

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

**February 13, 2008**

The Board of Directors of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Eugene, Oregon, held an Executive Session at 5:30 p.m. and a regular meeting at 6:00 p.m. on February 13, 2008, 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 February 8, 2008, and published in *The Register-Guard* on February 11, 2008.

**ROLL CALL**

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

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

**STAFF:**

George Russell, Superintendent of Schools and District Clerk  
Barbara Bellamy, Chief of Staff and Communications Director  
Susan Fahey, Chief Financial Officer  
Jon Lauch, Director of Facilities Management  
Ted Heid, Director of Labor Relations  
Doug Lemley, Custodial Supervisor

**MEDIA:**

Anne Williams, the *Register-Guard*

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Under provisions of ORS 192.610 – 192.690, Open Meeting Laws, the Board of Directors conducted an Executive Session for the following purpose:

To conduct deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to carry on labor negotiations, pursuant to ORS 192.660 (2) (d).

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

**STAFF:**

Tom Henry, Deputy Superintendent & Chief Academic Officer

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:**

Vivek Patel, North Eugene High School  
Noah Henry-Darwish, South Eugene High School

**MEDIA:**

KRVM

## **CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND FLAG SALUTE**

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

## **AGENDA REVIEW**

There were no agenda changes.

## **INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Superintendent George Russell waived his report.

## **COMMENTS FROM STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

**Vivek Patel** reported that North Eugene was in the last year of its small schools grant and the district had begun looking at new funding to become an elite small school. Mr. North participants sold "Valegrams" for Valentine's Day and then would sing to the recipients, making them feel special. The funds were donated to the Children's Miracle Network.

**Noah Henry-Darwish** said South Eugene had hosted Judy Shepard with the Learning Project in an optional assembly. The auditorium was packed. Student government was selling Valegrams for Valentine's Day.

## **ITEMS RAISED BY THE AUDIENCE**

Dr. Martinez wanted to remind people that during the comment period, the board was there to listen closely, but would not respond. He noted that there would be a public hearing at 6 p.m. on February 20 at the Sheldon High School cafeteria.

**Tom Sims**, 395 Hawthorne, a parent of children who had gone through grades 1-12, and grandparent of a River Road Elementary student, said he grew up in a small town in Oregon where people attended grade school where they lived. He urged the board to make decisions based on what the superintendent and staff recommended after due diligence without bias to ensure quality education for all and to consider patrons across the district who paid taxes.

**Nancy Willard**, 454 W. 29<sup>th</sup>, contended that the objective of the superintendent's recommendations was to preserve the integrity of the alternative schools and hide the inequities. She said the proposal would damage some of the most vulnerable kids in this community.

Ms. Willard said the Harris School clearly had an incredibly strong teaching staff. She said the school had tested an outstanding 3% above comparison schools in reading and 14% above comparison schools in math, with more special needs kids than anyone else. She criticized the proposal to tear this team apart to support two schools that were the most segregated and least capable of effectively dealing with special needs children. She said the district would close Coburg for one reason: That was the only way building a new school for Buena Vista could be justified.

In the Jefferson region, Ms. Willard said, there was a problem at the middle school level as the result of a badly-placed administrator. She noted there were 440 middle school students in that

region, and 135 who had remained in that school. She said the district would have to start over from scratch and engage parents to find out what kinds of school environments they wanted for their children, which she thought would probably necessitate restarting a comprehensive middle school in that region. She believed the plan was an unconscionable continuation of the inequitable benefits that were provided to the most privileged children in this community.

**Aidan LaCroix**, 1835 ½ Lincoln St., a Harris Elementary student, said he did not think the district should close Harris because it was the only school he knew with a marimba and a choir, and because the teachers were very nice and had very fun activities to do.

**Mary Christensen**, 2586 Potter St., a Harris teacher, had been a parent of an Eastside student and a Willard student at the same time. She had been a Parker teacher at a time of declining enrollment and had seen the enrollment turn around, so she knew that was possible. She wanted to thank the board and George Russell for the work they had done to address equity in the district. She said the superintendent had told Harris in December that nothing would be done to Harris in the next school year, so the staff was caught flat-footed at his recommendation Friday.

