MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 4J, LANE COUNTY, OREGON

November 15, 2006

Meeting Convened

The Board of Directors of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Eugene, Oregon, held an Executive Session at 6:30 p.m. and a regular meeting at 7 p.m. on November 15, 2006, at the Education Center, 200 North Monroe Street, Eugene, Oregon. Notice of the meeting was mailed to the media and posted in Education Center on November 9, 2006, and published in The Register-Guard on November 13, 2006.

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS:
Beth Gerot, Chair
Tom Herrmann, Vice-Chair
Eric Forrest
Charles Martinez, Jr.
Craig Smith
Anette Spickard
Yvette Webber-Davis

STAFF:
George Russell, Superintendent of Schools and District Clerk
Barbara Bellamy, Director, Communications and Intergovernmental Relations
Ted Heid, Director of Labor Relations
Tom Henry, Assistant Superintendent – Instructional Services & School Services K-8
Hillary Kittleson, Director of Financial Services
Kelly McIver, Communications Coordinator, Communications & Intergovernmental Relations

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 (1)(d).

REGULAR MEETING: The Executive Session recessed and the regular meeting convened with the above board members and staff present (except Ted Heid, who excused himself) along with the following:

STAFF:
Laurie Moses, Director of High School Services
Caroline Passerotti, Financial Analyst
Bill Hirsh, Director of Facilities and Transportation
Londa Rochholz, Alternative Education Coordinator
Sam Tupou, Curriculum Coordinator
STUDENT ADVISORY PANEL MEMBERS:
Joseph Dombrosky, Churchill High School
Antonio Salgado, North Eugene High School
Dara Halligan, Sheldon High School
Caitlin Monroe, South Eugene High School

CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND FLAG SALUTE

Board Chair Tom Herrmann called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and led the salute to the flag. He noted that all board members were present.

AGENDA REVIEW

Mr. Herrmann noted that the food service contract had been added to the Consent Group, as per the addendum to the reports and recommendations entitled *Ratify Agreement with Food Service Employees*.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Superintendent Russell reported that Dan Davis was now working with the school district on school security. He was pleased that Mr. Davis was doing this work so that they could make sure that schools were as safe as possible for both the students and the staff.

Superintendent Russell asked if the Board received School District 4J priority mail. He said a memorandum entitled *Shaping 4J* had been sent out in a priority email. He provided the board with copies in the board packets. He welcomed comments and suggestions.

Ms. Gerot stated that board packets included a copy of a notebook that went to each member of the focus group. She related that the focus groups would be reporting on the work on the following day. She said board members were welcome to attend.

Superintendent Russell reported that Ms. Gerot, Ms. Moses, and he had attended the Oregon Small Schools Institute (OSSI) Superintendents Institute. He had included a copy of the agenda and a power-point presentation made at the institute.

Superintendent Russell announced that the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators (COSA)/Oregon Association of School Executives (OASE) funding package had been included in board packets. He wanted to include this because at the COSA meeting before the Oregon School Board Association (OSBA) the group had a chance to review the proposal and some of the language that was being proposed to forward to the legislature as the COSA platform.

Ms. Kittleson added that the COSA had a proposal for funding that the group was working with other partners on in order to forward it to the legislature as a joint proposal. She said the proposal was in two parts: a $6 billion state school fund proposal that would mirror the governor’s proposal for basic funding, a little above the roll-up costs needed to continue services at the current level; and an additional $3 billion for a variety of targeted funding proposals. She explained, regarding the latter, that districts would receive per pupil funding if it would be spent for different specific categories of funding, such as an all-day kindergarten or for specific equipment.
Superintendent Russell related that there had been considerable discussion on taking a menu approach. He said people were concerned that it would become like the old school improvement dollars that were there one year and gone the next. Other superintendents were concerned about the menu approach as it was just not possible because of constraints of one kind or another to have an all-day kindergarten, as an example. He stated that those districts could choose other types of programs, such as a literacy program.

Mr. Smith asked if there was any discussion regarding the Governor’s “61 percent solution.” Ms. Kittleson responded that there was not.

Superintendent Russell announced that Ms. Gerot had been elected Secretary/Treasurer of the OSBA.

COMMENTS BY STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Dara Halligan, Sheldon High School, reported that the executive leadership for the school had just returned from a leadership retreat in Seaside. She said it had been a convention with participants coming from all over Oregon. She found it interesting to see what other schools’ ideas were. She stated that the Sheldon executive team was working on one idea they had picked up at the retreat called Mug Your Teacher. She explained that all of the members of the leadership team intended to paint a mug for a teacher and fill it with treats as an acknowledgement for everything teachers did for their students. She also thought it was a good unifying activity.

Ms. Halligan stated that the term had just come to a close. She said everyone in leadership shared their community service projects and it had been good to see what everyone was doing for their community.

