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

April 1, 2009

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 April 1, 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 March 27, 2009, and published in The Register-Guard on March 30, 2009.

ROLL CALL

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

STAFF:
George Russell, Superintendent of Schools and District Clerk
Tom Henry, Deputy Superintendent and Chief Academic Officer
Carl Hermanns, Assistant Superintendent/Chief Operating Officer
Barbara Bellamy, Chief of Staff and Communications Director
Susan Fahey, Chief Financial Officer
Caroline Passerotti, Financial Analysis Manager
Celia Feres-Johnson, Director of Human Resources
Yvonne Curtis, Director of Student Achievement

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:
Mallory Bray, Churchill High School
Lizzy Monroe, South Eugene High School
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 at 7 p.m. and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA REVIEW

There were no changes to the agenda.
INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Superintendent George Russell noted the many students present for the first information item and welcomed the students from Adams Elementary, their parents, and their teachers.

Superintendent Russell extended congratulations to North Eugene High School and its small schools for being awarded a second extension of its Meyer Memorial Trust Fund grant. Each of the three small schools was to receive $65,000.

Superintendent Russell called the board’s attention to a letter from Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education, to all U.S. governors regarding the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the investment of federal stimulus dollars in education, which are one-time dollars to be spent over two years. In turn, the federal government asked the states to collect, publish, analyze, and act on some basic information about how our schools educate our children, evaluate our teachers, and measure our success.

Superintendent Russell noted that the money is intended to help balance state budgets, relieving an immediate economic crisis, but is also intended to boost student achievement. To that end, the department also sought the states’ commitment to making improvements in teacher effectiveness and ensuring that all schools have highly qualified teachers; making progress toward college and career-ready standards and rigorous assessments that will improve both teaching and learning; improving achievement in low-performing schools by providing intensive support and effective interventions in schools that need them the most; and gathering information to improve student learning, teacher performance, and college and career-readiness through enhanced data systems that track progress.

Superintendent Russell briefly reviewed the stimulus funding program components, distribution formula outlined in the letter, and allowed expenditures. He called attention to the metrics associated with the commitments outlined earlier on which states would report. He said the federal government required the administration effort necessary for the reporting and would provide funding for that. He anticipated the federal stimulus funding would be forthcoming soon.

Superintendent Russell anticipated the board would hear more at the upcoming National School Boards Association conference and board members would have an opportunity to ask questions of Mr. Duncan, who will be speaking at the conference.

COMMENTS BY STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Linda Gai reported on the IHS fund raiser for KIVA, an organization devoted to assisting people to support themselves in developing countries. She described some of the charity’s recipients. She noted that Eugene IHS is listed on the KIVA website. She said that IHS was also sponsoring a film festival on April 17 at the Multi-Cultural Center at Sheldon High School to which the public is invited. Eugene IHS would also hold a community service fair on April 23 at 7 p.m. in the Sheldon High School Cafeteria. Local service agencies will share opportunities they had with students. Ms. Gai concluded by announcing April 17 is the application deadline for those who received IHS acceptance letters.

Mallory Bray reported that Churchill High School’s “Mr. Lancer” Dance is being held on April 3 and the Mr. Lancer Pageant is scheduled for April 9.
Lizzy Monroe said that prior to spring break, South Eugene High School students started putting up student-designed murals, which looked good. She reported that South Eugene’s Career Day is scheduled for April 3.

Joel Iboa said that Sheldon High School’s first track meet was scheduled for April 3 and he invited the public to attend. He said that IB and IHS seniors were doing review sessions for IB testing scheduled for May.

ITEMS RAISED BY THE AUDIENCE

There were was no one present who wished to speak.

COMMENTS BY EMPLOYEE GROUPS

Merri Steele and Paul Duchin, Co-Presidents of the Eugene Education Association, were present but had no comments to offer.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Receive a Report on Adams Ed Center Audit

Adams students from grades 3, 4, and 5 presented the results and recommendations from the energy audit they conducted at the Ed Center in conjunction with the Rachel Carson program at Churchill High School. The students, James, Andrew, and Alphonso of the fifth grade and Hunter, Caleb, and Miles of the fourth grade, were joined by teachers Darby Randall, Beverly Lewis, Sheryl Aydelott, and Catherine Kotlarek-James.

Principal Pamela Irvine reported on the school’s green power grant application, saying Eugene Water & Electric Board green power customers could vote on the grant and the school would find out soon if it won funding for its solar initiative. The school also received a garden grant from the City of Eugene. She anticipated that the City Council would approve the grant on April 12.

The students noted their partnership with Tim Whitley and high school students from Rachel Carson on the project and reported on their findings and recommendations. They recommended the use of weather stripping, the use of compact florescent light bulbs, and turning lights off when no one was in the room. They presented the board with a compact florescent light bulb.

