The Board of Directors of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Eugene, Oregon, held an
Executive Session at 6 p.m. and a regular meeting at 7 p.m. on October 3, 2007, 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 September 28, 2007, and published
in *The Register-Guard* on October 1, 2007.

ROLL CALL

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

STAFF:
George Russell, Superintendent of Schools and District Clerk
Tom Henry, Deputy Superintendent & Chief Academic Officer
Barbara Bellamy, Chief of Staff and Communications Director
Wally Bryant, Associate Director of Human Resources
Ted Held, Director of Labor Relations
Susan Fahey, Chief Financial Officer
Caroline Passerotti, Financial Analysis Manager
John Ewing, Financial Analyst

MEDIA:
KRVM
Anne Williams, *Register-Guard*

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

STAFF:
Laurie Moses, Director of High School Services
Jon Lauch, Director of Facilities Management
Yvonne Curtis, Director of Student Achievement
Jim Conagahan, Research & Assessment Coordinator
Ben Brantley, CIP Program Manager
Dennis Urso, Research & Evaluation Coordinator

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:
Natalie Harrison, Churchill High School
Zach Schneider-Lynch, IHS, All Campuses
Vivek Patel, North Eugene High School
Katie Melton, Sheldon High School, absent
Noah Henry-Darwish, South Eugene High School
OTHERS:
Paul Duchin, Eugene Education Association
Merri Steele, Eugene Education Association

CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND FLAG SALUTE

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

AGENDA REVIEW

Dr. Martinez determined that board members and staff had no changes to make to the agenda.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND SUPERINTENDENT’S COMMENTS

Superintendent George Russell noted several people were present to address the board. He called attention to the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) publication included in the board’s red folders entitled, “ESEA Reauthorization Begins with an Uncertain Step.”

Superintendent Russell said he and board member Beth Gerot had met earlier in the year with Senator Ron Wyden to share local concerns about the act and what changes they would like to see in the reauthorization of the ESEA, or the “No Child Left Behind Act.” The AASA had presented some positions to Representative George Miller, chair of the House Education and Labor Committee, and other representatives in Congress, and the report he had heard back was not encouraging. Superintendent Russell said he understood the basic structure of the act was not going to change significantly, and a number of key provisions that had raised concerns would continue, including the goal of 100 percent proficiency by 2013-2014, testing requirements for students in grades 3-8 every year in reading and math and again in the 10th grade against state standards, the disaggregation of data by groups, the retention of the one and two percent rules for testing special education students, and testing English Language Learners after one school year.

Superintendent Russell reported that the penalties associated with the failure to reach those objectives would also continue, including permitting students in a school that missed the AYP to move to another school of their choice in the district, permitting students to purchase after-school tutoring at district expense, reopening the school as a charter school, hiring an outside group to run the school, or reconstituting or closing the school.

Superintendent Russell said that some tweaks to the law would occur if the house and senate could reach agreement. Those included a provision that would allow states to measure growth in proficiency by looking at scores from year to year, and a provision that would permit states to use multiple measures of achievement beyond the annual statewide tests.

Superintendent Russell noted a provision which was controversial with teachers unions to calculate comparability by comparing the average teacher salary in high-poverty schools to the average salary in low-poverty schools and a second provision being contemplated that would require states and school districts to take steps to evenly distribute highly qualified teachers.

The board viewed a video entitled, “Dying to Belong” an anti-hazing video, provided by the OSAA. Superintendent Russell invited input from the student representatives about the video.
COMMENTS BY STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Vivek Patel, North Eugene High School, reported that North Eugene High School’s (NEHS) open house would be on October 9, preceded by Latino Parent Night, which was an opportunity for parents to interact with teachers. District resources tables would be available at the event. Mr. Patel said the girls’ soccer team won its recent game and the men’s football team shut out Marshall High School. He said the Ideas Small School had reported that each grade in the school was doing some form of community outreach to give back to the community.