Antonio Salgado, North Eugene High School, related that the 10th graders were taking the Oregon State Assessment tests. He said they were given three attempts to pass the test. He stated that the Site Council was discussing how to help the sophomores pass the test with teachers in the mathematics department.

Mr. Salgado announced that they were kicking off their Project Give on November 27 with an assembly. The project sought to feed the hungry members of their area by delivering frozen turkeys to them.

Additionally, Mr. Salgado said North Eugene High School (NEHS) was putting on the play Peter Pan. He stated that the play was being directed by Fred Gorelick, a new teacher. He related that the play would be a moving play, as the audience would move from one place to another as scenes changed. He noted that there was not enough money to create a large changeable set.

Joseph Dombrosky, Churchill High School, said the school was in the midst of “No Shave November,” and there were “scruffy looking guys like [himself]” walking around the school. He related that there were football playoffs on November 18 and the school leadership was planning a tailgater in the parking lot to raise school spirit.

Mr. Dombrosky reported that a date had been selected in December for a canned food drive dance to gather non-perishable items to donate to Food for Lane County during the holiday season.
Superintendent Russell noted that the Churchill High School (CHS) football team was doing very well.

Caitlin Monroe, South Eugene High School, related that everyone in student government was collecting dimes for the March of Dimes for the month of November.

Ms. Monroe said she had enjoyed the presentation given by the Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN) representatives about their recent experience at the conference in Wisconsin. She had discussed having a meeting between the student government of South Eugene High School (SEHS) and MSAN with one of the representatives. She hoped to collaborate to work on increasing awareness about diversity.

Ms. Monroe added that the Alcohol and Substance Abuse Prevention (ASAP) training was scheduled for the upcoming weekend. She said juniors and seniors provided the presentation to the sophomore class.

ITEMS RAISED BY THE AUDIENCE

Tim Whitley, President of the Board of the Willamette Resources & Educational Network (WREN), a local non-profit organization, and a teacher for the School District 4J, stated that this was his 16th year teaching and his 8th year teaching at the Rachel Carson Center for Natural Resources. He felt lucky to have participated in the development of this program. He said the program had grown into a comprehensive two-year natural resources program that had been recognized by numerous local, state, and national awards. He averred that the program served as a model of the Certificate of Mastery (CAM) program and as a place where students with diverse backgrounds and interests can find success. He believed that the key to generating attitudes of civic responsibility, collaboration, and discovery lie in taking students into the world. He related that the 60 students in the first-year program devoted 72 hours of classroom time each year to working with community partners on scientific data collection and hands-on restoration projects. He reported that the group had helped the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) by researching the best methods to germinate native seeds when the BLM could not afford to do it alone, and had been instrumental in helping the Nature Conversancy (TNC) preserve the last remaining habitat for endangered species in the West Eugene Wetlands. He noted that the Rachel Carson Center students had donated more time with TNC than any other organization in the area. The students had also spent many hours on habitat improvement projects with the City of Eugene Stream Team. He called these endeavors “real accomplishments” that benefited their partners and gave students knowledge and satisfaction that what they were doing was not practice, nor a class activity, but rather it provided a concrete benefit to the community and to the natural world. He felt the classrooms extended beyond the classroom walls and that the students’ teachers included a multitude of experts in the community. He stated that his students earned credits in science, language arts, and social studies and took classes in botany, ecology, field studies, technical writing, environmental law, and advanced placement (AP) environmental science. He said more importantly the students were gaining the skills needed to become active and engaged citizens in the community. He imagined a school in the future collocated with scientists, planners, land managers, botanists, wildlife biologists and where 4J students spent half of their school days working with these natural resource professionals and researchers. He envisioned students leading field trips for visiting elementary students and possibly adults at a state-of-the-art sustainably built facility which would serve students and would become a hub for learning about the natural environment of the South Willamette Valley. He imagined expanding the partnership to include many more non-profit and business organizations. He declared that WREN had taken on the role of providing environmental education opportunities in the wetlands for the entire community. He
listed some of the educational activities WREN had been involved in, all at little or no charge. He stated that WREN had helped to raise nearly $2 million from public and private sources to begin the construction of a field science laboratory to complement the project approved by voters in the 2002 4J School bond measure that earmarked $500,000 for construction of two 4J classrooms to house the Rachel Carson program on site. He felt his idea of a school of the future was nearly a reality. He said with the passage of the recent Parks and Open Space bond measure $1.75 million goes to this project. He noted that the recent lead capital campaign donation from Invitrogen of $150,000 had brought the donation total to nearly $200,000. He closed by stating that with the transfer of land from the BLM to the City of Eugene imminent and the project at the top of the United Front lobbying effort list of “asks” presented to legislators in Washington, D.C. the momentum was there to make the project a reality. He urged the School District 4J to remain an active partner in the project.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Receive a Monthly Financial Report