Ms. Christensen said in the region, there were five neighborhood elementary schools and four alternative or charter schools, so something had to give with declining enrollment. She saw three options: 1. Close a neighborhood school and shuffle around an alternative school as Superintendent Russell recommended; 2. relocate an alternative or charter school to another region; or 3. get creative. She said the timeline was too short, and Harris staff was a collaborative, hopeful, vision-oriented group that would like some time to talk about alternatives. She said Harris was not feeling the superintendent's stated bias toward neighborhood schools.

**Michael Boutette**, 2970 Friendly, parent of a Harris student, said his family chose Harris after visiting six or seven schools and walking into Harris, which felt like coming home. He said the entire staff was welcoming in a way he had never experienced in a school. He believed that small schools worked better. He said other schools in Eugene talked about and studied diversity, while Harris practiced it. He applauded the quality of the staff at Harris.

**Libby Bottero**, 2650 University, grandparent of an all-day kindergartner at Harris, the family's neighborhood school. She said Harris was a great school with great socio-economic diversity and a dedicated staff. She was a strong supporter of neighborhood schools, alternative schools and school choice. She would like to see Harris and Eastside co-locate and felt that solution would provide the most cultural diversity and social equity without the cost of building a new school. She did not see how the Harris site could accommodate both Eastside and Charlemagne the following year unless a new large school were built, and she felt voters might not pass a bond measure.

**Anita Boutette**, 2970 Friendly, parent of a Harris student, said Harris was an unbelievable school where teachers honored each other, honored each child, and honored other staff. As a parent, what she most wanted was for her child to be a good human being, and that was what he was learning. She recalled the words of The Little Prince, "What is important is invisible to the eye," and felt that was happening at Harris school. As a taxpayer, she was more interested in paying for staff, ideology, and the mix of people more than a building or groundskeeping.

**Kristy Larson**, 2590 Alder St., parent of a 13 year-old daughter who had gone to Harris, an 8-year-old TAG child at Harris and a 5 year-old who would attend all-day kindergarten at Harris next fall, was blindsided by the superintendent's recommendation to close Harris to accommodate two alternative schools. Harris was one of the most diverse and academically

exceptional schools in the area and served a large population of lower-income families. She felt displacing a neighborhood school with two alternative schools with higher than average income was basic discrimination against lower-income families attending Harris. She believed subsidizing alternative schools with her tax dollars as well as the lottery and transfer system had damaged neighborhood schools. She said Harris offered one of the few all-day kindergartens as well as one of the best music programs in Eugene. She felt six months was not enough time to adapt to the change. Harris has a support system and community of people who understood and cared for her family in the chaos imposed by her husband's serious illness. She moved to the area because of Harris and Roosevelt and could not afford to move and hated feeling out of control with her children's education after she had taken so many steps to ensure their success.

**Alexa Hackett**, 1220 W. 24<sup>th</sup> Ave., parent of two Harris transfers, said her son developed migraines after one semester at Edison. After moving to Harris, his migraines had disappeared and he had blossomed. She had concerns about whether her son would be able to attend Parker with his classmates or whether the family would have to go through the lottery process. There was no continuity for this child. She said alternative schools were not the heart of public school. She asked the board to reconsider this, because she and her kids felt they are part of a community at Harris.

**James Riggs**, 2250 Patterson St., #9, a single father of four children who attended Harris. The Harris community had accepted his family completely and helped his children. He was concerned that his son, who had special needs, would get lost in a new school. Another son, who was in a pre-kindergarten class, would not get the chance to go to kindergarten at Harris, where he already knew the staff.

**Katherine Craigmiles**, 2250 Patterson St., #9, Mr. Riggs' daughter and a past student at Harris, said the staff there was very respectful to the children and had helped her move through personal issues. She said the people at Harris were really nice, and she thought they should be given a fair chance. She said small schools felt more welcoming and more like family. Thanks to Mr. Nelson, principal at Harris, she was playing clarinet at Roosevelt.

**Meg Hamilton**, 3050 Hendricks Hill Dr., parent of two Harris students, was concerned about the loss of Title I status if students from Harris were divided among other schools, and a resulting loss of benefits to those kids. Her second concern was class size. A class of 34 kids had been divided by two FTE kindergarten teachers to keep a fluidity, which she believed demonstrated the teachers' creativity and commitment.