Speaking to the anti-hazing video, Mr. Patel thought the video was based on good research and he believed some students would like it, but he perceived it as being made for parents and also thought some students might not take it seriously. He did not think hazing was as serious now at North as it had been in the past, and he perceived more interaction between grades because of the small schools, which led to a decline in hazing incidents.

Natalie Harrison, Churchill High School, said she did not think there was hazing at Churchill High School (CHS) because of such things as freshmen advisors, who helped freshmen feel safe. She thought the video should be shown to students, although some might find them boring or not worthwhile.

Ms. Harrison reported that CHS was planning its homecoming events and was hoping to clean up the dances and make them safer for everyone so chaperones enjoyed it more. She noted that Churchill was also having an open house.

Zach Schneider-Lynch, IHS All Campuses, said the International High School (IHS) picnic occurred the previous week and it was an informal get-together for parents, teachers, and students. Student government had been reworking the school’s mission statement. He reported that he had witnessed minor level hazing, such as name calling. He had a friend who broke his collar bone in a first-day-of-school incident he thought could be termed hazing. He agreed it would not hurt to show the video to students.

Noah Henry-Darwish, South Eugene High School, said South Eugene High School (SEHS) was seeing the results of its new attendance policy; now five unexcused absences would result in partial credit for any class. He reported that the administration found the rule, in combination with detention and Saturday school, to be effective in reducing unexcused absences and tardiness. He said the school was excited about Team Green, the school-run recycling program that was helping students learn how to reduce their personal impact on the environment. Some participants on the team went through school garbage cans to find recyclable materials.

Mr. Henry-Darwish agreed with the remarks of other student representatives regarding the anti-hazing video. He thought some students would consider the video overdramatic, but for those it would help, he believed it was worth showing.

ITEMS RAISED BY AUDIENCE

Dr. Martinez opened the public input section of the meeting.

Dave Hauser, 2168 Elkhorn Drive, President of the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce, said the chamber valued its partnership with the district and looked forward to continuing to work together in the future. He asked the board’s assistance in helping downtown, which is important to local businesses and an important symbol of the community’s economic vitality, quality of life, and community pride. Mr. Hauser thought that the city was on the verge of realizing some exciting things in the city center and the result could be housing and retail opportunities. Urban
renewal was a key to promoting that investment, and is a financing tool widely used in Oregon. He said that next month the community would vote on Ballot Measure 28-44, which the chamber supported. He said that opponents of the measure had implied that the financial impacts were significantly detrimental to the district and that implied district opposition. He asked the board to clarify its position regarding the measure.

Jim Crabapple asked the district to take a leadership role in trying to preserve Civic Stadium, instead of what he perceived it is doing, which was the opposite, as demonstrated by its effort to get the deed settled. He thought that generated negative publicity for 4J. He wanted the district to work with the city to keep Civic Stadium, which meant a lot to him and to the community. He did not want the district to surplus the property.

Dennis Ebert of the organization, Save Civic Stadium, advocated for the preservation of the stadium and said his organization desired dialogue about continuing it as a viable part of the community. He had collected many signatures from concerned citizens, including some from other cities and countries.

Tom Halferty, 4510 Manzanita, advocated for saving Civic Stadium, which he said many people enjoyed. He said it seemed like a wonderful community resource which people from other communities preferred to their own stadiums. He acknowledged the financial pressures facing the district and suggested a fund-raising effort be started. He acknowledged there were no imminent plans on the part of the district to sell the stadium, but suggested a private fund-raising effort so the stadium could be saved. He acknowledged that the University of Oregon was not interested in the facility, but the citizens really loved it. He suggested the Emeralds’ lease be extended while the fund-raising effort went on.

COMMENTS BY EMPLOYEE GROUPS

Merri Steele, Eugene Education Association Co-President, thanked Superintendent Russell for attending a recent EEA meeting to discuss and answer questions about the Shaping 4J’s Future process. She said it had been very helpful, and invited school board members to attend EEA meetings. Ms. Steele said that the National Education Association (NEA) had an anti-bullying program that provided information and training about bullying issues, which arose as early as elementary school.

