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

May 20, 2009

The Board of Directors of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Eugene, Oregon, held a regular board meeting at 7 p.m. on May 20, 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 May 15, 2009, and published in the Register-Guard on May 18, 2009.

ROLL CALL

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

STAFF:
George Russell, Superintendent of Schools and District Clerk
Barbara Bellamy, Chief of Staff and Communications Director
Susan Fahey, Chief Financial Officer
Tom Henry, Deputy Superintendent and Chief Academic Officer
Carl Hermanns, Assistant Superintendent/Chief Operating Officer
Jon Lauch, Director of Facilities Management
Peter Tromba, Principal, Monroe Middle School
Sara Cramer, Principal, Cal Young Middle School
Cydney Vandercar, Principal, Spencer Butte Middle School
Jose da Silva, Secondary Assistant Principal, Monroe Middle School
Tim Carmichael, Athletic Coordinator, Churchill High School

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:
Mallory Bray, Churchill High School
Lizzy Monroe, South Eugene High School
Joel Iboa, Sheldon High School

OTHERS:
Paul Duchin, Co-President, Eugene Education Association
Merri Steele, Co-President, Eugene Education Association

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 7:18 p.m., after a performance by the Spencer Butte Middle School choir. Dr. Martinez 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 thanked the Spencer Butte Middle School Choir for their performance preceding the board meeting.

4J School Board Election

Superintendent Russell extended congratulations to Board Member Beth Gerot on her re-election to the 4J school board, and to Jennifer Geller and Anne Marie Levis on their elections to the board.

Chinese Immersion FLES Program Update

Superintendent Russell commented that during the April 15 board meeting, the board had received a report about the potential for Chinese Immersion schools. He stated that he had mentioned that the principals of McCornack Elementary School and Kennedy Middle School had expressed interest in pursuing the idea of a Chinese Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) program K-8. He also stated that at the April 15 board meeting, he had indicated that the board might see a Foreign Language Assistance grant application to pursue this program at those two schools. He stated that as of the May 20 board meeting, it looked as if this would not happen. He noted that staff at McCornack had decided not to pursue the application at this time.

Kate Darden Celebration of Life

Superintendent Russell spoke about attending the Celebration of Life for Kate Darden, a former school principal at 4J, who lost her battle with cancer. He stated that she had been a good friend and colleague to many in the district. He expressed his condolences to her family and friends.

Phone Issues

Superintendent Russell noted that the district was in the process of changing over their phone system, and that so far, all Ed Center phone numbers had changed. He stated that he would make sure board members received a copy of the updated phone list.

Town Hall Meetings with Legislators

Superintendent Russell stated that he was hoping board members would report on the two town hall meetings with Lane County legislators that had been held on May 16, as well as on the Stand for Children event in Salem.
COMMENTS BY STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Mallory Bray, Churchill High School, explained that Churchill was preparing for their Spring Fest, which leads up to the Powder Puff game on June 5. She stated that the school was holding a club fair during lunch period and would also have performers. She stated that elections for class officers for the following year would take place on May 21. She also stated that the school was preparing for graduation.

Joel Iboa, Sheldon High School, reported that Sheldon was also going to have Spring Fest soon. He stated that the event would include an inflated jungle gym. Students were also preparing for graduation.

Lizzy Monroe, South Eugene High School, stated that Spring Fest and graduation preparations were also occurring at South Eugene. She stated that the school was re-evaluating their school improvement plan and would begin working on the next year's school calendar soon.

ITEMS RAISED BY THE AUDIENCE

None.

COMMENTS BY EMPLOYEE GROUPS

Merri Steele, Co-President of the Eugene Education Association (EEA), congratulated Ms. Gerot on her re-election, and Ms. Geller and Ms. Levis on their elections to the board. She stated that on May 18, the EEA had appeared before the 4J Budget Committee and that she wanted to restate their points and provide the board with additional information. She stated that the Co-Chairs of the Joint Ways and Means Committee of the Oregon legislature had announced a $6 billion budget for Oregon's K-12 schools, and that this was a significant step in the right direction. She stated that current indicators revealed that the economy would begin to stabilize as early as next year. She expressed EEA's desire that the extra resources provided to Oregon schools would address growing class sizes inside 4J and help continue to provide core courses. She described an incident where a parent chose to send their children to a different school district based on the class size in which their children would be enrolled, which was 34 students. She explained that larger class sizes and the elimination of some class sections was a huge issue for secondary students, especially those who wanted to take college-level courses or who wanted to graduate with a full IB degree.