**Abby Gershenzon**, 355 Dellwood Dr., a parent of two daughters attending Eastside, spoke on behalf of the Site Council and the Eastside community, thanking Superintendent Russell and the board for considering Eastside as part of the larger Shaping 4J planning process. They supported the superintendent's recommendation pertaining to Eastside. She noted that the number of families entering the Eastside lottery continued to far exceed available spaces. She said the Eastside educational model could work for a wide range of learners, and the community looked forward to working with a diverse population of students at its new location. The community appreciated the recommendation to leave a regional learning center at the Harris site, believing that having access to this learning center would make it possible to effectively teach a wider range of learners at Eastside and eventually Charlemagne than otherwise would be possible. She said including Eastside in the plan demonstrated the district's continuing commitment to school choice while meeting the diverse needs of students.

**Paula Fleitell**, 131 McClure Lane, had appeared earlier to address the small number of transfer students to be allowed into South and Roosevelt next year and the problems it would cause for

students, including her daughter, who had spent her entire education as a transfer student in South Eugene neighborhood schools. She said forcing her daughter into North without knowing one person after attending Parker, Eastside and Roosevelt seemed difficult and disappointing. With only 30 transfers into South, it seemed unlikely her daughter would get in. She suggested phasing in enrollment caps, beginning in elementary schools in the South neighborhood so families could see their kids all the way through school. This would mean undoing some of the caps already placed on South and Roosevelt in the last two years, but only for a couple of years. She suggested that transfer students who had been attending South schools could be considered as a group and allowed to finish in South neighborhood schools. She said this would be similar to French immersion students, who were considered a special group and placed directly into South. She felt long-term transfer students could use the same consideration.

**Sara Zarzycki and McKenna VanVoorhis**, both 8<sup>th</sup> graders at Roosevelt Middle School, started with school choice and wanted to end with it. They knew transfers to South and Roosevelt had been severely limited and they wanted to finish at South with all the people they knew.

**Ann Cole**, 2185 Fairmount, challenged the underlying assumption behind the recommendation that balancing socio-economic status in schools would significantly improve the performance of those children living in a culture of poverty. Research of the Chalkboard Project had shown that parental involvement was the strongest indicator for academic achievement, crossing all socio-economic boundaries. She recalled Dr. Martinez's discussion when he was running for school board of the importance of culture developed in the school for the success of children, the importance of relationship and community. She would like to see those values more strongly visible in the restructuring being proposed. Money and resources were needed, but they paled in the face of the motivating power of relationships to fuel a student in poverty to step out of it. She saw a movement toward large, institutional schools like Bertha Holt and Cesar Chavez for the youngest, most vulnerable students. How were parents to feel part of the community in a school this large, not to mention the child? She did not think the children caught in a culture of poverty would be served by these recommendations.

**David Zarzycki**, 131 McClure Ln., parent of a daughter at Roosevelt and two daughters who were South Eugene High School graduates, said his family had benefited from the school choice policy. He urged the board not to abandon the policy. For the past two years, enrollment at Roosevelt had been more restricted, resulting in a loss of teachers and programs. Parents wanted what was best for their children, and in most cases were in a position to know what school met their students' needs. Choice allowed parents to vote for the school that best met the academic and social needs of their child. He urged the board not to dismantle the quality programs that took decades to build and nurture.

**Pam VanVoorhis**, 4380 Blanton Rd., parent of two children in 4J. The family originally lived near North, and her son was unable to get into the lottery for Corridor, even though it was half a block away and went to Howard. He did well at Howard and her daughter entered kindergarten there. Her son was recommended by his teacher at Howard to go to Roosevelt for math and eventually went to Roosevelt and would graduate from South this year. Her daughter went to Crest and only one student in her class went to Jefferson; the rest went to Roosevelt, Kennedy or Spencer Butte. She wanted to follow her friends and went into the lottery for Roosevelt. She had been going to school since the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade with her Roosevelt friends. Now she had to enter the lottery for South. Ms. VanVoorhis felt Roosevelt students should be grandfathered in to South and the district should start with the lottery change at the middle school level.

**Brenda Monroe**, 2635 Onyx, a teacher of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades at Family School, had already been through more than one school move and wanted to address issues related to that. She said community building was an important part of her school and of many schools here. When Family School was moved to Cesar Chavez, she said it was quite difficult at first. Integrating 90 staff members and 450 students took a long time, but now relationships were cordial and they had forged a community. If the district planned to continue moving schools from place to place, she encouraged the creation of systems to support the staff, students and parents in making the changes.