Hillary Kittleson, Director of Financial Services, stated that the revised October report/budget projection summary was in board packets. She explained that after staff had presented the report to the board it had been realized that two journal entries had not been done: a $400,000 journal entry from the Certified Insurance Reserve Fund and a $300,000 journal entry from the Classified Insurance Reserve Fund. She said as part of employee agreements made with those two groups, lump sum payments were to be made in 2005/2006 and the insurance reserves were to pay for half of it. She reported that the projected unaudited ending fund balance for 2005-2006 was $10.8 million rather than $10.1 million and this put the projected reserves at $17.7 million, $11 million above board targets. She said this was almost $1.5 million more than budget and of that amount staff recommended that approximately $600,000 be used for reappropriation, mainly for carryover for access and options funds allocated in 2005-2006. She recalled that at the previous meeting she had reported that staff had assumed that the district would realize some savings in Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) money from the financing of the unfunded liability in the $500,000 to $700,000 range. She said this had not happened, rather there had only been a “couple hundred thousand” in additional working capital. She related that last year the superintendent recommended that the PERS savings be used for equipment and textbooks. Staff was uncertain what the recommendation was at the moment but staff would be bringing one before the board in the first supplementary budget process of January. She added that staff was delighted that the two ballot measures that would have adversely affected the schools had failed. She said the five-year forecast would be presented to the school board on December 11 and it would incorporate the most up to date information available on PERS rates and the Governor’s budget.

Receive a Report on the Annual review of the District’s Charter Schools - SCHEDULES A – B - C

Londa Rochholz, Alternative Education Coordinator, explained that district staff was charged with conducting an annual assessment of the charter schools and providing a report to staff and the board. Ms. Rochholz and Caroline Passerotti highlighted the reports, as follows:

**Ridgeline Montessori School**, now in its sixth year of operation, experienced continued gains in Oregon assessments. There was a dip in the writing scores for fourth grade, but this was based on one year and it was too soon to determine whether this was a trend. Staff has been very conscientious in analyzing instruction to see what areas might need to be strengthened. The school met the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) goals under the No Child Left Behind Act.
The school continued to work with 4J staff to meet weekly with a student services team to assess needs for special needs students.

Financially, Ridgeline Montessori was stable and was in compliance with its contractual obligations. The school had achieved a revenue level, with a combination of State funding and other sources to exceed $1 million (as had the Village School). Ridgeline Montessori reported an ending fund balance of $96,000, or 8.2 percent of their operating revenues. Reserve funds served to cushion school operations from future fluctuations in funding. Revenues included $84,000 from the District Local Option Levy and an additional $52,000 under the City of Eugene Local Option Levy. A substantial increase in expenditures arose from staffing and equipping two additional classrooms and expanded operations to include after school enrichment programs, a summer program, and an extended Kindergarten. Each of the programs was offered on a fee basis.

Ridgeline Montessori school reported a total average daily membership of 211.5 in grades Kindergarten through 8, meeting the school's target, and 89 percent resided within the boundaries of the School District 4J. Future enrollment was projected to increase slightly as the middle school population expanded into the increased capacity developed this past year.

Both the Ridgeline Montessori and Village Schools leased space from the district in the Willard School site and both schools were interested in more space.

**The Village School** was also in its sixth year of operation. It made gains in most assessment areas and experienced declines in some areas. The small testing sample size did not indicate trends. The school had been responsive in analyzing its instruction and looking for ways to improve it. It met its AYP goals under the No Child Left Behind Act. It continued to work with 4J Special Education staff on analyzing what needed to be done to serve special needs.

Martha Collins finished her first year at the Village School and was hired as Principal. She was noted for having a strong background in private Waldorf School education.

The Village School was a financially stable operation and in compliance with its contractual agreements with the school district. The school was moving toward a more "arm's length board governance model" and district staff had asked the treasurer to continue to be very involved in the oversight of finances. The total revenues exceeded $1 million in 2005-2006 and the school showed an excess of revenues over expenditures of $150,000 and an ending fund balance of $427,000 which represented 46 percent of its operating revenues. Revenues included District Local Option Levy proceeds of $80,000 and $40,000 from the City of Eugene Local Option Levy. Total expenditures grew by approximately 25 percent, due primarily to the adoption of a new salary schedule. Reserve funds were dedicated to the future acquisition of a permanent facility, equipment replacement, and mitigation of future impacts of any PERS increases. The school had substantial liquidity in most of its assets.

The Village School reported a total average daily membership of 184.6 students, which was slightly above projections, and of that total 91 percent lived within the School District 4J boundaries. It was noted that initially 20 percent of the school population did not reside within the boundaries. Future enrollment was expected to increase gradually to approximately 189 students.