Paul Duchin, EEA Co-President, stated that he had also attended Ms. Darden's service, and that he was struck by the amusing anecdotes about Ms. Darden shared there. He explained that much of the service addressed Ms. Darden's passion for education and for teaching. He stated that he and Ms. Steele had been meeting with displaced and laid off teachers, and expressed that it was difficult to meet with these teachers because of their passion for education and teaching. He stated that it was difficult to figure out why the district had come to this place, making it clear that EEA understood that the board had not created the problem. He noted that many teachers would suffer a great deal because of cut backs, and that many employee groups had already made sacrifices to try to assist the district. He stated that the district should acknowledge this, and that the district needed to step forward if there were additional funds to restore some of the eliminated FTEs. He stated that over 50 teachers had been displaced or partially displaced. He explained that over 60 teachers had been temporary employees and
were let go, and that 36 FTE had been cut. He stated that EEA hoped the district would restore some of the FTEs.

Ms. Steele thanked the board for the recognition of the diversity cadre at the May 6 board meeting.

**ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**Presentation from Lane County Head Start Program Director Annie Soto**

Superintendent Russell introduced Annie Soto, Executive Director of Head Start of Lane County (HSLC), and stated that at the May 6, 2009 board meeting, Board Member Jim Torrey raised concern about the pending cuts to Head Start funding in the state and in Lane County, and the impact or implications of such reductions to early childhood education and district efforts to close achievement gaps.

Ms. Soto shared information regarding the status of Head Start funding and described the Head Start program relationships and connections with 4J. She reviewed a document entitled *Head Start of Lane County Mission Statement; Ready to Learn; Transitions to Kindergarten*.

In response to a question from Mr. Torrey related to the federal stimulus and Early Head Start, Ms. Soto explained that Early Head Start had been around since 1995. She stated that it had been in HSLC’s strategic plan since 1997, and that it served children 0-3. She explained that these years in a child's life are very important in terms of many things, including prevention measures. She explained that HSLC would apply for 72 Early Head Start slots out of the 120 available in Oregon, in concert with Healthy Start and the University of Oregon. She stated that HSLC hoped to begin serving these children within 18 months. She explained that at the national level, there are $1.1 billion available, and that $3.8 million was available for the State of Oregon. She stated that the cost of the program was about $13,000 per child. She explained that Head Start of Lane County had received $387,000 in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) dollars, which was a welcome but unexpected gift. She stated that 50% of this amount would go to staff cost of living adjustments because staff salaries had been flat funded for the past eight years. She explained that the other 50% would be used for improvements and repairs to facilities. She noted that the ARRA money would not address lost slots, as there were no ARRA dollars for Head Start expansion, and that the dollars were for preschool classrooms.

In response to a question from Board Member Craig Smith related to language arts adoption, Ms. Soto explained that the language arts adoption the board had voted on a few years before had gone through.

In response to a question from Board Vice Chair Yvette Webber-Davis related to the 200 families on the HSLC waiting list, Ms. Soto explained that HSLC was mandated to re-prioritize families by income eligibility once each year. She stated that the waiting list was by income level (including income related to the number of eligible children in a household) and that HSLC had a weighted system that considered a number of factors. She stated that homeless and foster children were always placed at the top of the waiting list. She stated that some families were referred to HSLC community partners, and that not all children on the waiting list received services.
In response to a question from Mr. Torrey related to how HSLC worked with the Oregon Health Plan, Ms. Soto explained that any family not enrolled in the Oregon Health Plan were encouraged to do so and were supported in their enrollment by HSLC's nurse. She explained that HSLC also funded certain medical procedures for families not eligible for the Oregon Health Plan.

Ms. Soto encouraged board members to stop by one of HSLC's sites and thanked the district for its support of HSLC.

**Receive a Report on District's Middle School Programs**

Superintendent Russell invited Kay Mehas, Director of School Services; Peter Tromba, Monroe Middle School Principal; Sara Cramer, Cal Young Middle School Principal; and Cydney Vandercar, Spencer Butte Middle School Principal, to come forward to present information regarding the efforts of middle schools to move in the direction of achieving the board goals and accomplishing the key results at the middle school level.

One of the board’s key results under the goal of increasing achievement for all students and closing the achievement gaps is: *By 2011-12, the district will implement state-adopted content and performance standards, and outline the knowledge and essential skills that students will demonstrate at the critical transition stages of elementary and middle school.*

Ms. Mehas stated that it was a privilege to work with outstanding educators and administrators. She stated that the most important stages in a child's development occurred between ages 0-3 and during middle school. She read a short passage from a document titled: *The Forgotten Middle: Ensuring that All Students Are on Target for College and Career Readiness before High School.* She introduced the middle school principals.