**Jack Davidson**, a student at Harris, did not think the district should close Harris because the teachers were really nice and it was very educational. There was a lot of stuff to be learned at that school.

Dr. Martinez thanked the speakers, especially the students, noting that it took a lot of courage to speak in a large room.

## **COMMENTS FROM EMPLOYEE GROUPS**

**Merri Steele and Paul Duchin**, Co-Presidents of the Eugene Education Association (EEA), spoke. Ms. Steele said the silver lining in *Shaping 4J's Future* was that people felt so passionate about their schools and their education. They knew the board faced hard choices, and they appreciated the board's diligence and the commitment of all people participating in the process. They had heard consistently that people wanted a decision as soon as possible so that decisions could be made about school choice.

Mr. Duchin said he and Ms. Steele had an opportunity to go with the superintendent to Harris and had heard the passion of the staff there. They also heard the passion in the room tonight and hoped the board listened to all the input. He said they were perplexed about why the Eugene Association of Substitute Teachers (EAST) bargaining process had been stalemated, considering that the substitute teachers who qualified for insurance worked the equivalent of half-time in the school district. For that, the substitutes got \$300 from the district for insurance, while a full-time licensed employee got over \$900, the same as classified employees and administrators. He said the amount of money involved was relatively small, and the insurance was one of the reasons the substitutes worked in this district. The EEA encouraged the district to demonstrate the following day, Valentine's Day, in mediation that the district had a heart.

## **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

### **Receive a Report on the Superintendent's Report and Recommendations for Shaping 4J's Future (Part 2)**

Superintendent Russell said he would share his recommendations and how the district got to where it was in the Shaping 4J's Future process. He wanted to make sure people understood what the district was doing and why.

Barbara Bellamy, Chief of Staff and Communications Director, reviewed the history of a series of planning processes over the last decade and how the board had provided strategic direction for the district.

Superintendent Russell reviewed his report and recommendations in a Power Point presentation. He said as with most strategies, the devil was in the detail, and he was continuing to find details that needed further exploration. He said often details might have repercussions in terms of additional costs as a result of changes. In summary, the recommendations are:

1. Close Harris Elementary School for the 2008 – 2009 school year and redistribute students to Edison and Parker elementary schools. Redraw the attendance boundaries for Edison and Parker. Relocate Eastside Alternative School from Parker into the Harris building for the 2008 – 09 school year. During 2008-09, make additions to the school that will allow it to accommodate adding the French Immersion school for the 2009-10 school year.
2. Move Meadowlark students to a new school at the Kinney Loop site in 2011-12. Buena Vista would then become a K-5 stand-alone school at the Meadowlark site.
3. Close Coburg in June 2011, and relocate students to the new school at Kinney Loop site in 2011-12, and reassign middle school students from Cal Young to Monroe.
4. Close the Fox Hollow building and move the French Immersion School to join Eastside in the Harris building in 2009-10.
5. Move the Family School and establish it as a 1-8 school sharing the facility with the Arts and Technology Academy at the Jefferson building for 2009-10.
6. Implement a differentiated staffing ratio based on the percentage of free-and-reduced lunch students, English Language Learners, and special education students (excluding students receiving only speech and language services). Schools serving higher percentages of these students would receive more staffing than other schools.
7. Limit transfers for middle and high schools. Each middle school could accept up to 5% of the middle school students residing within the boundaries of another region. No school could accept transfers that would result in a student enrollment that exceeds the middle school size maximum enrollment target of 600 students. Each high school could accept up to 7.5% of the high school students residing within the boundaries of another region. No school could accept transfers that would result in a student enrollment that exceeds the high school size maximum of 1500 students.
8. Transportation. There may be some additional transportation costs related to boundary adjustments and school consolidations. He recommended that the district also consider providing transportation within each region to alternative schools in that region.

Ms. Bellamy reviewed the time frame for the recommendations on page 27 of the report and the process leading up to the board's final decisions on March 19, including a public hearing at 6 p.m. February 20 at the Sheldon High School Cafeteria.

Superintendent Russell observed it had been interesting to look at emails and commentaries, which ran the gamut from people saying the recommendations went way too far and others saying the recommendations did not go far enough.

Board Member Yvette Webber-Davis raised basic technical questions related to the possible use of portable buildings at the Harris site: What would be the cost of those units? Did the district typically purchase or lease buildings? Were there uses for them later?