Paul Duchin, Eugene Education Association Co-President, thanked board member Jim Torrey for having breakfast with him and Ms. Steele to get better acquainted. He noted his recent visit to Washington, DC, to attend the NEA conference where the ESEA was a major topic, and he concurred with Superintendent’s Russell’s assessment of the situation regarding the “No Child Left Behind” Act. He suggested that one glimmer of hope was that Oregon Representative Darlene Hooley was circulating the growth letter widely endorsed in Oregon and was working to have it signed by all members of the Oregon delegation. The other glimmer of hope was that Oregon Representative David Wu would introduce something related to class-size reduction, at least at the elementary level.

Mr. Duchin encouraged the board to invite the incoming secretary-treasurer of the NEA, who was chairing NEA’s committee on the ESEA, to Eugene to speak.

Mr. Duchin said the NEA had been asked to facilitate a conversation among some of the groups involved in the Jena Six controversy. Sheila Simmons, the head of the NEA’s Human and Civil Rights Department, would participate in that effort. He reminded the board that Ms. Simmons had also offered to come to Eugene to do work with the district on the achievement gap and he encouraged the district to take advantage of that offer.
ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Receive an Update on the District’s Limited Exclusive Cold Beverage Services Contract with Coca Cola Bottling Company

Caroline Passerotti, Financial Analysis Manager, provided the update, calling attention to the contract extension recently signed with the Coca Cola Bottling Company, which was included in the meeting materials. She reminded the board that the district met with the company to review the contract and to discuss the elements of the district’s wellness policy as it related to the contract. Ms. Passerotti said that the policy prohibited the sale of foods with minimal nutritional value and called for vending machines to sell only healthy snacks. The hours of operation for the vending machines were also limited. She noted that the high schools had three years to comply with the wellness policy requirements.

Ms. Passerotti reported that the company had agreed to comply with and support the wellness policy. She said that case sales had been lower than expected prior to the adoption of the wellness policy and the policy had an impact after adoption. The district and company acknowledged the district would not be able to provide the case sales expected at the time of the original contract because of the evolving climate around nutrition. Coca Cola proposed to extend the contract for 3-1/2 years, to comply with the district’s wellness policy, and to relieve the district of the case requirement as well as payback for the initial payout to the district, which the district used to pay for the installation of bleachers in the new athletic fields. Ms. Passerotti reported that the company had asked for a new pricing structure for beverages sold in the stands and permission to remove machines that did not perform adequately. Those elements were all included in the agreement. She invited questions.

Board member Craig Smith asked what was happening in the schools, what supplanted the beverages, and if students were going off campus. Ms. Harrison said the choices offered students were good, but many students went to the Churchill Market across the street, which she stated had terrible food. Mr. Patel said that more students were going off campus, including freshmen. Vending machines did not open until 1:40 p.m. and many students were off campus by that time. Many students had gone to Safeway before it closed and now they were going to the Dollar Store. Mr. Patel thought fewer students were buying school food.

Mr. Henry-Darwish agreed with Ms. Harrison and Mr. Patel. Mr. Schneider-Lynch said more people drove to school in their cars and were able to leave campus and easily find food nearby.

Superintendent Russell said the policy might be working against the district if so many students were leaving campus at lunch time. Dr. Martinez indicated some actual data would be useful. Board member Jim Torrey suggested that the district could ask nearby retailers if their business had gone up since the district’s wellness policy changes were enacted.

Receive an Update of the Shaping 4J’s Future Planning Process

Barb Bellamy, Chief of Staff and Communications Director, reported that the Shaping 4J’s Future process was proceeding on schedule. She handed out a timeline listing some key dates in the survey process. She anticipated the survey newsletter would be distributed to parents through the schools on October 16 and the survey would also be on the district’s website. There would be workshops focused on Spanish-speaking families near the end of October, and staff had discussed taking advantage of parent-teacher conferences at least, at the elementary
level, to learn if parents had filled out the survey. She noted that Superintendent Russell would discuss the survey at an upcoming City Club meeting.