Ms. Cramer stated that the goal of middle school principals was to send students forward with the academic skills and readiness that they need for high school and for college. She explained that oftentimes, middle school students and their abilities were underestimated. She then played a student-produced video about Cal Young Middle School's Discrimination Free Zone (DFZ).

Ms. Cramer explained that interventions, challenges and transitions were three things that middle school principals spend a lot of their time concerned about and working on. She then showed another video.

Ms. Cramer explained that the middle school principals made up a cohesive group because of their small numbers. She stated that the group collaborates on making middle school count and making students aware of the importance of this time in their lives. She stated that middle school teachers were very passionate about their work.

Mr. Tromba emphasized that 4J began talking to students about college at the fifth grade level. He stated that cross-curricular classes had benefited students. He explained that student interventions and tracking student progress proved to be effective.

Ms. Vandercar stated that funding was usually provided for activities that have proven to be effective, and thanked the board for being willing to spend funds on unproven methods, stating that the support was crucial to closing student achievement gaps.
Ms. Cramer stated that she was seeing changes in teaching models, material delivery and double dose classes and explained that 4J employed co-teaching methods that involved regular education and special education teachers working in concert to teach specific subjects. She explained that she and her colleagues were also recognizing that relationships with one or more trusted adults was more important than teaching methods in determining student success.

Mr. Tromba explained that achievement scores fall in middle school, and that short classes and frequent class changes made it difficult for students to concentrate. He stated that double dose classes therefore helped students perform better.

Ms. Mehas highlighted accountability protocols and uniform algebra credits across all middle schools.

In response to a question from Ms. Gerot, Ms. Cramer stated that at her school, collaboration between teacher and student happened for each student four days per week. She also stated that the school was looking at incorporating writing activities and teaching in all classes, including Physical Education. She explained further that many middle schools were extending the length of each class period.

Ms. Vandercar explained that longer class periods were making a difference, and that her school's test scores were rising.

Mr. Tromba explained that teachers in his school employed professional learning communities as a form of professional development.

In response to a question from Mr. Smith, Ms. Cramer explained her desire for four years to work with students before they entered high school rather than the current three, starting with fourth or fifth grade, so that curriculum for those years could be aligned across the district.

In response to a question from Mr. Torrey, Mr. Tromba explained that teachers could tell from Kindergarten which students would need special help, and that parents and teachers were both needed to help students succeed. He also mentioned district initiatives designed to make middle school as relevant as possible to students.

Board Member Alicia Hays expressed her agreement, mentioning that she had just raised a middle schooler (who was now in high school). She thanked middle school administrators for their time with parents.

Ms. Cramer stated that communication between parents, teachers and administrators was vital, and that new technologies, including social networking sites, had divided children and parents.

Ms. Hays stated that parent and parenting support were also important.

Mr. Tromba said that children needed to develop self-advocacy skills because they were so influenced by their peers.

Ms. Gerot applauded the principals for their efforts, stating that in the past the district had worried more about the social aspects of middle school rather than academic content.

Mr. Iboa asked about support for families headed by English Language Learners, and what actions had taken place to communicate with these families. In response, Ms. Vandercar explained that each middle school had a mentorship program, and that each week teachers...
discuss specific students. She stated that administrators, teachers and staff had specific students they looked out for, and that the mentorship program was growing.

Ms. Cramer explained that each school had translation and interpretation support services for parents whose first language was not English. She stated that when meetings occurred at Cal Young that required parent involvement, translation services were provided, and that these services varied between school sites.

Receive a Follow-up to May 18 Budget Committee Meeting

Superintendent Russell introduced Susan Fahey, Chief Financial Officer, and reviewed the documents titled *Analysis of the 2009-2011 Co-Chairs Budget*, an email sent to Oregon superintendents by Kent Hunsaker, Executive Director of the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators (COSA) and OSBA (Oregon School Boards Association) *Talking Points on Ways and Means Co-Chairs Budget Proposal for 2009-11*. Ms. Fahey provided a follow-up report regarding the May 18 district Budget Committee Meeting.