Jon Lauch, Director of Facilities Management, said the district typically purchased those buildings and had moved and reused a few, but to call them portables was a misnomer. The

buildings were permanently installed under current codes. The cost of adding two classroom modulars with four classrooms at Harris would be about \$600,000. He said other issues would include installation of off-street parking, which would cost another \$100,000-200,000.

Dr. Webber-Davis wanted more information about what would happen to two special education programs or resource centers on the Harris site under this proposal.

Tom Henry, Deputy Superintendent and Chief Academic Officer, said Harris currently had a learning center and a regional learning center, along with an Easy Care office that worked with students who had not yet entered 4J schools. In the first year, Easy Care would stay there and regional learning center programming would remain if Eastside were to move there. In the second year, if Fox Hollow moved there, Easy Care would not be able to stay, but other special education services would remain.

Board Member Craig Smith, referring to testimony tonight that the regional learning center had worked well with Harris, the existing neighborhood school, wondered if it would work as well with Eastside. Mr. Henry did not know if the district would leave the same regional learning center on the site, but did believe Eastside and immersion schools would be able to work with special education students with a broad range of needs. The district would provide the staff development necessary to do this.

Mr. Smith wanted to clarify that the district did not site charter schools, but if charter schools moved to the Willard site, the district would be the landlord. The district chartered and monitored the schools, but the schools ran themselves and had a choice of locations. Looking at the chart and the regions, he noted, most of the activity was in the Churchill and South regions, because of declining enrollment in those areas. He said the district was looking at a 1,000-student reduction in the future and had to adjust to current realities.

Board Member Eric Forrest thought it would be helpful to see what the 5-7.5% caps in transfers for middle schools and high schools would look like today. Mr. Henry noted that there were still a lot of questions to be worked out. A range of 1,012 at North with January numbers to 1,634 at Sheldon. If the 7.5% were applied with a gross number, the range would be 1,137 to 1,512. A 5% number would do more leveling, although Sheldon would never drop below 1,500 because of the number of kids in the boundary and not exiting with current trends. The other complication came from projections, which staff was still reviewing.

Mr. Forrest wanted to know the number of kids who had applied to Meadowlark/Buena Vista and not gotten in through the lottery. If Buena Vista had a larger ability to take kids in, and the district was talking about moving Meadowlark and Coburg together, he had some worry that the district might lose the ability to have the school size desired. If the district followed the recommended formula, he had concerns about middle schools in the Churchill region moving up enough kids to fill the high school. He wanted to see that data.

Board Member Jim Torrey wondered what the diversity of Eastside and Charlemagne would look like today if they moved right into Harris next year, and how the district would make sure the diversity was closer to what it would like to see happen. He wondered how a 4<sup>th</sup> grader who had not been in an immersion school would get up to speed. He had a sense the district had still not gotten hold of the growth patterns of the communities in Coburg and Eugene.

Superintendent Russell noted that there were a lot of ifs. He said the district had been looking at closing Coburg school for 25 years, and the people of Coburg had said give them another

couple of years. He did not see enough growth by 2012-13, but said the district could hold onto the property just in case.

Mr. Henry said the capacity range at Coburg was 175-225, and if the number of students increased, the site could house a maximum of 225 without renovating or adding a new school.

The board took a short break.

Board Vice Chair Beth Gerot wanted to keep in mind that these recommendations were part of a decade-long process with a lot of input that was primarily driven by declining enrollment, changing demographics, and the board's desire to be proactive. She noted that the district had a rich history of working with staff and students through school transitions. She wondered if facility changes would be needed at the Arts and Technology Academy to accommodate Family School.

Mr. Lauch said no facility changes had been identified.

Ms. Gerot commented that the superintendent had said earlier there might be schools that would fall below 1,200. Mr. Henry said depending how the district approached this, knowing it would lose 600-700 high school students over the next five years, it was possible unless the district decided to equalize enrollment that some schools would drop below 1,200. He said the staff would bring back some scenarios with the 7.5% and 5% management.

Ms. Gerot, responding to a question during the break, said she assumed the French Immersion School would be viewed as a feeder into Roosevelt and South and not be part of the 5% and 7.5%. Superintendent Russell said each immersion school went into a specific middle school and high school, and Mr. Henry added that they would not be included in the transfer numbers.

