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

November 18, 2009

The Board of Directors of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Eugene, Oregon, held an executive session at 6:30 p.m. followed by a regular board meeting at 7:00 p.m. on November 18, 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 November 13, 2009, and published in the Register-Guard on November 16, 2009.

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS:
Craig Smith, Chair
Beth Gerot, Vice Chair
Jennifer Geller
Jim Torrey
Mary Walston

STAFF:
George Russell, Superintendent of Schools
Barbara Bellamy, Chief of Staff and Communications Director
Susan Fahey, Chief Financial Officer
Carl Hermanns, Assistant Superintendent/Chief Operating Officer
Christine Nesbit, Associate Director of Human Resources

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).

REGULAR BOARD MEETING: The Executive Session recessed and the regular meeting convened with the above board members and staff present along with the following:

BOARD MEMBERS:
Alicia Hays

STAFF:
Laurie Moses, Director of Secondary Services
Sara Cramer, Director of Elementary Services
Sharon Tabor, After School Programs Coordinator
Paco Furlan, Principal, River Road/El Camino del Río Elementary School
Janis Swan, Federal Programs Administrator

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:
Jenna Careccia, Churchill High School
Hannah Rosenberg, Sheldon High School
Sasha Johnson-Freyd, South Eugene High School
Sarah Hankins, North Eugene High School
OTHERS:
Paul Duchin, Eugene Education Association Co-President
Merri Steele, Eugene Education Association Co-President
Sandy Shaffer, City of Eugene Library, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department

MEDIA:
KRVM

CALL TO ORDER AND FLAG SALUTE

Board Chair Craig Smith called the regular meeting of the School District 4J Board of Directors to order at 7 p.m. He announced that Board Member Anne Marie Levis was unable to attend the meeting due to illness. He noted that Board Member Alicia Hays would arrive after 7:45 p.m. He led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA REVIEW

Superintendent George Russell indicated that there were no changes to the agenda.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Superintendent Russell said guests from the River Road/El Camino del Rio Elementary School would be introduced as part of the report on the after school programs. He stated that reading materials he provided to board members included The Essential School Board Book, a book recommended by Board Vice Chair Beth Gerot. He said as they looked forward to the board retreat, he hoped the opportunity to read the book would generate conversation on board leadership. The other material included a portion of the report called, The State of Black Oregon, produced by the Urban League of Portland. He noted that he had attended an Urban League of Portland dinner during the previous week, as a guest of Jan Oliver of the University of Oregon. He thought the report would be helpful, given that the board was continuing to have a conversation regarding the Equity Committee’s report. He had included the section of the report on education because it addressed issues that the board might want to discuss. He also provided copies of a report on The Hispanic-White Achievement Gap in Oregon, produced by ECO Northwest.

Superintendent Russell related that the first recommendation from the Urban League was to attack the achievement gap before it started. He said they cited the fact that evidence clearly indicated that the achievement gap between African-American and Caucasian children began before they took their third grade tests and then persisted throughout their education. He stated that their second recommendation was to invest heavily in pre-kindergarten interventions. Their third recommendation was to require all school districts to develop equity plans based on the desegregated students’ data that was drawn from research on existing populations.

He recalled that one of the issues brought forward by the Equity Committee had been where the district was in regard to its diversity and equity strategic planning process. He stated that the League also recommended that students be assessed frequently and that there should be intervention at key stages, such as fifth to ninth grades. He noted that this conformed with the goal of looking at transition grades.

He related that another recommendation was to provide the best teachers to the students with the greatest learning needs and to ensure that staff was culturally competent to help keep
students in school. He said one finding was that almost one-third of African-American students did not graduate on time, adding that the board had some specific goals related to graduation rates. The study also recommended making classes more engaging and relevant. He noted that the board continued to discuss rigor, relevance, and relationships. He said the League also talked about career academies as part of a solution and the need for support and expansion of education initiatives that work for African-American students, examples of which were included in the report. He hoped that the material would help to generate discussion at the board retreat.

Superintendent Russell also provided a report called, *How Leaders Invest Staffing Resources for Learning Improvement*. He said Ms. Gerot, along with Paco Furlan, Principal of River Road/El Camino del Rio Elementary Schools and Barb Bellamy, Chief of Staff and Communications Director, had given a report at the Oregon School Boards Association (OSBA) Conference regarding how to invest resources to address the needs of students. He stated that the study had been conducted by The Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy from the University of Washington. He encouraged board members to read Chapter 4, if they were not able to read the entire report. He recalled that when they had the conversation with the Equity Committee, some discussion had arisen around what the district was specifically doing and how much information the board and others had about the kinds of things the district had been doing to address equity. He felt that Chapter 4 related well to the district’s efforts in that regard.