**Receive an Enrollment Report**

Dennis Urso, Research and Evaluation Coordinator, provided the enrollment report, copies of which were provided to the board members in the board packet. He invited questions.

Mr. Torrey asked if the district knew what grade level was most involved in drop-outs, and why. Mr. Urso said the district had a drop-out report that was always a year behind, and it included the number of students. The reasons for dropping out were numerous, but often it was because the student did not feel as though they belonged in school and lacked an affiliation with the school. The district will employ an exit survey this year to find out why students left. To this point, the district had lacked a systematic way of tracking that data.

Mr. Urso shared a PowerPoint presentation entitled, *Three-Year Projection by Region* to demonstrate trends if the district did nothing.

Tom Henry, Deputy Superintendent and Chief Academic Officer, said the report was Mr. Urso’s final report as he recently retired and would be finishing up his work at the end of October. Mr. Henry introduced Jim Conaghan, who would be assuming Mr. Urso’s responsibilities for the district.

**Receive a Preliminary Report on Oregon State Assessment Results**

Yvonne Curtis, Director of Student Achievement, and Mr. Conaghan, Research and Assessment Coordinator, provided a preliminary report on the Oregon State Assessment Data.

At the request of board member Yvette Webber-Davis, Ms. Curtis provided an overview of the testing process, noting the challenge of providing computer access to the students. She described how the schools attempted to create test environments that fostered student success. Ms. Curtis said, in response to a follow-up question from Ms. Webber-Davis, that she was advising schools not to test students until the district was sure everything worked. The district was offering training opportunities to the schools to assist in the transition.

Responding to a question from Ms. Gerot, Mr. Urso clarified that students who met the standards in an earlier test were not allowed to retake the test.

Ms. Gerot asked staff to speculate on the fall test scores for 8th grade students at the local and state level. Ms. Curtis said staff had not yet completed that analysis and would have done that analysis over the summer if it had the scores. Mr. Henry said staff was concerned about the drop and the slides it picked were intended to highlight that data.

Dr. Martinez asked when the district would reach the point where the data was sufficiently stable and available for more in-depth analysis and discussion. Mr. Henry did not know, however, he thought the district would be ready to provide a report similar to those provided in the past by mid-year. If the district could not get good disaggregated data from the state, it would produce the data itself, which would take time. Mr. Conaghan believed the biggest challenge would be the year-to-year comparisons. He acknowledged there had been some dramatic score swings in some schools. He said the psychology of the issue was huge; the district wanted to recognize testing anomalies without overreacting to them. He hoped to get some clear answers from the state soon, but believed it was scrambling for answers.
Ms. Curtis said the district was using its district assessments in combination with state data to provide the needed data, particularly in reading, to assess individual students and discuss potential interventions.

Mr. Smith asked if students considered the assessments meaningful. Mr. Henry-Darwish said the tests were regarded as something students must do. He did not think students found them meaningful and the assessments were not a big part of the school year.

Mr. Patel said that many students excelled on the test with ease while those that did not, had a tough time and gave up mid-way through the test. Teachers tried to help, but many students ended up guessing at the answers. He thought more failed or achieved the bare minimum.

Ms. Harrison thought the test was stressful, which had affected her personal experience. She thought students considered it kind of a nuisance, but they had to do it. Mr. Smith asked if it mattered if a student did not do well. Ms. Harrison said it mattered for her, but she could not speak for other students.

Mr. Schneider-Lynch said that students could benefit from knowing why they were taking the test.

Ms. Curtis said the state used to publish a parents’ report that came out the following year and was mailed to parents. The state then stopped sending them via mail and began sending them electronically in a difficult-to-read format, so schools were not forwarding them to parents. She believed that parents needed the reports and emphasized that the district would make them available once the data was ready. Mr. Henry pointed out there was little utility in asking a student to take a test in the spring, but not giving them their score until fall. Ms. Curtis concurred, saying that when students knew their test scores sooner they were more motivated and challenged to improve them.