Ms. Gerot wanted to know what the thinking was regarding dispersal of special education students and what that might do to the numbers in some neighborhood schools and/or alternative schools. Mr. Henry said the staff would take a look at that.

Dr. Martinez said he had previously raised concern that the review of alternative schools had somehow given alternative schools immunity from closure as part of this process. Superintendent Russell noted that the board had said that all potential options related to both alternative and neighborhood schools were open for consideration as part of the Shaping 4J's Future strategic planning process. He said it was clear in the minutes that because an alternative school was determined to be viable at the time of the review did not mean there would not be a decision later to close an alternative school if it made sense when looking at the bigger picture.

Dr. Martinez wondered why not close an alternative school to reinforce enrollment patterns and strengthen neighborhood schools that were seeing declining enrollment. The superintendent said a number of alternative schools had closed over the past few years, the most recent would be Hillside at the end of this year. He had considered how to balance the board's desire to continue a strong choice program along with strong neighborhood schools and excellence across the board. He had felt closing alternative schools was not really on the table in light of previous board decisions.

Dr. Martinez observed that there were missing ingredients in terms of timeline and budgeting, boundary changes for a new school at Kinney Loop and a contingency plan in case bonding did not come through. The superintendent saw several options: Closing Meadowlark and

distributing students among three schools in the region, Gillham, Willagillespie and Bertha Holt; closing Buena Vista and making Meadowlark a neighborhood school; or moving Buena Vista to another region that had a site to accommodate it. In his mind, trying for the bond measure was the most viable option. He said the bond measure could also include major remodeling of Roosevelt Middle School and possibly another new neighborhood elementary in the North region.

Mr. Smith asked about the process following the public hearing for the board to get the big picture of what the superintendent was trying to accomplish with his recommendations and looking at how the recommendations related to the guiding principles and goals.

Superintendent Russell said it would be helpful to have directors' thoughts about different alternatives to explore immediately.

Mr. Torrey wondered how the district could give Churchill a hook so more students chose to go there instead of South. He wondered if Churchill had a technical/vocational/sustainable orientation, whether it would become a school of choice. He wondered about true regional choice that would provide transportation within the region.

Superintendent Russell said regional transportation and regional restrictions on choice could be considered. He said getting more heavily into transportation would require additional investment for buses and another bus barn.

Mr. Torrey said to provide equal access to all students, the district needed to provide transportation for the children of single mothers and low-income families.

Laurie Moses, Director of High School Services, said Churchill was in its second federal small learning community grant phase, and its career academies were offering professional technical programs that were drawing students. Mr. Torrey said he would market the heck out of that.

Board Member Alicia Hays said before hearing how much people appreciated their schools, she had been skeptical about school choice, but it had become apparent to her how important it was for students to find their niche. She commented that 4J was boldly leading the way in some aspects.

Mr. Smith asked about constraints board policy put on schools regarding marketing their programs.

Ms. Bellamy said the district provided the same forum for all schools and had restricted advertising by parents groups and individual schools to level the playing field, since not all schools had the same resources. She said new strategies would be required if the board wanted to focus on getting information out to people about what was available in their region.

Mr. Smith thought the district needed to review constraints in place that prevented neighborhood schools in particular from marketing themselves.

Dr. Webber-Davis appreciated the comments about schools marketing themselves and felt there were many good programs that people did not know about.

Mr. Russell said some other districts, such as Louisville, Kentucky, held choice days for parents to visit schools. He added that one alternative would be requiring people to visit their neighborhood schools before applying for other schools.

Mr. Torrey said he had been asked by a group of Adams parents to visit and they had asked him what they could do to prove the school's value. He told them to get parent groups to ask the parents of kindergartners what they wanted. He felt the district needed to start at that level to make sure there were enough students feeding into the Arts and Technology Academy.

Dr. Martinez would be concerned about giving all schools the freedom to market their programs and suggested giving targeted schools that were under-enrolled resources to do more outreach.

Mr. Smith pointed out that preventing alternative schools from marketing could hamstring their ability to create more diversity and thwart goals already established.

Dr. Martinez felt marketing had to be targeted.

Dr. Martinez noted that if board members wanted more specific information about the proposals, they could funnel those through the board leadership.