Dr. Martinez thanked the students for their work.

Receive a Legislative Report

Barbara Bellamy, Chief of Staff and Director of Communications, briefed the board on legislative issues and board and staff communications with legislators.

Ms. Bellamy reported that a joint meeting of the House and Senate education committees met earlier that day to discuss the topics of virtual education and charter schools. Randy Harnisch of the Oregon School Boards Association had presented testimony to the committees to provide
context on the topics and to remind the committees that when the charter school law was developed, it did not envision virtual legislation. The Oregon School Boards Association and Oregon Education Association provided testimony regarding the bill, as well as parents of children now in virtual charter schools. Ms. Bellamy anticipated that Senate Bill 767 (SB 767) would be the framework for any further conversation about the topic, and she provided copies of that bill to the board. She said a number of groups had coalesced around the bill. She briefly reviewed the components of SB 767.

Responding to a question from Board Member Craig Smith about a bill introduced by Senator Vicki Walker that proposed to eliminate a district’s ability to release students to home schools, Ms. Bellamy said she would check into the status of that legislation.

Superintendent Russell reported that the figure he was now hearing in Salem in regard to the education funding shortfall for the 2009 biennium was $5.4 billion, which would mean a $5 million impact on the district.

CONSENT GROUP – ITEMS FOR ACTION

Approve Grant Application: eMILE Project

Staff from the Instruction Department submitted a grant application to the Chintimini Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation for $6,708. The Engaging in Mobile and Individualized Learning Environments (eMILE) Project will provide a creative, engaging, and accelerated learning environment for students through the use of the iPod Touch mobile technology. An individual iPod will be issued to 30 Talented and Gifted (TAG) identified and/or high potential sixth through eighth grade students attending three of the district’s middle schools. Participants and their advisors will design a curriculum-based study, including research, that accelerates learning using a variety of activities.

The superintendent recommended approval of the grant application. A copy of the grant description form was included in the board packet.

Approve Board Meeting Minutes

The superintendent recommended approval of the minutes from the February 4, 2009, February 18, 2009, and March 4, 2009, regular board meetings and work session. Copies of the minutes were included in the board packet.

Approve Personnel Items

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

MOTION: Board Member Jim Torrey, seconded by Mr. Smith, moved to approve the consent items.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously; 7:0.
ITEMS FOR ACTION AT A FUTURE MEETING

Approve Instructional Calendar for 2009-2010 School Year

Celia Feres-Johnson, Director of Human Resources, and Yvonne Curtis, Director of Student Achievement, were present to answer questions regarding the proposed 2009-10 instructional calendar. Dr. Feres-Johnson said the calendar was developed within the budgetary adjustment agreements reached between the district and the Eugene Education Association. She extended her thanks to Ms. Steele and Mr. Duchin for their flexibility and willingness to work with the district on schedule adjustments within a very short time frame.

COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS BY INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. Torrey spoke of the professional development training day at Awbrey Park he had recently observed, saying it was really well done and in particular, commended the teacher-facilitators. He said that he had also noticed that an after-school program for children was being conducted even though no school was occurring. He asked how that program was funded. Tom Henry, Deputy Superintendent and Chief Academic Officer, indicated that parents paid to send their children to the program. He did not think that Awbrey Park was a recipient of an after-school grant, but it was possible the school was using some Title I funds to support the program. Mr. Henry stated he would find out if any district funds were involved. Mr. Torrey said he had been impressed with the number of children participating in the after-school program.

Board Member Beth Gerot reported on her recent experience observing a professional day in the Churchill region. She commended the event and the participation of students and teachers. She believed it demonstrated the type of collaboration the district wanted to see.

Ms. Gerot reported that the district will participate in an ExEL In-State Institute and one day of the institute would be focused on resource use. She hoped the district got some ideas about how to use resources differently from the event.

Ms. Gerot said she visited Cesar Chavez Elementary School to observe the after-school program for Latino students who were learning to read in Spanish. She said that Carmen Urbina, Parent, Family & Community Coordinator, had indicated to her that there was a class for Latino parents so they could find out about what their children were expected to learn in school to help them be better prepared to help their children. A similar class was being planned for parents of African-American children.

ADJOURN

Dr. Martinez adjourned the regular board meeting at 7:45 p.m.

George Russell
District Clerk

Charles Martinez, Jr.
Board Chair

(Recorded by Kimberly Young)
Attachments to Official Minutes:
1. Letter to Governors from U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan
2. Grant Application Form: eMILE Project
3. Personnel Action Items

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Under provisions of ORS 192.610 – 192.690, Open Meeting Laws, the Board of Directors conducted an Executive Session for the following purpose: To conduct deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to carry on labor negotiations, pursuant to ORS 192.660 (2) (d).