The **Network Charter School** completed its third year of operation and included five organizations: Creative Minds, Material Exchange Center for the Community Arts (MECCA), Le Petit Gourmet Bakery, Nearby Nature, and the Eugene Glass School. Students performed
below district averages on assessment tests, but ran fairly close to state averages and had shown significant improvement in all testing areas. One significant accomplishment that occurred in the past year was that the school had received its accreditation as a special purpose school through the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools. The school had hired a new executive director, Dr. Mary Layton, who brought relevant experience to the position.

Regarding special education, the Network Charter School continued to work with staff to explore alternative models. The current consortium of education providers in the network were continuing to work with staff to figure out the best delivery model for special education.

The Network Charter School was managed in a fiscally conservative manner and was operationally stable and in compliance with their contractual agreements. The school reported substantial cash on hand as well as significant levels of reserves. The ending fund balances were generated to offset fluctuations in school spending and to support the acquisition of a permanent site. It reported total operating revenues of $635,000 and net income from operations of $75,000 from a total income of $96,000. The ending fund balance was approximately $215,000 which represented 24 percent of operating revenues. The major sources of the revenue were $500,000 from the State School Fund, a final installment of the Federal Charter School Implementation Grant of $50,000, District Local Option Levy proceeds of $37,000, and City of Eugene Local Option Levy proceeds of $25,000. All of the federal incentive grants had been fully expended over the past year. In the spring the school had been awarded a two-year Federal Charter School Dissemination Grant, a competitive grant awarded to charter schools that had completed the third year of operation and wanted to figure out ways to share their success or practices with other schools. The grant was for $117,000. The primary area of cost for the school had been in the area of purchase services as the school contracted with all of its providers for teaching and administrative services; no staffing costs were delineated in the audit. There was an operating surplus of over $100,000 due to savings that were incurred while a new executive director was being sought.

The Network Charter School financial statements also reflected a food service operation which had been conducted under a pilot program approved by the State of Oregon and operated independently from the school district’s food service program. The annual assessment by the State in the previous year had provided approval to continue the program.

Regarding enrollment, 149 students were enrolled in grades 6 through 12. Only one was in the sixth grade and the school may choose to drop the grade from its program. 64 percent of the school population lived within the School District 4J boundaries. The school had an average daily membership of 88.9 students, not including 13 non-resident students receiving services under an IAP. Enrollment slowly increased over the last three years but the enrollment pattern and student profile remained somewhat constant with enrollment starting out low and building over the course of the year. Turnover was higher than in other charter schools and alternative education. A number of students attend on a part-time basis.

Areas for continued improvement that were noted in the review were:

- To continue to more closely align projections for enrollment to average daily membership trends;
- To be sure that audited financial statements comply with audit law and Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) requirements in a timely manner.

Ms. Rochholz opened the floor for questions.
In response to a question from Ms. Gerot, KC Clark, Administrator in Educational Support Services, explained that the requirement for special education was that every district was responsible for the special education services for its own students. She said the School District 4J provided the services but it billed the other districts if students were from different districts. She added that an emerging issue was that students coming to Network Charter School were not always coming by parent choice and this was resulting in an increasing number of young people with behavioral issues landing in the Network Charter School program.

**Receive a Report on Work Underway at Both the State and District Levels Regarding High School Graduation Standards**

Laurie Moses, Director of High School Services, referred to the two attachments in Board packets entitled *Graduation Requirements Now and in the Future* and *High School Diploma Project*. She reviewed the work that had been ongoing in School District 4J. She noted that the State used to require 22 credits, 3 in Language Arts and 1 in Applied Arts, Fine Arts, or a Second Language, but the School District 4J required 23 credits to graduate including 3.5 credits in Language Arts and .5 in Humanities and in addition the district required 2 credits in Applied Arts, Fine Arts, or Second Language plus "4 components."

Ms. Moses reported that teams from each of the four high schools attended seven meetings over the course of the year. She stated that each team was comprised of an administrator, a counselor, a school-to-work coordinator, a 21st century coordinator, and some teachers. In addition to the four high schools, representatives from the International High School program, the Opportunity Center, the Alternative Education programs, and Network Charter School also participated in some of the meetings. She said much of the work had to do with the extended application component of the four components and the need to establish some criteria around them.