Ms. Gerot expressed the difficulty of hearing different messages from different groups. She explained that during the OSBA Legislative Committee conference call the previous day, legislative aides were assuring in their belief that there would be enough votes to pass the Co-Chairs budget. She stated that she was unclear about the source of the additional $400 million in the Co-Chairs proposed budget, but had heard that it would come from additional tax revenues. She stated that she also understood that the $400 million would come from the $800 million proposed revenue package. She explained that she understood that in the absence of these revenues, cuts would be made to other services before they would be made to K-12 schools. She stated that she was therefore confused that these funds were being referred to as reserves by OSBA, Ms. Fahey and COSA.

Ms. Fahey explained that she received her information from documents in the packet presented at the May 16 Budget Committee meeting.

Ms. Gerot added that the variety of different data points was interesting. She stated that she looked forward to understanding the truth in the next few weeks.

Mr. Smith commented that he had heard the word “uncertainty” uttered by different legislators related to the budget and revenue sources.

Superintendent Russell echoed Mr. Smith’s comments, noting that most Oregon voters were unaware of the state budget crisis, and that polls showed that many voters believed the crisis could be solved if the state legislature cut waste, and did not favor raised taxes unless they involved school or human services funding.

Mr. Torrey stated that part of the problem was that so many voters were unaware that a state budget crisis existed. He explained his belief that school organizations were adept at presenting information to the legislature, but that other social and human service groups were not. He expressed his desire to have funds in the coming year to reinstate services that were cut during the crisis, and that the board could not and would not know the budget situation until the end of June.

Ms. Gerot stated that it was a bad time for running campaigns for money measures.
Receive a Legislative Report

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

Ms. Bellamy introduced Laurie Moses, Director of High School Services, who provided an update on the Oregon School Activities Association (OSAA) and hybrid league process at 4J.

Ms. Moses explained that the Classification and Districting Committee met on May 11 in Wilsonville, and that Tim Carmichael, 4J Athletic Director, served as the state representative of athletic directors on the committee. She stated that the committee had heard public testimony and then had gone into a work session. She explained that a South Eugene High School parent had spoken in favor of the hybrid league, stating that it would renew interest in school athletics. She stated that the hybrid proposal was currently strongly favored by the committee. She noted that the committee would hear testimony again in September, and would make its final recommendation to the OSAA executive board in October.

In response to a question from Mr. Torrey, Ms. Moses explained that Mr. Carmichael had been working closely with the committee with a goal of reducing the budget by $100,000. She then provided specific 4J hybrid activities which would considerably reduce team travel.

Mr. Carmichael explained that all of the local high schools, including Marist, had put together athletic schedules that would significantly reduce team travel, especially at the junior varsity level. Many junior varsity teams, he explained, would trade opponents in order to reduce travel. He stated that school teams would not travel unless absolutely necessary, and that the district still wanted to provide a good experience for student athletes.

Ms. Bellamy addressed the Safe and Secure Rural Schools dollars the county had worked with the federal delegation to get renewed. She explained that Mr. Smith had expressed concern that Lane County would put those funds into reserve despite the fact that the district had lobbied to be able to spend the funds locally.

Mr. Smith explained that he was concerned that this news could impact education funding in the long term, but that the decision had not yet been made. He expressed his desire that the board send a letter to county commissioners expressing concern about the potential impact their decision could have on public funding of education.

After discussion, the board decided to refer the issue to the next board leadership meeting for further discussion and possible action.

CONSENT GROUP – ITEMS FOR ACTION

Approve Expenditures for April 2009

A summary of the district’s expenditures for April 2009, totaling $15,716,665.75 was included in the board packet.

The superintendent recommended approval of the April 2009 expenditures.
Approve Grant Application: Eugene School District 4J Bus Emission Reduction Program

Staff from the Transportation Department submitted a grant application to the Environmental Protection Agency for $2,523,101. In this project, supported by American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding, Eugene School District 4J and its partner school districts – Creswell, Oregon City and South Lane – are applying for funds to support the purchase of school buses with the most current emission control systems and the replacement of older buses that do not have the current technology for diesel emission pollution reduction. The goal of the project is reducing emissions that are harmful to student bus riders and the community.

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

Approve Grant Application: Beyond the Asphalt Outdoor School—Mountaineers

Staff from Kelly Middle School submitted a grant application to the Mountaineers Foundation for $5,000. The Kelly “Beyond the Asphalt” outdoor school will provide opportunities for students to increase their understanding of the relevance of environmental science and technology, helping them to make connections to the natural world. All activities will take place at the McKenzie River Conference Center for three days of intense learning and fun along the banks of the McKenzie River in the Willamette National Forest. The experience will offer students, many of whom rarely explore beyond the asphalt parking lot adjacent to their apartment building, an opportunity to participate in GPS navigation in a natural setting, study ecosystems, learn survival skills, and identify and appreciate plants and wildlife.

