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

January 14, 2009

The Board of Directors of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Eugene, Oregon, held a regular board meeting at 7 p.m. on January 14, 2009, 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 January 9, 2009, and published in The Register-Guard on January 12, 2009.

ROLL CALL

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

STAFF:
George Russell, Superintendent of Schools and District Clerk
Tom Henry, Deputy Superintendent & Chief Academic Officer
Barbara Bellamy, Chief of Staff and Communications Director
Jon Lauch, Director of Facilities Management
Laurie Moses, Director of High School Services
Susan Fahey, Chief Financial Officer
Carl Hermanns, Assistant Superintendent/Chief Operating Officer
Kay Mehas, Director of School Services

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:
Linda Gai, IHS, All Campuses
Joel Iboa, Sheldon High School

MEDIA:
KRVM

CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND FLAG SALUTE

Board Chair Charles Martinez called the meeting of the School District 4J Board of Directors to order and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA REVIEW

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Superintendent George Russell noted it was School Board Appreciation Week and cited the governor’s proclamation recognizing the significant contribution that board members make to the education of students in the community and throughout the state as well as their work to
improve the lives and conditions of children in the community. He added his appreciation for the efforts of the board.

Superintendent Russell pointed out materials that were distributed to the board, including a Harvard Education Letter on the subject of virtual-instruction programs and a report from the State Board of Education Online Learning Subcommittee. He invited Laurie Moses, Director of High School Services, to provide an update on recent Oregon School Activities Association (OSAA) actions.

Ms. Moses reported that the OSAA Classification and Districting Committee met January 12 to review responses from across the state, including a letter from Superintendent Russell. She said there was about three hours of public testimony related to classifications 1A through 6A and presentations for a number of proposals. She said travel time and missed classes were major sources of concern, with schools preferring to play in a higher level than to travel across the state. She said the committee concluded its deliberations with a directive to OSAA to prepare three draft plans for submission to OSAA membership:

1. A five-classification plan with a cutoff point at 1,390, placing North Eugene and Churchill in a league with Albany and Corvallis; Thurston, Willamette, Sheldon and South Eugene in a league with Medford, Grants Pass and Roseburg.

2. A six-classification plan with a cutoff at 1,480, placing North Eugene and Churchill in a league with Springfield, Thurston, Willamette, Ashland, Eagle Point and Marshfield; Sheldon and South Eugene would remain in a league with Medford area schools.

3. A hybrid six-classification plan with a blended hybrid league – schools in Eastern, Central and Southern Oregon and the Eugene area would have separate leagues with teams from more than one classification, allowing communities to play one another during the regular season and split up for state competition in team sports at the varsity level.

Ms. Moses said the next committee meeting was February 23. The Mid-Western League had voted to support the hybrid plan and athletic directors from Bethel, Eugene and Southern Oregon were meeting to discuss whether to support the hybrid plan. She said there was little support for OSAA’s initial proposal.

Dr. Martinez said it was important for the board to get a sense of how athletic directors from local districts reacted to the three draft plans. He suggested sending a letter from the board to provide another voice of concern; a draft letter would be presented at the board’s February 4 meeting.

In response to a question from Board Vice Chair Yvette Webber-Davis, Ms. Moses said details of the draft plans would be published next week.

COMMENTS BY STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Joel Iboa reported that Sheldon High School’s Spanish immersion program was in need of funds and fundraising activities were underway to address a $5,000 deficit.

Linda Gai reported that International High School juniors were nearing completion of the first half of their 11th grade advanced projects, which included 30 hours of community service; senior
projects would begin when the new semester started on February 2. She said IHS was hosting several information nights for 8th grade students who were interested in enrolling.

ITEMS RAISED BY THE AUDIENCE

There were no items raised by the audience.

COMMENTS BY EMPLOYEE GROUPS

There were no comments from employee groups.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Receive a Report on the Local Option Levy Results

Barbara Bellamy, Chief of Staff and Communications Director, used a map to illustrate local option levy election voting patterns by precinct. She also provided a statistical breakdown of votes by precinct. She said most precincts in Eugene passed the local option levy by more than 50 percent and in a number of precincts, the levy passed easily with 62 to 80 percent yes votes. She said the last time the levy was renewed it was a stronger financial environment, but the community’s continued support of the district remained despite the struggling economy.

Board Member Alicia Hays commented that she had recently attended a meeting of the Siuslaw School Board and members had been impressed that the 4J School Board had incorporated passage of the local option levy in its goals for community support.

ITEMS FOR ACTION AT THIS MEETING

Approve Priorities for the 2009 Legislative Session

Ms. Bellamy reviewed the 2009 Legislative Priorities – Draft January 9, 2009 document. She highlighted changes that had been made: A reference to the Quality Education Model, affirmation of a commitment to full implementation of the new Oregon Diploma requirements, and phased implementation of new graduation requirements aligned with resource investments.

MOTION: Board Member Craig Smith, seconded by Dr. Webber-Davis, moved to adopt the 2009 Legislative Priorities as revised.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously, 5:0.

ITEMS FOR ACTION AT A FUTURE MEETING

Consider the 2009-10 Lane Education Service District Local Service Plan

Superintendent Russell stated that District Local Service Plan was presented annually as mandated by the legislature; the plan outlined the services to be provided through the Lane ESD, including programs for children with special needs, school improvement services, technology support, administrative and other required services. He noted that the board in the past had given direction to ensure that it was recognized that the ESD was often the sole source of support and resources for many of the very small school districts in Lane County and leveling was appropriate in some instances to guarantee those school had adequate resources to operate effectively. He said that resulted in the flex dollars formula, which was included in the
current plan. He said as budgets got tighter school districts wanted to look more closely at how resources from the ESD and flex dollars were allocated, with Springfield and Bethel expressing an interest in seeing some changes in how the plan was constructed and resources distributed. He hoped that would not result in the three largest districts receiving most of the resources. At this point he was prepared to recommend approval of the plan unless there was a significant change in direction.

Superintendent Russell said one concern was the way in which behavioral classrooms were staffed; ESD staffed at a 1:10 to 1:12 ratio and districts with similar programs staffed at a much higher ratio. This caused concern when districts were forced to make cuts and raise their ratios. He said a second concern was distribution of flex dollars; in particular Bethel was concerned that it was two or three times larger than South Lane, but received the same amount of funding.

COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS BY INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS

Board Member Jim Torrey complimented Superintendent Russell on his straightforward communications with the public about issues that faced the district.

Dr. Martinez expressed his appreciation to South Eugene High School staff for inviting him to discuss equity and diversity issues and how to support those goals in the context of diminished resources.

ADJOURN

Dr. Martinez adjourned the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

George Russell
District Clerk

Charles Martinez, Jr.
Board Chair

(Recorded by Lynn Taylor)

Attachments to Official Minutes:
1. Board’s 2009 Legislative Priorities