Sam Tupou, High School Curriculum Coordinator, explained that the additional four components as part of the new graduation requirements involved the education planning profile, the extended application, the career-related learning experiences, and the six standards as part of the college/workforce readiness. He said the State was pushing for students to apply the knowledge and skills they were learning in the classroom in conjunction with their career goals and plans. Part of the work Ms. Moses had referred to had to do with the high schools developing plans in order for students to apply their learning. He cited, as an example, that South Eugene High School was implementing its senior project referred to as the Senior Seminar Experience and at the end of the school year, current seniors were expected to demonstrate their learning with a project and a presentation. Regarding community service, Mr. Tupou related that South Eugene High School required 25 hours in conjunction to their reports and Churchill High School required 60 hours of community service to be completed by students with 20 hours documented as part of the student’s personal planning. He said because of its recent shift to the small schools model North Eugene High School students were demonstrating the rigorous standards through their AP English classes. He stated that Sheldon High School students were completing a 10th grade block period where they did hours of job shadows and a reflection project.

Ms. Moses added that as part of their work they had come to consensus on a definition of rigor. She said they discussed the challenges they were facing without a common district expectation for this work and had many questions about diplomas and certificates. After much discussion, the teams settled on using proficiency rather than sufficiency around the extended application component of the graduation requirement and they added a community component for each school that had not been previously in place. She related that at present in Eugene there were
five different types of diplomas and five different types of certificates and the standards were different at each site. She listed the questions that the teams were asked to look at:

- To what extent are we in support of the Oregon State Board's leaning of offering one state high school diploma?
- Do we support 4J offering multiple types of diplomas?
- If so, should the requirements for each look the same or should they be different?
- Do we support continuing to offer a variety of certificates?
- Given that the State was increasing requirements to 24 credits, should 4J requirements for the honors diploma increase as well?
- What issues and concerns should be identified around implementing a modified diploma?

Ms. Moses stated that the second piece of writing outlined the direction the State was taking in regard to diploma requirements. She said they had not yet determined a process whereby feedback was attained from either the representative teams or the schools, themselves. She related that Ms. Bellamy, Mr. Tupou, and she would be attending a workshop on November 20.

Ms. Webber-Davis said she did not expect answers at the present meeting. She noted that in other quarters around the State it seemed there was a little more information in terms of science and math requirements, one of which was that Algebra 1 and above would be counted but every student would be required to complete Algebra 2. She said two terms of lab sciences were required. She remarked that as she was thinking about the requirements she wondered if there would be opportunities for students to meet requirements through some kind of proficiency assessment or whether the requirements would solely be based on class work. She also wondered what this would mean for staffing and professional development. She asked if there was a plan for tracking and implementing it.

Ms. Moses responded that the State Board of Education had a policy that read that districts could award credit based on proficiency, but she was uncertain how much discussion had transpired as to what School District 4J wanted to do with it. She said teams from each of the schools were being sent to a three part series sponsored by Lane Education Service District to learn about it. She added that the extent to which these additional requirements would require a clear timeline and the implications related to staffing and course offering changes, particularly related to the math change. She projected that not counting math classes that were less rigorous than Algebra 2 would have a significant impact on how courses were offered and what was expected of students.

In response to a follow-up question from Dr. Webber-Davis, Ms. Moses affirmed that today's 9th graders would be required to take three math classes, but at present, there was no language dictating what those math classes would be. She said further discussion on when this would occur and what math classes would be required would happen before the end of the year.

Mr. Smith was interested in hearing what current seniors thought about this.

Ms. Moses noted that many of the components were already in place in 4J schools. She cited, as an example, that students would be required to have a plan and profile for his or her education; this had, to varying degrees, been in place in 4J schools for a number of years.

Mr. Smith asked school representatives if they recalled this activity. Ms. Halligan replied that she thought she did. Mr. Tupou said most student plans were in the guidance counselor office. He said the move to change it intended to get students to engage more in their planning.
Superintendent Russell remarked that he had participated in a discussion at the OASE meeting at the OSBA conference. He said the State had a DVD that outlined the basis for why the changes were needed. He recalled that there were passionate differences of opinions on whether or not high schools should be preparing their students for college; some people felt there should be different tracks for different students depending on an assessment of potential, aptitudes, and abilities. He related that much of it depended on where schools were in the state and what kinds of job opportunities were available in different communities, in that some people wondered if it was appropriate to “impose” a college type of curriculum on students when the reality was that only 10 percent would go on to college. Some people thought it did a disservice to some students to focus on college as a choice for all young people. He noted that he had included an article by Richard Rothstein entitled A Misdirected Push: College for All? in board packets, because one of the superintendents at the OASE meeting had brought it out to prompt a discussion on whether schools were moving “too quickly in the wrong direction.” He commented that Mr. Rothstein had also written Class in Schools and had interesting viewpoints regarding the achievement gaps and where some of the obligations and responsibilities should come from and be directed to. He predicted there would be more spirited discussions as ODE and the State Board of Education circulated around the state and held sessions on this issue. He added that the superintendents group had a representative who sat with the State Board Of Education, Doug Darden.

In response to a question from Mr. Forrest, Ms. Moses listed the five different types of diplomas: traditional, modified, individualized, alternative, and honors. The five different certificates included the CIM, the CAM, a certificate of accomplishment, a certificate of attendance, and a certificate of achievement.