**COMMENTS BY STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

Hannah Rosenberg, Sheldon High School, reported that as the holiday season approached, many clubs at Sheldon High School were working on projects to ensure the holidays were enjoyable for everyone. She said the ASB was planning an Irish day of giving and caring and planned to hand out slices of pie on the last day before Thanksgiving break. She related that they understood the holidays could be hard for some students so they were trying to demonstrate their care for every Sheldon student. She stated that the leadership class was beginning Snowflakes of Joy; each student was collecting spare change and donations from teachers, family, and friends to buy a gift for a child in need. She said Sheldon’s Key Club was hosting a clothing drive and the nutrition classes were hosting a food drive. She also brought a copy of the school newspaper, *The Talisman*, for the board members to read.

Sasha Johnson-Freyd, South Eugene High School, related that they had spent a lot of time recently planning the annual food drive, but this year they were trying to make it the biggest one yet. She said they also had been actively looking into the possibility of holding an equity workshop specifically directed toward students. She had read a quote by President Barack Obama that talked about open and transparent government and in the spirit of this type of transparency she had recently helped to facilitate putting the South Eugene High School Student Body Constitution online. She felt this was an important step because it encouraged education, information, and the empowerment of students, which brought along with it responsibility.

Jenna Careccia, Churchill High School, stated that the Churchill High School Site Council had been taking a critical look at the school improvement plan and their goals. She said they were looking at what they had been doing, how it had been working, and what might need to be changed. She reported that Churchill had its Homecoming and the turnout had been amazing. She noted that the Community 101 program that leadership was involved in was in the process of being introduced to all the advisories in the school, so now almost every student knew what they were doing in Community 101 and would be actively participating in that process. She also
reported that the administration and the students had started to form a Gay/Straight Alliance at the school, with the first meeting to be held on the following Thursday during the lunch period. She said they hoped to create a safe place for everyone, gay or straight, to inform people about their way of life.

Sarah Hankins, North Eugene High School, said North Eugene was doing well and had held some activities around Halloween. She reported that the International High School had done its yearly pumpkin carving. She stated that they had held their first student-run assembly. She related that the advisory classes, their teams, and their mentors paired up to have an ice cream eating contest. She noted that they had received a lot of positive feedback about the event. She said awards were given and the event had been successful. She stated that State Representative Chris Edwards and Ms. Gerot had visited the school and talked to her and the other two school representatives, Jennifer Kerfoot and Yuki Partridge, about education and their opinions on how to improve it in the face of budget cuts. She looked forward to having Rep. Edwards come back to talk to the Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN) students.

Ms. Gerot commented that she felt the students had done a great job. She said it was interesting to hear the students talk about high expectations and rigor-relevance relationships. She applauded them. She said Rep. Edwards indicated that he would like to speak with students who were not as successful and they were going to arrange for him to do so.

ITEMS RAISED BY THE AUDIENCE

There was no one wishing to speak.

COMMENTS BY EMPLOYEE GROUPS

Paul Duchin, Eugene Education Association (EEA) Co-President, spoke on behalf of Ballot Measures 66 and 67, acknowledging that the board was well aware of the importance of the measures. He considered the ramifications of the defeat of the measures to be beyond Draconian. He said an additional $8.5 million taken out of the district budget could be represented many different ways. It would translate into a reduction of 120 teaching positions. He continued, if the money was taken out of the administrators, there would be no building principals, no assistant principals, and an additional 20 administrators cut. He said if the reduction was taken out of the classified workers, it would cut over 200 positions and if it was taken in days from the school year, the year would be cut by 17 days. He stated that it is obvious that these things are not acceptable. He believes that the defeat of the ballot measures would not only impact the schools, but would impact the social fabric of the State of Oregon.

Merri Steele, Eugene Education Association (EEA) Co-President, invited everyone to join in phone banking efforts. She said Board Member Mary Walston had done some phone banking already. She stated that the next phone banking date was scheduled for December 17 from 4 to 8 p.m. She also invited any district staff members interested in joining the effort to attend. She said if December 17 would not work for them, there were other dates to choose from.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Superintendent Russell noted that he had overlooked that Bev Smith, Executive Director of Kidsports, was in the audience during the introduction of guests segment of the meeting. He introduced her to the board. He said the school district had a long-standing relationship with Kidsports and he welcomed Ms. Smith to the meeting.
Receive an Update on the District’s After School Activities

The Best and ACE after school programs are funded by 21st Century Community Learning Center Grants. These grant-funded programs partner with the school district, Title 1, USDA food program, City of Eugene, LIFE Physical Education grant, Family Resource Coordinators, and Arts Umbrella to provide targeted academic assistance and enrichment to over 500 students in eight of the district’s highest poverty schools. Data collected shows that these programs are helping to close the district’s achievement gap by increasing academic skills in reading. Data is also being collected this year on math and writing achievement. Programs have been offered in the Best schools since 2000 and ACE schools since 2005, through a combination of grant and general fund dollars. Schools, parents, and students report a high level of satisfaction with the program’s goals and outcomes.

