Graduation Requirement Committee where information was given about the upcoming Essential Skills requirements, adding that at the first October meeting there would be an update on the Essential Skills work and what has been going on in the district.

Dr. Martinez reported meeting with Richard Long, music program coordinator, who had suggested that students could offer musical performances before board events.
ADJOURN

Dr. Martinez adjourned the regular meeting at 8:28 p.m.

______________________________    _________________________________
George Russell                     Charles Martinez, Jr.
District Clerk                     Board Chair

(Recorded by Judy Burton)

Attachments to Official Minutes:
1. Draft Board Policy IGBH, Alternative School Policy
2. Draft Board Policy JECC, School Choice
3. Middle School Alternative Program Review Process
5. Personnel Action Items
6. 2008-09 Draft Board Goals & Annual Agenda

Following the adjournment of the regular board meeting, the board reconvened in executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: The board held an executive session under the provisions of Oregon Revised Statute 192.610 – 192.690, to conduct the Annual Evaluation of the Superintendent to review and evaluate pursuant to standards, criteria, and policy directives adopted by the governing body, the employment-related performance of the executive officer pursuant to ORS 192.660 (2) (i).