Mr. Forrest asked if anyone was talking about physical education. He pointed out that in four years of high school only one credit of physical education was required. Ms. Moses replied that there was community interest in it. She noted that IHS students could seek to waive physical education and health. She thought one possibility for addressing physical education would be to give credit for proficiency.

Ms. Spickard related that parents had asked her how scheduling would work. Ms. Moses responded that at this point they were primarily looking to find common definitions of diplomas.

Dr. Webber-Davis observed that many times things were done educationally that might or might not connect with other things that had been done. She asked if there was a linkage between the Oregon Content Standards and the potential new requirements. Ms. Moses replied that her sense was that there was concern about the work force and the post-graduates. She felt that much of the present work was driven by a fear that students were not leaving high school prepared to be successful in secondary education, in the work force, and as citizens. She felt this was driving the most recent conversation.

Mr. Tupou affirmed that this was part of the conversation. He said it boiled down to the skills and knowledge that young people should have when they walk out the door. He noted that Sheldon High School had been piloting a curriculum alignment project in which the teachers sat down and had a conversation about what skills and standards they were addressing and then tried to match it up with other teachers in order to reduce gaps and redundancies in skills. He added that South Eugene High School and some of the other schools were looking at standardizing the approach to the standards, so that a student transferring from one school to another would not miss out on critical skills.
In response to a question from Dr. Martinez, Ms. Moses explained that the third meeting had been held the previous day and at that meeting they had language arts teachers and principals from each of the high schools in addition to special educators and some teachers from the International High School look at materials in light of the language arts adoption. She said some interesting conversations had arisen because this was a group that did not ordinarily consult one another. She stated that they had been using the college readiness standards in the conversations about what sorts of standards should be in place for the 11th and 12th grade. She related that there was some logic in using those standards.

Superintendent Russell asked if the State Board of Higher Education and the State Board Of Education had met. Dr. Webber-Davis replied that the two boards had met two weeks earlier and had discussed the standards and a number of other initiatives. She said one initiative that had been undertaken in the past year or two related to general education requirements and looking at it across the spectrum, including post-secondary, four-year institutions, and community colleges so that students had greater transferability of general course requirements. She related that they had also looked at it in terms of high school requirements so that math courses, for instance, could be designated as being a prerequisite for certain college courses.

Dr. Martinez observed that from a University of Oregon perspective what might be perceived as “reaching the bar” of transfer was not just what appeared on a transcript. He said the issue of what was transferable across institutions within the Oregon University System (OUS) was one that was also complex. He suggested an “almost institutional engagement” in some of the issues. He thought instructional staff of higher education institutions might be surprised at the perspectives of those involved in higher education and vice versa.

Ms. Monroe commented that the dilemma in physical education for high school students was that some students only exercised in physical education and some participated in after school sports activities. She thought students participating in extracurricular sports could better spend time that would be spent fulfilling physical education requirements on other studies.

Ms. Gerot felt there was a sense of urgency from the State Board to complete the work and make decisions regarding graduation requirements. She asked what the process would be to get feedback to them from School District 4J. She noted there were other issues brought up by this such as the potential of having enough qualified teachers to hire in the classroom and the costs that would be associated with changes in requirements.

Ms. Bellamy responded that the State Board had requested that input be submitted by the first week in December. The original deadline had been January, 2007, and she intended to request that they revert to the original timeline.

**Receive an Update on the School Choice Process for High Schools**

Mr. Henry acknowledged that the board was aware that the district had been making policy, communication, and administrative procedure changes at the elementary and middle school levels regarding the school choice program. He said staff was now facing a few program changes at the high school level.

Mr. Henry explained that with the “small schools” at North Eugene High School and the adoption of “small learning communities” at Churchill High School there were more program options for students at the high school level. He stated that in the past some schools, such as the IHS, mailed information to parents of 8th graders and other schools did not and this created gaps in the communication process. Staff hoped to come up with one strategy that would work to
Mr. Henry thought they would probably have an informational brochure that talked about all of the programs and how to get involved in the school choice process. He said the process would not change as applicants for the programs would still turn in their forms to the Monroe Street offices.

Continuing, Mr. Henry highlighted one other change: the IHS program had not previously utilized the lottery and had managed the program from each of the high schools. He said that South Eugene High School had an over-enrollment the previous year so this year a lottery would be employed and the applications would be managed from the central office. He thought it possible, should a similar situation arise in the coming year, that students on a waiting list that live in the South Eugene attendance area could potentially not make it into the South Eugene program, while by lottery, students from the Churchill High School or Sheldon High School area could be admitted to the program at South. He noted that this happened in the elementary schools. He said staff could create a lottery whereby students that live in the attendance area of a given high school would be given priority in the IHS program of that school but this would require a policy change. He related that some high school principals were asking how more diversity in the socio-economic status (SES) of IHS students could be achieved. He thought a lottery could manage enrollment so that it was more spread out.

