The Board of Directors of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Eugene, Oregon, held a regular meeting at 7 p.m. on October 17, 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 October 12, 2007, and published in The Register-Guard on October 15, 2007.

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS:
Charles Martinez, Jr., Chair, absent
Beth Gerot, Vice Chair
Craig Smith
Eric Forrest, absent
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
Yvonne Curtis, Director of Student Achievement

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:
Natalie Harrison, Churchill High School
Vivek Patel, North Eugene High School
Katie Melton, Sheldon High School
Noah Henry-Darwish, South Eugene High School
Zach Schneider-Lynch, IHS, All Campuses

MEDIA:
KRVM

CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND FLAG SALUTE

Beth Gerot, Board Vice-Chair, called the meeting of the 4J School Board to order at 7 p.m.

Those present saluted the flag.

AGENDA REVIEW

There were no changes to the agenda.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Superintendent George Russell welcomed visitors from the University of Washington conducting a research project. He reported on staff meetings being held in various locations about Shaping 4J’s Future, noting the ones held so far had turned into regional advocacy meetings. He said
the questions had been good, and people had been passionate about their viewpoints and wanting to be heard. He said the Churchill student body president had come to talk with him, requesting that high school students have an opportunity to complete the survey.

Superintendent Russell said the district would present a program called “Thinking of College” on October 29 with State Rep. Nancy Nathanson to inform students and family members about Oregon resources available to help students attend college.

The superintendent noted that the annual Leadership Summit would be held December 3 in Portland; he asked board members to contact him or Debbie Nankivell if they are interested in attending.

COMMENTS BY STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Noah Henry-Darwish, South Eugene High School, reported on test and career learning day. Student government held a retreat the previous week to go over parliamentary procedure and Tripod results.

Katie Melton, Sheldon High School, reported that homecoming would be the following weekend. She noted that the coffee cart had been taken out three years ago, so the cart would not be an issue there.

Vivek Patel, North Eugene High School, reported on the art school, which had a partnership with Lane Community College to integrate art into academic classes through a DECO (discover, explore, create and own) program. He said an actor, director and designer from LCC came to the school once a week to work with classes, and the Art School students and staff had recently been working on an informative CD for parents and the community. Board members would receive a copy once final editing was complete.

Board member Craig Smith arrived.

Mr. Patel reported that North Eugene had done a survey for the Wellness Advisory Committee on sports drinks and caffeine, and Principal Laurie Henry would be reporting the results to the board. He did not feel students were educated enough to know why sports drinks and caffeine were being taken away, and they felt the board was snatching everything away from them.

Mr. Patel said a post-secondary planning survey had been done at the school asking what students planned to do after high school and how many were thinking about college. Board members would get results of that as well.

Mr. Patel said homecoming was coming up, with a traditional big barbecue before the game, and car-bashing fundraiser.

Natalie Harrison, Churchill High School, reported on Testing Day at the school, and a club fair, which had a good turnout. The school was planning for Fall Fest and homecoming.

Zach Schneider-Lynch, IHS, All Campuses, reported that school elections had been held, and students were planning fundraisers.
ITEMS RAISED BY THE AUDIENCE

Tom Halferty, 4510 Manzanita, representing Friends of Civic Stadium, thanked the superintendent for telling the news media that the district would wait at least five years before selling the stadium. He said a lot of people would like to see the stadium renovated and continue to be used for baseball, and he hoped the board would support giving more time before selling it.

Superintendent Russell clarified that he had said that the board had no plans to do anything with Civic for at least five years, until the new baseball program with the University of Oregon came up.

Lily Price, 4472 Hyacinth St., said she had been reading a lot about the achievement gap among students, especially at the high school level. She asked whether the board at any time anticipated discussing policies regarding single-gender classrooms in 4J.

Dan Herbert, 1913 Potter, recalled that he had asked the board in February to ask the Task Force on Shaping 4J’s Future to explore the connection between housing patterns and school achievement. He said that had not happened, but he felt the issue still needed to be addressed. He noted that the Housing Policy Board had added housing and school relations to its work plan, and that Superintendent Russell had told the City Club two weeks ago that the district planned to work with the Housing Policy Board. He urged the board to give its strong support.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Receive a Report on Eugene Education Fund Activities

Eugene Education Fund (EEF) Director David Meredith reported another record year, with the fiscal year that ended June 30, showing $757,743 in revenue. He gave an update on the 2007 Annual Campaign, headed by John, Ruth, Tom and Sarah Bascom, with a goal of raising $750,000 by December 31. He said $541,000 had been raised by October 1, the most recent figures available.