Sharon Tabor, After School Programs Coordinator, presented an update on the district’s after school programs. She said the district has had a grant for the programs since 2000 and also received some funding from the City of Eugene, the district, and, as of this year, have a new partnership with Title 1. She invited all board members to visit the program.

An I-movie had been created to highlight some of the components of the program. She said they focused on students and parents, in order to obtain feedback about the program. The I-movie on the ACE and Best programs was presented. Ms. Tabor credited Jeff Henderson for the many hours of work he had put into making the movie. The DVD received a round of applause.

Ms. Tabor said the programs have three goals: To support academic achievement; to bring families into the schools; and to work with community partners. She shared slides on the achievement data, adding that three of the after school programs focus on writing. She related that a University of Oregon student had conducted a study on all of the writing programs a couple of years earlier. Students who were in need of some support in writing were targeted. She showed a graph that indicated that ACE students’ writing started out below that of their peers, but experienced a 30 percent increase in writing abilities over their peers who were not in the program.

Mr. Furlan showed a slide that delineated the improvement in reading fluency that students in the Best program experienced. He also shared a slide showing significant improvements experienced by the River Road Elementary students. He noted that almost 50 percent of the River Road students are picked up by the bus at 7:30 a.m., eat breakfast at school, receive lunch at school, and then are fed dinner at school before being taken home at about 6 p.m., four days a week. He said it is an all-encompassing program. He acknowledged that it is a long day, but there are 75 students in the program and they always have a waiting list. He described the work that the students do, noting that the ratio of students to instructors is 8:1. He stated that the students are tested every two weeks to monitor the effectiveness of the program. He has been principal of the school for six years and there has always been an after school program, but this one is the most robust so far.

Ms. Tabor stated that they are excited about receiving the Title 1 support.

Janis Swan, Federal Programs Administrator, observed that there are not enough hours in the school day for some students to receive the support they need. She said by participating in the program, students can maximize what they can do because they are able to have dinner there...
and receive bus transportation home. She feels it is a great partnership that takes advantage of using funds effectively to build a stronger program. She stated that they have been able to extend the program because of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds. Ms. Swan thanked Ms. Tabor for the work that she does to make the program function smoothly.

Ms. Tabor discussed some of the partnerships they have entered into. She said the Arts Umbrella has brought in a strings program and students are playing violins, violas, cellos and bass violins. She stated that another partner is the PAWS readers and their biggest partner is the City of Eugene. She said the City arranged for recreation opportunities for the students. Ms. Tabor invited Sandy Shaffer to speak about the City’s involvement.

Ms. Shaffer explained that she is the Youth and Family Services Manager for the City’s Recreation Services Division. She thanked the many people who have managed the grant so seamlessly over the years. She said they had done an amazing job of pulling together all of the partners to help the students improve their academic achievement. She acknowledged that it is not always easy to have outside entities come into the schools and operate programs. She said things have become streamlined and they have been able to create programs that allow them to do what is best for the kids. She related that a coordinator at Meadowlark Elementary School told her about 40 children doing yoga for an hour in the school gym. She said the more staff members were able to establish relationships with the children and the more the children had positive adult role models in their lives, the more they achieved their goals. She stated that the recreation activities and collaborative agreements they have created are time and money well spent. She added that the City and the Recreational Services Department are also facing budget hurdles.

Ms. Tabor reiterated her invitation to come and visit the program.

Ms. Walston asked if the reading scores they had presented were a snapshot in time. Mr. Furlan affirmed that they were. He explained that they tested each fall and then again in the spring to measure improvement year to year. He said as soon as a student achieved the academic benchmark three times in their progress monitoring they were exited and a new child was added.

Board Member Jim Torrey clarified that Best stood for Bethel Eugene Springfield Together. He stated that at the beginning, the ability to bring those three entities together was one of the contributing factors for how the original grant came into existence. He asked what the renewal option looked like for the grant. Ms. Tabor responded that they are competitive grants that are not automatically renewed. She said the Best grant is in its second year and there will be four more years of funding, three with full funding, the fourth at 75 percent of the funding, and the fifth at 50 percent. She stated that the ACE grant is in its fourth year and is at 75 percent funding and will receive 50 percent of its funding in the next year. She related that they are not writing a grant at present because they are not allowed to do so during the grant cycle.