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

Approve Grant Application: Title VII Indian Education Project

Staff from the NATIVES Indian Education Program submitted a grant application to the Federal Government for $264,897. The grant request is a continuing application for funding from the Office of Indian Education for the NATIVES Program to service the needs of Eugene School District 4J students. The program provides academic, cultural, and social support to students of Native American/Alaska Native heritage who are enrolled in the program in the district.

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

Approve Grant Application: Dual Language Spanish Immersion Materials

Staff from River Road/El Camino Del Rio Elementary School submitted a grant application to the Chintimini Fund of Oregon Community Foundation for $7,000. The school plans to purchase a leveled library of books in Spanish that will provide all students opportunities to read at their appropriate level and allow high potential students an opportunity to read at advanced levels. These curricular materials will enhance opportunities for the school’s Spanish-speaking and English-speaking students to be successful. The goal for this project is to produce students who are able to read and write at high academic levels in both English and Spanish. These books will help students to learn to read in Spanish and challenge them to be successful in not only one language, but two.
The superintendent recommended approval of the grant application. A copy of the grant description form was included in the packet.

**Approve Grant Application: AVID—Preparing All Students for College**

Staff from South Eugene High School submitted a grant application to the McCarty Dressman Foundation for $29,250 to expand the AVID program at the school. AVID is a program that has had great success nation-wide in helping to close the Achievement Gap. It primarily targets typically underserved populations of students (low income and/or students of color) who have demonstrated college potential, but who are underperforming. It provides supports in terms of a daily class that develops reading, writing, and study skills in addition to regular monitoring and intervention. A cadre of college tutors meets twice a week with AVID students, helping them work through higher level questions they have from their coursework in content area classes. Students who complete four years of AVID attend college at a rate of approximately 90% and complete college at a better rate than the average college student. While South Eugene is well suited to students who come from families with a college-bound tradition, AVID is helping to provide for those students who require and deserve additional support.

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

**Approve Board Meeting Minutes**

The superintendent recommended approval of the minutes from the April 15, 2009 and May 6, 2009 regular board meetings. 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.

**MOTION:** Dr. Webber-Davis, seconded by Ms. Gerot, moved to approve the consent items.

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

**COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS BY INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS**

Mr. Torrey stated that he appreciated the presentations given during the meeting.

Ms. Gerot stated that she learned that the Oregon Department of Education's budget would be cut by 16% and that Susan Castillo's office budget would be cut by 60% at a recent Professional Educators Advisory Team (PEAT) meeting. She noted that as a result, the PEAT would be discontinued, as would Ms. Castillo's Business Advisory Team. She stated that Ms. Castillo's office hoped to retain their Student Advisory Team. She explained that she and Mr. Torrey had observed River Road Elementary School's after school programs the previous week. She stated that she was excited to see activities around homework and student achievement in addition to hands-on project learning. She expressed her sadness about cuts being made to after school programs. She also expressed her gratitude for the support she received when running for re-election, saying that her re-election was reflective of the diversity and collaborative efforts of the district and the board.
Ms. Hays congratulated Ms. Gerot on her re-election. She also congratulated Siuslaw School District on the property tax levy that was approved by voters the day before.

Dr. Webber-Davis congratulated Beth Gerot for her re-election to the 4J school board, and congratulated Jennifer Geller and Anne Marie Levis for their elections to the board. She also thanked the Spencer Butte Middle School Choir for their performance before the meeting.

Dr. Martinez echoed Dr. Webber-Davis’ congratulations and stated that Ms. Geller and Ms. Levis would soon hear from the board about getting up-to-speed on board issues.

ADJOURN

Dr. Martinez adjourned the regular meeting at 9:10 p.m.

George Russell
District Clerk

Charles Martinez, Jr.
Board Chair

(Recorded by Katie Dettman)

Attachments to Official Minutes:
1. Head Start of Lane County Mission Statement
2. Summary of Expenditures for April 2009
4. Grant Application Form: Beyond the Asphalt Outdoor School—Mountaineers
5. Grant Application Form: Title VII Indian Education Project
6. Grant Application Form: Dual Language Spanish Immersion Materials
7. Grant Application Form: AVID—Preparing All Students for College
8. Personnel Action Items