Responding to a question from Mr. Smith, Mr. Henry acknowledged that teachers probably paid more attention to the local assessments than to state tests. Ms. Curtis described the work the district was doing around the assessments to make them available to teachers so they could modify instructions.

Board member Eric Forrest asked if all districts used the same approach as 4J in terms of test frequency and the technology used. Ms. Curtis said as of 2006, the entire state went to TESSA, except for the few who requested the waiver due to technology gaps or student needs. Mr. Conaghan said the Triangle Lake District had a waiver, for example. Ms. Curtis said each student had the opportunity to take the test the same number of times. She said that in the past, teachers had often given the test early to inform instruction, but the district was not finding the current test so useful in that regard. Mr. Henry clarified that Mr. Forrest’s concerns were that the district could be manipulating the data, but Mr. Henry did not think that was occurring. He believed the approach was fairly standardized.

Mr. Forrest thought principals were concerned about the test from a perception point of view, but he thought the tests had little or no impact on students, who did not seem to be concerned about them. Ms. Curtis said that the principals do use the data to identify areas where more attention was needed and wrote school improvement plans based on the data.
ITEMS FOR ACTION AT THIS MEETING

Approve Three Memorandums of Agreement with EEA for the 2007-2008 School Year

Ted Heid, Director of Labor Relations, briefly reviewed the Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the Eugene Education Association (EEA).

MOTION: Mr. Gerot, seconded by Mr. Forrest, moved to approve the MOUs.
VOTE: The motion passed unanimously, 7:0.

CONSENT GROUP

Approve Grant Application: North Eugene High School Smaller Learning Communities Project

Staff from North Eugene High School submitted a $1,249,997 five-year grant application to the U.S. Department of Education. After planning and implementing Smaller Learning Communities (SLC’s) for ten years, North Eugene has a basic SLC infrastructure in place that now includes 9th and 10th graders. Staff support is at 98 percent and all stakeholders are on board. What was now needed was to: 1) Expand SLC’s so that every student will be in a small learning community; 2) Implement Oregon’s new graduation requirements and higher achievement goals for all students; and 3) Put in place effective research-based strategies and supports so that all students can succeed.

The goals of the project were: 1) Personalized learning communities; 2) Rigorous curriculum; 3) Supports for success for all students; and 4) Ongoing professional development, which supports the first three. Long-term outcomes will be more students meeting state standards and prepared for higher education, fewer drop-outs, a safer school, and more students in post-secondary education or employment after graduation.

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

Approve Personnel Items

The superintendent recommended approval of the personnel items included in the packet. These cover employment, resignations, and other routine personnel matters.

MOTION: Mr. Forrest, seconded by board member Alicia Hays, moved to approve the items on the consent agenda.
VOTE: The motion passed unanimously, 7:0.

ITEMS FOR ACTION AT A FUTURE MEETING

Make a Decision Regarding the Location of Two New Synthetic Surface Athletic Fields

Jon Lauch, Director of Facilities Management, noted the three community meetings held to solicit public comment and called attention to the field options reviewed by the public, copies of which were included in the red folders. He called attention to the public comments received, which were also provided to the board and noted some information provided to the board in response to the comments. He acknowledged the participants at the community meetings and those who sent in feedback.
Mr. Lauch indicated that the meetings did not indicate great support for locating fields at Roosevelt Middle School because it would mean a longer wait for the construction of the proposed new school. The Spencer Butte neighborhood had indicated strong support for locating a field at that school. He said the district had previously discussed doing synthetic fields without a track to avoid conflicts between uses, but the community strongly advocated for all-weather tracks, which would require additional discussion.