Mr. Meredith said 114 grant proposals had been received from 4J schools, and winners would be announced November 5. Six would get special recognition at the Back to School Gala on October 18.


Susan Fahey, Chief Financial Officer, presented the 2006-07 Budget Projection Summary and explained that the district’s financial audit was not yet complete, but she did not believe the numbers would change substantially. She went over the format for new board members. She highlighted changes since the April forecast, including a $1.564 million increase in State School Fund revenue, and expenditures that were $1.112 million lower than projected.

Ms. Fahey said the board would receive a 2007-08 update at the end of November and noted that enrollment was down by 85 students, but that would not affect funding this year. Superintendent Russell commented that the lower number would affect the district next year.

Board member Craig Smith thought it would be good to look at the sources of revenue, from the state perspective, to give context for the audience. Ms. Fahey said from the State School Fund perspective, a number of different revenues, including all property taxes collected for schools in
the state, all state funding and other revenues, were calculated and allocated on a per-pupil basis statewide. She said entrenched and local option levies were not included in that pie.

**Receive a Report on the Financial Impact of Measure 20-134, Downtown Urban Renewal Amendment**

Ms. Fahey presented figures, requested by the board on October 3, about the impact of urban renewal funding on the district, specifically Measure 20-134, an amendment to the Eugene downtown urban renewal plan that was on the November 7 election ballot. She said an increase in funding for urban renewal districts did not directly affect an individual school district’s budget because of the state’s school funding formula. On a statewide basis, if there were less local property tax revenues going to a school district because of urban renewal districts, then the state would provide more general funds to provide an equal amount of per-pupil funding to all districts. She said if it were a pie, it would have two big pieces, one with statewide property taxes and the other the state funding formula, so when the property tax piece shrank, the pie would get smaller, but it would affect everyone. All things being equal, she said the effect on 4J this year would be a loss of about $17,000.

Since local property taxes are part of the school funding formula, the state will have slightly less revenue available when it distributes funds to all school districts, if Measure 20-134 is approved. Staff estimates that 2007-08 school funding formula revenues would be reduced by approximately $570,000 (about $1 per student statewide).

4J local option tax revenue, however, could increase slightly if Measure 20-134 was approved. Taxes on the increase in property value due to urban renewal would be counted under the general government Measure 5 tax rate cap, not the education tax rate cap. Because 4J was in Measure 5 tax compression, the district would be able to collect a higher level of revenue from the 4J local option levy.

**MOTION:** Board member Jim Torrey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Smith, to instruct the board chair and vice chair to write a letter stating these facts to the Register-Guard.

**VOTE:** The vote was 5-0 in favor of the motion.

**Receive a Report on the Oregon School Report Cards**

Tom Henry, Deputy Superintendent & Chief Academic Officer, said the Oregon School Report Cards had been released to districts on October 5, 2007, for the 2006-07 school year. He said because of some of the issues involved with state assessment, the report cards had also been adjusted this year.

Jim Conaghan, Research and Assessment Coordinator, noted that the report cards were commonly seen as ratings, and a number of factors drove the overall ratings, including performance in the most recent two years of Oregon statewide assessments; improvements over successive two-year periods; attendance; and school characteristics, with a primary focus on participation in statewide assessments.

Mr. Conaghan discussed adjustments in the report cards that had been reported in the news as lowering standards. He looked at it differently, because with the switch to paper and pencil, many students had only one opportunity to test, so the standards had temporarily been lowered 2 points on performance and 1 point on improvement, as a balance.
Mr. Conaghan reported that the bulk of 4J schools rated in the strong or exceptional range in 2005-06 and 2006-07, while the bulk of state schools were in the strong or satisfactory range. One of the charter schools, Network Charter, rated unacceptable, primarily due to academic performance and attendance dropout rate, he said. A couple of newer schools, Bertha Holt and César Chávez, were rated for the first time this year, because they now had the performance history.