Dr. Martinez said this had been discussed in board leadership. He thought the district should look at prioritization by region. He encouraged staff to review the policies regarding lottery preference and to include references to the high schools and in regard to giving prioritization based on SES. He supported addressing this at a policy level.

Mr. Herrmann asked what the timing was for consideration of a change. Mr. Henry replied that the Board would have to address it in December in order to institute changes for the next year of enrollment. He thought it was doable though it would be an accelerated pace to institute the changes.

Mr. Herrmann supported considering a regional preference for high schools.

Ms. Spickard concurred with Mr. Herrmann, given that all four high schools had an IHS program.

Ms. Gerot indicated her support, adding that she would support the utilization of a similar lottery system to the one used for the elementary schools that took into consideration the SES.

In response to a question, Mr. Henry affirmed that it would not affect students that were currently enrolled.

Superintendent Russell recalled that the issue of secondary schools had come up during the Access and Options discussion and that he had stressed the importance of focusing on elementary schools at that point and then looking at secondary schools at a later point. He predicted a policy change could be controversial.

ITEMS FOR ACTION AT THIS MEETING

Adopt the 2007 Legislative Position Paper

Ms. Bellamy had reviewed the 2007 legislative position paper at the previous meeting. She said a small edit had been made based on that discussion, but it was essentially the same.
noted that the key messages to be used as a script for talking with legislators were included in board packets.

**MOTION:** Ms. Gerot, seconded by Mr. Forrest, moved to adopt the 2007 Legislative Position Paper.

**VOTE:** The motion passed unanimously, 7:0.

**CONSENT GROUP - ITEMS FOR ACTION**

**MOTION:** Mr. Smith, seconded by Dr. Martinez, moved to approve the items in the Consent Group.

**VOTE:** The motion passed unanimously, 7:0.

**Approve Board Meeting Minutes**

The superintendent recommended approval of the board meeting minutes from the regular meeting held September 20, 2006.

Dr. Webber-Davis offered the following correction to page 11, paragraph 7:

“She said she had become a member of the American Diploma Project...”

There were no objections to the correction.

**Approve Personnel Items**

The Superintendent recommended approval of the personnel items included in the packet. These cover employment, resignations, and other routine personnel matters. (see attached)

**Ratify Agreement with Food Service Employees**

The Superintendent recommended that the School Board ratify the agreement with food service employees.

**ITEMS FOR ACTION AT A FUTURE MEETING**

**Consider the Redirection of 2002 Bond Levy Funds Originally Designated for the Rachel Carson Environmental Center**

Bill Hirsh, Director of Facilities Management and Transportation, reviewed the history of the bond levy funds that had been designated for the Rachel Carson Environmental Center. He said the City bond levy had passed and it included $1.7 million for infrastructure for the West Eugene Environmental Center. He stated that in terms of budget the project had approximately $2.1 million, not including the district's commitment for $500,000. He reported that WREN was actively fund-raising with the goal of raising as much as $500,000. He said the center was projected to cost $4 million, making the project approximately $1 million short. He reiterated that the commitment the district had made was that no district dollars would be spent until all of the money was on hand.
Mr. Hirsh related that one reason the project was short $1 million was that some design work had been completed and the structure had been designed to the Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design (LEED) Platinum Standard. He said the land transfer from the BLM was imminent, but had not yet happened.

Mr. Hirsh conveyed staff’s recommendation to redirect the money within the bond to the highest priority unfunded security items. He said the reason for this was that the district was out of time for use of the money in terms of an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) penalty.

Superintendent Russell said it seemed to him that they had run out of time in terms of the IRS requirements. He did not believe it would be fiscally prudent to recommend taking a course that could result in an IRS penalty being assessed against the district. He could not ensure that the district would meet the time requirements. He said when they had made some reductions in the bond and had made some choices as to how to spend the money some of the things that had been given a lower priority and not funded included some major security improvements. He now felt, in light of some recent events, that he could not in good conscience forego a move to make the 4J campuses more secure, though he still felt the environmental center was a worthwhile project.

Superintendent Russell related that a second part of his recommendation was that if the Board was still supportive of the project, as he believed they should be, the Board should ask staff to develop optional approaches to support the Rachel Carson Environmental Center. He suggested, as an example, that the Board could look at non-capital dollars such as proceeds from the sale of surplus property that could be redirected or that it could put it into a future bond measure for 2008.

Dr. Martinez asked what the IRS penalty was comprised of. Mr. Hirsh replied that the IRS required bond monies to be spent within three years of the sale of the bond and if this goal was not met, a penalty was assessed. He was uncertain of the amount. Dr. Martinez averred that it would be important to know the quantity of the penalty and Mr. Hirsh indicated he would find it out.