### **Receive an Update Regarding the New Synthetic Turf Athletic Fields**

Mr. Lauch recapped the district's partnership with the City of Eugene on the four high school athletic fields since 2000, and the discussion of a continuing partnership for fields at up to four middle schools, including two fields that had been built at Cal Young and Madison. He reviewed the passage of a city bond issue providing up to \$5 million for field development.

Mr. Lauch said the district had just received the reports of the wetland delineation, which showed very minimal issues at Spencer Butte, but at the Arts and Technology Academy almost everything south of the school with the exception of the existing soccer field and oval track had been identified as wetlands. This would add to the cost and time for the project if the district moved forward.

Mr. Lauch said the requests for proposals (RFPs) were out for lighting and field turf, with a deadline of February 14. The bid date for the primary construction work (excavation, drainage, etc.) was currently scheduled for March 20, 2008, which would allow for potential contract award at the April 2 board meeting. The current completion date for Spencer Butte would remain the end of August 2008, but he said the schedule for the Arts and Technology Academy would likely be pushed out because of the length of the wetlands mitigation process, which would take four to six months.

Regarding funding, Mr. Lauch said the district was still in speculative mode until the bids came in. He said the city had notified the district that it may come up short and reviewed the city's piece of the puzzle. The city included \$5 million in the recent parks bond measure for partnership on athletic fields. \$1 million was reserved for turf replacement at the four (4J) high school fields, representing half (the city's share) of the projected costs. The remaining \$4 million would be allocated toward new fields in 4J and Bethel school districts, including the two fields already completed at Cal Young and Madison. He noted that the city had expressed concern about its ability to be a 50% partner all the way through because of escalating costs and its commitment to partner with the Bethel District for two fields for up to \$2 million. That would leave about \$2 million for the four 4J middle school fields. The city has paid about \$280,000 for lighting at Cal Young and Madison, and would need to pay an additional \$670,000 for 50% of the incremental costs for the field construction at those sites. As a result, the

balance available from the city parks bond measure for additional 4J fields would be about \$1 million.

Mr. Torrey wondered about getting money from the city's park fund. He noted that the Arts and Technology Academy needed help, and a new track could make the school special.

Sarah Medary, Recreation Services Director for the City of Eugene, said when the bids came in for both 4J's and Bethel's fields, the city could look at what was possible.

Superintendent Russell said once information became available, he would come back to the board with a recommendation for building one or two fields.

## **ITEMS FOR ACTION AT THIS MEETING**

### **Approve Proposed Addendum to the Superintendent's Contract for 2007-2010**

Dr. Martinez said the board had conducted an evaluation of the superintendent in an executive session on September 5, 2007, and then had approved extension of the superintendent's contract to June 30, 2010. He said the board had asked him and Ms. Gerot to meet with the superintendent regarding a proposed contract addendum.

Dr. Martinez called board members' attention to additional information about salary comparisons for superintendents and Mr. Russell's salary history. He thought it important to understand where the superintendent sat relative to a complex market and also for long-term planning, since the district would not have Mr. Russell forever.

The proposed contract addendum included:

- Effective July 1, 2007 the superintendent would be moved to the Longevity Step of the salary schedule.
- Effective July 1, 2007, a COLA increase would be applied to the salary schedule commensurate with that applied to the salary schedule for other administrators.
- Effective January 1, 2008, the superintendent's TSA would be increased by an additional \$100 per month.

Dr. Martinez said the board also had the opportunity to consider from time to time a bonus for exceptional performance, and the board had determined the superintendent's performance to be exceptional through its reviews. Dr. Martinez and Ms. Gerot recommended approval of the addendum to the superintendent's contract for 2007-10, plus a performance bonus for 2006-07 in the amount of 5% of annual salary to be paid into the tax-sheltered annuity of the superintendent.

**MOTION:** Ms. Gerot moved, seconded by Dr. Webber-Davis, to approve the recommended addendum to the superintendent's contract for 2007-10.

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

Dr. Martinez thanked the superintendent for his tremendous service to the district.

## **CONSENT GROUP – ITEMS FOR ACTION**

### **Approve Grant Application: Girls Group Grant**

Staff at Sheldon High School submitted a \$4,535 grant application to the EC Brown Foundation and the Oregon School Health Network. Mental health therapists, counselors, nurses, a principal, and a health assistant at the South Eugene Health Center and Sheldon High School would attend a conference in Portland entitled "Education and Engagement: Learning About Diversity." The trained individuals would then lead outreach efforts in the school communities to strengthen relationships with African American youth and effectively serve these youth's mental and physical health needs at the four Eugene School Health Centers.