Mr. Conaghan cautioned that the overall ratings of some strong academic schools could be thrown off by missing one of the targets. He explained that one of the alternative schools that had rated exceptional last year dropped to satisfactory, primarily due to attendance. He said schools in neighboring districts that had high test scores had really been hit by lower participation rates.

Mr. Smith asked for a clarification of the difference between attendance and the participation rate. Mr. Conaghan said attendance referred to daily school attendance at school, while participation measured the number of students taking state tests.

Mr. Smith wondered what was measured in the report card. Mr. Conaghan said grades 3-8 were measured by attendance, and in high school, both were factored in. In reply to a question from Mr. Torrey, Mr. Conaghan said the district focused on getting students with chronic attendance problems tested.

Mr. Smith asked if there was any compulsion to take the tests. Yvonne Curtis, Director of Student Achievement, replied no.

Mr. Torrey wondered how a baseline would be found if this year was unique.

Mr. Conaghan said the district had been struggling with that, since this year was an anomaly in so many ways.

Board member Yvette Webber-Davis wanted to clarify that the report card reflected the modified formula. Mr. Conaghan said it did, noting that page 2 listed an adjusted percentage of students meeting or exceeding the benchmarks.

Ms. Curtis reiterated that the state had adjusted the scores in addition to the report card, adding to the confusion.

Ms. Gerot asked why the percentages of classes taught by qualified teachers on Page 2 were so much lower. Mr. Conaghan said there had been a mistake, but the correction did not get caught before the printing deadline.

Mr. Henry commented that the figure for highly qualified teachers was inaccurate, and the district was still working to correct that error.

**ITEMS FOR ACTION AT THIS MEETING**

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

Superintendent Russell noted that Jon Lauch, Director of Facilities Management, was home sick, and quickly reviewed his recommendation that the artificial surface fields be located at Spencer Butte Middle School and the Arts & Technology Academy at Jefferson. He reiterated that he wanted to wait until further analysis was completed before making location
recommendation on the two sites and whether the district wanted to work with the city on possible inclusion of tracks on the sites. The district held public meetings in September about the two sites as well as a third site at Roosevelt Middle School.

Superintendent Russell said more cost information was now available, and it looked as if costs could be double what the school district and the city had expected, making the costs of each field $2 million instead of $1 million, more than the partners had available for the projects. He said the staffs would be discussing ways to reduce the costs with designers, architects, and the city. He said a more specific recommendation would be on the agenda at the November 7 board meeting.

**MOTION:** Board member Alicia Hays, seconded by Dr. Webber-Davis, moved to accept the recommendation that the Spencer Butte and Jefferson sites be chosen.

Ms. Hays said she had appreciated the presentation about the three sites at the October 3 board meeting, as well as the public input on the issue and the efforts to look into the future.

**VOTE:** The vote was 5-0 in favor of the motion.

**CONSENT GROUP - ITEMS FOR ACTION**

**Approve a One-Year Extension of the Contract Between the Eugene Education Fund and School District 4J**

In February of 1994, the board and the Eugene Education Fund (EEF) entered into a contract specifying how the district and EEF would work and how donations given through the fund would be distributed. The board approved addendums to the contract in 1997 and 2001.

The 1997 addendum provided for an annual renewal of the contract based on mutual agreement and success of the previous year's fundraising activities. Since 1994, EEF raised over $5,021,208 in donations for school district programs, plus an additional $1,239,691 in development funds that went to support fundraising efforts. Over $968,797 had been given to schools in equity grants, which helped schools maintain educational programs. Direct donations to schools had been increasing each year.

During the last campaign cycle alone, January through December 2006, the EEF raised $672,585 in gifts and pledges.

The superintendent recommended approval of a one-year extension of the contract between the Eugene Education Fund and School District 4J.

**Approve Grant Application: Project IDEAS**

Staff from North Eugene High School’s School of IDEAS submitted a $82,928 two-year grant application to ETIC/Oregon University System. The purpose of the project would be to increase technology use in innovative science and health occupation classrooms. Additionally, the project would increase alignment of high school science curriculum with college readiness standards. Finally, the project would enhance engineering awareness through the development of a Design and Engineering class for IDEAS ninth grade students.