Mr. Torrey asked if the Bethel and Springfield School Districts are still involved in similar programs. Ms. Tabor affirmed that they are. She said Springfield has formed a successful relationship with the Willamalane Park & Recreation District and the City of Eugene has kept a program going at Bethel School District called Club Bethel.

Mr. Torrey congratulated them on their program.
Presentation of The Principal Story DVD

Superintendent Russell presented The Principal Story which provides a portrait of the challenges facing America’s public schools and the difference a dedicated principal can make.

Superintendent Russell explained that the video is part of the Wallace Project, funded by the Wallace Foundation. He said the district has been the recipient of over $1 million from the Wallace Foundation over the past seven years. The district continues to be involved through the Oregon Leadership Network and through ExEL. He stated that The Principal Story was originally broadcast by the Public Broadcasting System. He said the documentary featured principals of two schools, one in Chicago and one in Springfield, Illinois. He felt there are some schools in Eugene that are very similar to the one in Springfield.

Ms. Hays arrived.

Superintendent Russell shared the documentary, which was 55 minutes long, with the board. At its conclusion, he noted that he had seen it five times and still found it to be moving. He was particularly impressed by the caring and feeling for the students exhibited by the principals that were featured. He said he had followed up with some of the people from Springfield, Illinois, at the Wallace Conference and he had spoken with the principal that was featured, Tresa Dunbar, about some of her work. Kerry Purcell was the Chicago principal who was featured. He observed that people are often not aware of how difficult the role of the principal is. He felt that sometimes people became so engrossed with test scores that they lose sight of the social and emotional things that happen with kids every day. He said principals have to address those things as well as needed instructional improvements.

CONSENT GROUP – ITEMS FOR ACTION

Approve Grant Application: 4J Technology Rich Classrooms-Adams

Staff from the Instruction Department submitted a grant application to the Oregon Department of Education for $267,782 over a two year period. The district and its partners at the University of Oregon seek to create four model Technology-Rich Classrooms (TRC) at Adams Elementary School. Key components include: Extensive technology access for students and 21st century teaching stations; technology training and 1:1 teacher support by an experienced technology coach; and ten days intensive ongoing professional development per year (5 days from ODE and 5 days from 4J).

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

Approve Grant Application: IPod Literacy Project

Staff from the Instruction Department submitted a grant application to the Qwest Foundation for $8,104. The IPod Literacy Project extends the current IPod Intervention Project from three middle schools to all eight middle schools in the district. The project has three goals: Improve student reading comprehension strategy use; increase student and teacher access to technology that supports reading comprehension strategy use; and increase teacher knowledge and skill in incorporating digital technology in their classroom.
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 October 21, 2009 and November 4, 2009 work sessions and regular board meetings. Copies of the minutes were included in the board packet.

**MOTION:** Ms. Gerot, seconded by Ms. Walston, moved to approve the consent items.

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

**ITEMS FOR ACTION AT A FUTURE MEETING**

**Vote on Oregon School Boards Association Officers and Resolutions**

The 2010 Oregon School Boards Association (OSBA) Board-Elect nominated the following candidates for the open officer positions:

- Secretary/Treasurer – Kris Howatt
- Vice President – Randy Tweten
- President-Elect – Bobbie Regan

Officers will be elected by member boards with each board casting one vote for each office. Larger sized districts have more than one vote under the governance model for votes on resolutions, legislative policies and priorities, constitutional amendments and officers. School District 4J has two votes based on the weighted formula. Officers serve one-year terms. President and past-president positions are filled automatically by the current president-elect and president respectively.

The OSBA Board and Legislative Policy Committee have referred the following four resolutions to member boards for voting:

- **Resolution 1** amends the OSBA constitution to establish that when a member district, education service district or community college boundary spans more than one OSBA region, that member board must declare in which region it intends to vote and vote only in that region.
- **Resolution 2** establishes a finance committee in the OSBA constitution to monitor, review and recommend investments, investment policy and the financial practices of the association.
- **Resolution 3** amends the OSBA constitution to allow the OSBA board to select its officers and discontinue the practice of referring a slate of officers to the membership for ratification.
- **Resolution 4** amends the OSBA constitution to add two OSBA board of director positions to represent the regions of the immediate past president and president, respectively, during their terms in those offices when those officers come from regions that have only one representative.