The superintendent recommended approval of the grant application.

### **Approve Ratification of CIP Contract Awards**

On September 18, 2002, the Board of Directors affirmed the 1993 district policy for delegating Contract Award authority for Bond Funded CIP contracts of \$500,000 or less to the superintendent, or designee, subject to subsequent ratification by the board. The designee was Jon Lauch, Director of Facilities and Transportation. Contracts in excess of \$500,000 would continue to require board approval. The purpose of the board item was to summarize all CIP contract award activity requiring a formal bid or formal competitive selection and for the board to ratify those awards that have been made by authorized staff since the last ratification.

The summary sheet in the board packet identified all contracts that have been awarded as of the status date indicated in accordance with delegated authority. The summary also identified who awarded the project and will indicate board ratification data of said award as applicable.

The CIP management staff would continue to provide the board with Contract Award Status updates for ratification, pursuant to School Board Policy DI (Capital Improvement Contracts Financed by Bond Levy Funds-previously Policy 6610.5)

The superintendent recommended ratification of awards for CIP GO Bond funded projects as indicated on the summary sheet.

### **Accept the Audit Report from Grove, Mueller and Swank, PC for the Fiscal Year 2006-07**

The firm of Grove, Mueller and Swank, PC completed the annual audit in accordance with Oregon Revised Statutes. The District's Financial Policy Committee, of which Jim Torrey was a member, reviewed the "Comprehensive Annual Financial Report," the "KRVM-FM Radio of Lane County School District 4J Financial Statement," the report to management, and the staff response to the management report.

The superintendent recommended acceptance of the audit report for fiscal year 2006-2007.

### **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. Torrey moved, seconded by Mr. Smith, to approve the consent items.

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

## COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS BY INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. Torrey reported that he went to San Diego with a number of staff and had attended a meeting at a small learning center at a school with 90% free/reduced lunch program. He said the speaker said the formula of rigor, relevance and relationships needed to be turned around, so that relationships came first, then relevance and rigor. He thought the board had heard that tonight from a lot of people about Harris, about the importance of relationships.

Dr. Webber-Davis had attended a Climate Change/Sustainability meeting at the University of Oregon, along with Mr. Lauch and Susan Fahey, Chief Financial Officer, and representatives from other school districts in the area and had found it very informative. She said the districts had discussed what they were doing well and had looked at future programs. A number of follow-up activities were planned, and she looked forward to 4J's participation.

Ms. Gerot wanted to make sure others knew about the Diverse Students Conference, April 25-27 in Portland, a collaboration among school boards from Oregon, Washington, Nevada and Idaho. This year students from Churchill, North Eugene and Roosevelt in Portland would be doing a presentation, with the help of Carmen Urbina and Johnny Lake. She encouraged other members to attend.

Ms. Gerot said State School Superintendent Susan Castillo would speak at City Club on February 29 about new graduation requirements, and she thought others would like to attend. She spent a week in Washington D.C., the first three days at a National School Board Association (NSBA) leadership conference, and wanted to share written materials and ideas about linking the role of school board members to student achievement. She passed out copies of a document, *America's Cradle to Prison Pipeline*. In her last three days there, she attended the NSBA Federal Relations Network and had the opportunity to speak with Senators Wyden and Smith and aides in the offices of all congressional representatives. She said NSBA had made securing the Rural Schools Act, which was important to 4J, a part of its national agenda.

Mr. Forrest appreciated people who came out tonight to speak and had been moved by people's statements about their schools.

## ADJOURN

Dr. Martinez adjourned the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

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George Russell  
District Clerk

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Charles Martinez, Jr.  
Board Chair

(Recorded by Susan Wulfekuhler)

### **Attachments to Official Minutes:**

1. Superintendent's Recommendations for Shaping 4J's Future (Part 2)
2. Proposed Addendum to the Superintendent's Contract for 2007-2010
3. Grant Application: Girls Group Grant
4. CIP Ratification Information
5. Comprehensive Annual Financial Report
6. KRVM-FM Radio Financial Statement
7. Report to Management dated December 14, 2007
8. Staff Response to Audit Management Letter dated January 28, 2008
9. Personnel Action Items