Mr. Lauch noted City of Eugene and 4J staff present at the meeting for discussion of this item: Ben Brantley of 4J, as well as Janet Whitty and Sarah Medary of the city. He also acknowledged Ms. Bellamy’s assistance with the community meetings.

Mr. Lauch introduced Bill Sider and Kurt Wilson of Pivot Architecture. Mr. Sider shared the schematics viewed by the public at the community meetings. Board members asked questions clarifying the details of the schematics.

Mr. Torrey observed that the baseball field at Spencer Butte was one of the only facilities in the area.

Mr. Forrest determined from Ms. Whitty that the lights at the fields were generally off by 10 p.m. unless it was Friday night.

Mr. Torrey asked if the district received complaints about the Cal Young facility. Ms. Whitty said no.

Mr. Torrey said he would like a reduced size fence at Jefferson and suggested the district approach Nike for assistance. Ms. Medary indicated she had provided the company with maps of Jefferson, Spencer, Monroe, etc. as it was contemplating such a donation in association with the Olympic Trials.

Superintendent Russell did not anticipate making a specific recommendation on the layout of the fields until November 2007. He thought if the district decided to go ahead with the tracks, construction should happen at the same time the fields were done. He wanted to look into partnerships that could make that possible.

**COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS BY INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS**

Mr. Torrey asked if the district could find a way to reach out to economically disadvantaged people who did not have ethnic backgrounds. Ms. Bellamy said yes, and indicated the district’s title coordinator would assist with that outreach. She thought there could be incentives to spur parental responses.

Mr. Torrey said it was great to hear the students weigh-in on the issues and important to hear their points of view.

Ms. Webber-Davis reported that she had the opportunity to attend the opening of the Multicultural Center at Sheldon High School and found the center to be bright and happy, and a good feeling place.

Ms. Webber-Davis said she represented the board at graduation requirement meetings and suggested the Instruction Department would present a report to the board at a future meeting. She appreciated the processes the district was engaged in and noted the teams that were brought together from each high school to weigh-in on the issues. She said the district still had a
lot of work to do. She also appreciated the input solicited from the University of Oregon, Oregon State University, and Pacific University. Ms. Webber-Davis said the work would have a focus on those students who participated in career and technical education. She was glad to have a chance to participate.

Mr. Smith reminded the board of the Eugene Education Fund Gala on October 18 and reported that fund-raising efforts were ahead of schedule.

Mr. Smith said if there was a misunderstanding in the community about the impact of urban renewal on the school districts, it might be appropriate to issue a press release soon. Ms. Fahey indicated there would be a minimal financial impact to the district, but that it would be very small.

Ms. Gerot said she received an e-mail from Katy Parker, a former Churchill student representative, who was attending Oregon State University in the Honors Program and was heavily involved in school activities. Ms. Parker expressed appreciation for her experience on the board and the Wellness Committee as it prepared her for college.

Ms. Gerot said she attended the Multicultural Center open house and commended the student demonstrations that took place.

Ms. Gerot also reported on her experience participating with Mr. Torrey in an American Studies class at the School of Ideas at NEHS, saying she found the student discussions interesting. Mr. Torrey congratulated NEHS students and teachers for their thank you notes in response to the district reviews.

Dr. Martinez also acknowledged the leadership of Bob Bolden at Sheldon High School for supporting the Multicultural Center.

Dr. Martinez called the board’s attention to the additional information provided about the upcoming board retreat.

ADJOURN

Dr. Martinez adjourned the meeting at 9:35 p.m.

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George Russell                  Charles Martinez, Jr.
District Clerk                  Board Chair

(Recorded by Kimberly Young)

Attachments to Official Minutes:
1. Second Addendum to Limited Exclusive Cold Beverage Services Contract
2. Three Memorandums of Agreement with EEA for the 2007-08 School Year
3. Grant Application: North Eugene High School Smaller Learning Communities Project
4. Personnel Items
5. Enrollment Projections by Region Using 9/28/07 Enrollment
6. Consolidated Classification Enrollment Report as of 9/28/07