Dr. Martinez stressed that he was not suggesting the district should endure a penalty, rather he just felt it important to know the information.

Mr. Forrest asked how much the center was originally projected to cost. Mr. Hirsh responded that the entire project was originally slated to cost $10 million. He thought it would probably cost more at this point. He said the work of WREN and the other partners sought to build this in phases and the school district intended to help with the first phase.

In response to a follow-up question from Mr. Forrest, Mr. Hirsh said the hope had been that construction would be underway already but the project had run into two challenges: the transfer of the land had run into a bump in that the BLM had to gain congressional approval for it and that fund-raising efforts were somewhat stymied by the fact that the project would ultimately be owned by the school district and not non-profits. Regarding the latter, he related that WREN had come back with a plan to divide the center into two pieces, a classroom owned by the school district and the support services to be owned by a non-profit. He said the school district would ultimately own a building that contained a “classroom and a half.” He added that WREN would rent most of the property from the City and the district would have a separate lease.
COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS BY INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS

Dr. Webber-Davis reported that she had spent the previous weekend at the Oregon School Board Association conference. She found it very interesting and she had met a lot of people. She also attended a lot of sessions, including some that sought to help new board members “learn from the mistakes of others.” She had been pleased to be able to be present when Ms. Gerot had been elected.

Mr. Smith related that the Eugene Education Fund Gala had been held two weeks earlier. It was a success and raised $38,000. He said the Eugene Education Fund Board had met the previous week to dole out grants totaling $78,000.

Ms. Gerot commented that the Coordinating Committee was, in terms of strategic planning, looking to engaging the Board in the process. She said as the focus group wound up, reports would be written that would then go to Superintendent Russell and then to the Board. She hoped the Board could plan a couple of work sessions or a retreat for consideration of the work. She said after the Board reviewed it the University planned to put together a think tank that would “further massage it.”

Ms. Gerot reported that the first meeting of the OSBA Governance Committee had been held. She had been impressed with the selection of committee members. She applauded the OSBA for providing good information for the committee, as the committee had been able to review a number of different models from around the country. She said the committee would meet again on the following weekend. She related that a lot of concern had been expressed at the conference regarding the change within the organization and “greater voice” within the organization. She noted that many people felt disenfranchised. She felt the governance work had potential to move the organization forward.

Ms. Gerot related that she had also enjoyed attending the conference with her colleague, Dr. Webber-Davis. She had found particularly interesting one presentation that provided an overview of the immigrants from Mexico going back to the 1800s. The presentation also included information on some of the cultural issues surrounding the immigrants from Mexico that seemed to be barriers to families and children looking at education as an important component of their future success. She did not think School District 4J had done much to look at those issues over the course of the last year and a half. She felt it to be an important topic and that the Board should revisit it.

Ms. Gerot noted that the OSBA had also done some work regarding trends in bargaining. She indicated she would send the information to the Board and staff as she felt it apropos to the upcoming bargaining the district would undertake.

Ms. Gerot added that she had enjoyed the honor of welcoming some Japanese students to Kelly Middle School. She related that she had lunched with them and they all met with Mayor Kitty Piercy. She said she had discussed the differences in the role school board members played in the educational process in Japan with a Japanese school board member.

Dr. Martinez commented that the University of Oregon had a project that was in its second year that involved youth from the School District 4J that included 240 recently immigrated Latino youth. They followed them to look some of the issues in terms of access to education and barriers and family functioning. He said there had never been a study that was this thorough with this large of a sample size. He felt there were a lot of implications regarding what this data would tell the district about its educational system.
Dr. Martinez mentioned that he had attended the Equity Committee meeting. He related that the room had been packed and there had been a lot of students that were engaged and who spoke on the concerns the committee was addressing. He said they spent a lot of time discussing the Equity Report from the previous year and many good questions had arisen from the conversation, including questions on data that was not clearly captured such as discipline referrals and the things that lead to expulsion – a process wherein there was a known disparity.

Dr. Martinez congratulated Ms. Gerot for her recent election to the office of secretary/treasurer for the OSBA. He said it meant a lot to School District 4J.

Dr. Martinez added that he would be unable to attend the board leadership meeting on November 20 and requested that someone attend in his stead.

Mr. Herrmann noted that he had spent three hours with the Chamber of Commerce interviewing future first citizen candidates. He had been reminded of what an extraordinary group of young people were attending school in the School District 4J.

ADJOURN

Mr. Herrmann adjourned the meeting at 9:06 p.m.

_____________________________  ________________________
George Russell                      Tom Herrmann
District Clerk                      Board Chair

(Recorded by Ruth Atcherson)

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