The superintendent recommended approval of the grant application.
Approve Grant Application: Roosevelt Middle School Safe Routes to School Grant

Staff from Roosevelt Middle School submitted a $37,855 grant application to Oregon Transportation Safety Division. The purpose of the project is to develop a sustainable, integrative, K-8 regional model to maximize opportunities for students to safely bike and walk to school, and to improve student personal health and the air quality of our community.

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

MOTION: Mr. Torrey, seconded by Ms. Hays, moved to approve the consent agenda.
VOTE: The motion was approved 5-0.

ITEMS FOR ACTION AT A FUTURE MEETING

Adopt the Revised Guiding Beliefs and Values Statement

The board annually reviews and affirms or revises a statement of Guiding Beliefs and Values to articulate the core values that guide the work of the Board of Directors and all 4J staff in achieving the district's mission. Barbara Bellamy, Chief of Staff and Communications Director, went over revisions suggested during the board's annual planning retreat on October 5 and 6, including:

- 2nd bullet under children, changed to, “We believe all children can learn” to reflect the strongest statement possible.
- 1st bullet under leadership, changed as a result of wordsmithing to, “We believe it is critical for the Board and staff to plan and direct resources consistent with our beliefs and values.”

Ms. Gerot added another wordsmithing in the 4th bullet under staff, to change, “training in best practices” to “professional development in best practices.”

Any changes suggested at this meeting will be incorporated into the draft that will be presented for approval at the November 7 board meeting.

Adopt the Board’s Goals and Annual Agenda for 2007-08

Ms. Bellamy observed that School Board Policy BA required that the board adopt an annual agenda to demonstrate how it would provide "leadership and direction for the district," but the practice had been to have two-year goal statements. She noted that the board had decided at its retreat that it wanted to talk more about the student achievement goal, ways to focus on the instructional core and alignment of key results and goals with the work being done in the Harvard Executive Leadership (ExEL) program. As a result, she said, staff drafted a one-year agenda with 2007-08, but included in the first goal under student achievement the board’s intention to continue working on longer term goals that aligned with the framework and strategies that were evolving as the district participated in the ExEL program.

Ms. Bellamy said the other big change was slimming down the goals, collapsing five areas into three, student achievement, stewardship of district resources and stakeholder engagement, and broadening the stakeholder engagement section. She reviewed the changes.
Mr. Smith commented that one difference in this was a reference to measurable outcomes in student achievement. He alluded to a long discussion about benchmarks at the retreat and wanted something about measures included.

Ms. Bellamy stated that on page 2, the previous version had said the district would implement the plan by monitoring and using student performance data, along with a key result about the board using data. She said that could be restored. Her takeaway from the board retreat came from board chair Charles Martinez’s concerns about using benchmarks, which he felt were pretty low, although he did talk about standards.

Mr. Smith thought it would be ideal to articulate what the board wanted all students to achieve, which he felt would give a level of high expectation for students and the board. Realistically, he felt the board also needed to be concerned about and monitor multiple measures of performance.

Mr. Torrey agreed about standards, but also wanted to know how to identify gaps in providing support for students who could not at this point meet the standards.

Superintendent Russell asked Mr. Smith if he wanted the previous #3 reinstated. Mr. Smith wanted to articulate what the board felt students needed to be able to do to be successful in the world.

The superintendent said the staff thought doing the key result of developing two-year goals would be part of the process of developing that.

Mr. Torrey wanted that to be sequential, so students would know where they stood as they went along.

Dr. Webber-Davis wanted a crosswalk providing some semblance of parallelism with all the different reports required of the district. She recalled a conversation at the retreat about coherence, and also a wonderful discussion about the group’s high expectations for all students. She saw a danger in being too specific and running afoul of changing criteria. She argued for striking a balance.

Mr. Smith saw a lot of dissonance, noting that the Oregon Report Card and No Child Left Behind were politically motivated, and he felt neither provided good assessment tools.

Mr. Torrey remarked that the board’s standards did not have to align with the state and federal standards and should come from looking at what the district wanted students to do.

Dr. Webber-Davis agreed, but added that the same conversation was going on at all levels, and the district needed to meet state and local standards.