Voting in the 2009 OSBA Officer and Resolution Election will open on November 16, 2009 and run through December 15, 2009. OSBA mailed copies of the Voter’s Pamphlet to all board members. The board will vote on the OSBA officers and resolutions at the December 2 board meeting.
Ms. Bellamy stated that Ms. Gerot would speak more to this item.

Ms. Gerot explained that the OSBA board has set four resolutions before the membership. She said the former process would have had them voting on the resolutions in the membership meeting, but now they will be voting as a board and whatever vote the board puts forward will go forward to the OSBA. She reviewed the resolutions.

Ms. Walston related that she had sat in on the business meeting at the OSBA Conference. She felt the resolutions were well thought out and that the discussion on them had been robust.

Mr. Smith remarked that one problem with the third resolution is that if a district has a bad board, they would have bad leadership.

Ms. Gerot said with the new governance model, they are finding that they are getting new board members who are not just throwing their names in a hat. She believes they have a much better board than had been seated six years earlier. She noted that they are only putting forward one name to replace Scott Hiller, who resigned from the board effective January 1. She related that they will be selecting a new president and a new treasurer, but it is hoped that the current treasurer, Bobbie Regan, will become president.

COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS BY INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS

Board Member Jennifer Geller reported that she had attended the OSBA Conference. She learned about a number of things and there were things that had resonated for her. She considered both keynote speakers to be fantastic and had spoken about a lot of the things that the district was doing. She said a theme that emerged had to do with the economic times and the importance of having arts and opportunities for extracurricular activities in the schools. She believes that students need those opportunities to develop creativity; it is a critical part of student achievement. She stated that the speaker, Dave Hunt, had spoken a lot about Ballot Measures 66 and 67. She had been disturbed to learn that if the ballot measures failed, the state would also lose some federal matching dollars.

Mr. Torrey urged anyone who is available between 8 a.m. and noon to attend an economic development discussion at the Hilton Hotel. He felt it is very important to emphasize the significance of quality education in the community in terms of making sure that people would want to do business in the community. He said organizations are looking at where they should go because it is now a buyers’ market. He was convinced that quality education makes a difference in terms of where businesses decide to locate and in terms of where existing businesses fail.

Ms. Hays related that she had attended a Disproportionate Minority Contact Conference in Portland on November 16. She noted that approximately 600 people had been in attendance. She said they were looking at the disproportionate contact in juvenile justice and child protective services involving minority families. She reported that one of the first things brought up was that education should be included in next year’s conference, as well as alcohol and drug dependency issues and mental health-related issues. She thought they should hold it in a larger venue because the conference had been very crowded. She observed that when they discussed things such as the achievement gap, it was woven together and they need to look at the whole picture of what was happening. She had spoken with John Raddich about the
Ms. Walston said she had attended the OSBA Conference. She echoed Ms. Geller’s comments and congratulated Ms. Gerot for serving as president of the organization. She related that she had gone to North Eugene High School the previous week, learning more about the small schools model. She appreciated that they had student ambassadors explaining their classes. They had also spent about 20 minutes in one classroom with a teacher who explained project learning.

Ms. Gerot stated that she had testified before the Race to the Top design group the Thursday before the OSBA Conference. She served on the Low Performing Schools Work Group. She said a major component around board development had been completely dropped, as had almost any mention of school boards, and she had urged them to include it. She had spoken with two members of the design team after the testimony and they related to her that they had met earlier in the day and felt that something was missing. She had been assured by them that there would be, in the final draft, some pieces around board development and governance as an important component.

Ms. Gerot shared that she had the opportunity to welcome some Japanese students who came to Kelly Middle School for a week on behalf of the board. She complimented the program, in which students really communicate with the students from Japan and the Japanese students came to share their culture.

Mr. Smith thanked Superintendent Russell for sharing the documentary with the board. He extended his congratulations to Ms. Gerot for her service on the board. He said he had gone to the OSBA Conference to give a presentation, along with Ms. Bellamy and Superintendent Russell, on evaluations of superintendents.

Mr. Smith noted that he and Ms. Gerot had gone to River Road Elementary School. He found it always interesting to see the Spanish immersion program. He commented that Principal Paco Furlan shared a lot of the same characteristics with the principals that were featured in the documentary.

ADJOURN

Mr. Smith adjourned the meeting at 8:59 p.m.

George Russell     Craig Smith
Superintendent     Board Chair

(Recorded by Ruth Atcherson)

Attachments to Official Minutes:
1. After School Program Materials
2. Grant Application Form: 4J Technology Rich Classrooms-Adams
3. Grant Application Form: iPod Literacy Project