Superintendent Russell said staff would address these issues and observed that these goals would not be adopted until December, and then it would be time to start looking at the 2008-10 goals.

Mr. Torrey wanted staff to push back if he made a statement out of his newness to the board that was incorrect. He stressed that everyone wanted the same things, and that staff are the experts.
Ms. Gerot thought this was a big discussion the board did not have time to complete at its retreat.

Ms. Bellamy suggested adding a bullet under Goal I to capture some of the discussion at this meeting.

Any changes suggested at this meeting will be incorporated into the draft and presented for approval at the November 7 board meeting.

**Adopt the Board’s and Superintendent’s Working Agreements**

The board annually reviews and affirms or revises a set of group agreements that outline how the board, superintendent, and executive leadership team will work together. Ms. Bellamy noted that governance principles had been added from the template reviewed by the board at its retreat. The draft will be presented for approval at the November 7 board meeting.

**Appoint Budget Committee Members and Set the Date for the First Budget Committee Meeting**

Ms. Fahey noted that the terms of District 4J Budget Committee members Joe Cavanaugh, Mary Walston, and Virginia Farkas expired on June 30, 2007 and the board would fill two three-year terms that run through June 30, 2010, and one that would expire on June 30, 2008 at its November 7 meeting.

The three openings were published in the Register-Guard and on the 4J website. Former applicants to the board and budget committee, as well as members of 4J citizen committees had also been notified of the openings. The application deadline is November 1.

Superintendent Russell wondered if the third appointment could be for two to three years instead of six months. Ms. Fahey said she would research the issue.

**Approve the District Continuous Improvement Plan**

Mr. Henry went over the District Continuous Improvement Plan (DCIP), which must be submitted every two years to the Oregon Department of Education, presenting district goals and strategies for 2007-08 and 2008-09, and was required for state and federal funding. He said the staff did its best to align the plan with the board’s goals and agenda.

Mr. Henry said the achievement goal focused on students with disabilities, English Language Learners (ELL), and economically disadvantaged students, because data indicated they were doing the least well in the district. He said the instructional leadership team felt the DCIP gave a good picture of all the district’s activities to overcome the achievement gap and support various groups of students.

Mr. Smith asked what OAKS scores were; Mr. Henry said OAKS was the new terminology for the Oregon state assessment scores.

In reply to a question from Dr. Webber-Davis, Mr. Henry said the five focus areas on page 1 reflected the district’s goals and would not necessarily be used by other districts, although the Oregon Department of Education had used the last 4J plan as a model. The district had received many requests for its plan, so similar goals were likely to show up in other district plans. He credited the work of the instructional leadership team.
The superintendent will recommend approval of the District Continuous Improvement Plan at the November 7 meeting.

**COMMENTS & COMMITTEE REPORTS BY BOARD MEMBERS**

Dr. Webber-Davis enjoyed the board retreat and found it beneficial.

Mr. Torrey found the board retreat very helpful for a new board member. The previous week he had participated at Howard Elementary School in a program focusing on technical improvements and a school that was using them.

Ms. Hays attended the Western Oregon Women’s Conference, co-sponsored by 4J, that day. One of the amazing things about the meeting was the Mujeres group which is comprised of Latino women who are Spanish-only speakers. The Mujeres group represented 80 of the 400 women who attended the conference. Ms. Hays found it very exciting to call forth leadership skills in women who did not necessarily think of themselves as leaders, and she felt it set the tone as the district moved forward. She was excited to see a conference for Latino youth in the district plan.

Mr. Smith found the retreat to be the best he had attended in the district.

**Adjourn**

Ms. Gerot adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

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George Russell                        Charles Martinez, Jr.
District Clerk                             Board Chair

(Recorded by Susan Wulfekuhler)

**Attachments to Official Minutes:**
1. City of Eugene Ballot Measure 20-134
2. ODE Release regarding School Report Card Formula
3. 2006-07 District Report Card - Individual School Results
5. Grant Description Form: Project IDEAS
6. Grant Description Form: Roosevelt Middle School Safe Routes to School
7. Draft Guiding Beliefs and Values Statement
8. Draft 2007-08 Board Goals and Annual Agenda
9. Draft Board’s and Superintendent’s Working Agreements
10. District Continuous Improvement Plan for 2007-09