

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

Date: August 5, 2026

The Board of Directors (BOD) of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Eugene, Oregon, held a planning meeting at 4:30 p.m. via live-stream and broadcast on KRVM. Notice of the meeting was emailed to the media and posted on the 4J website on July 31, 2026.

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ericka Thessen
Maya Rabasa
Jenny Jonak
Judy Newman
Morgan Munro
Tom Di Liberto (online)
Rick Hamilton

ABSENT:

None

STAFF:

Miriam Mickelson, Superintendent
Jackie Garcia Villa, Executive Assistant to the Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services
Lisa Fjordbeck, Operations Manager for the Superintendent's Office

OTHER GUESTS:

None

EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATIONS:

Jamie Meyers, Eugene Education Association (EEA) President

MEDIA:

KRVM

I. CALL PLANNING MEETING TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Chair Thessen called the planning meeting of the Eugene School District 4J Board of Directors (BOD) to order at 4:30 p.m. She said the names of the members present and read a land acknowledgement statement.

II. BOARD CHAIR WELCOME

Chair Thessen welcomed attendees to the planning meeting. She highlighted updated components of the regular meeting agenda, specifically the “Hearing of the Public” and “Good of the Order” sections.

She brought attention to committee assignments and asked Board members to identify the committees they wish to serve on by the end of the planning meeting.

III. AGENDA APPROVAL

The agenda was approved as presented.

IV. BOARD PLANNING AGENDA TOPICS FOR 2026-2027

1. Team/Relationship Building

Vice Chair Rabasa engaged the Board in a series of team building activities throughout the planning session, including a Sources of Strength ball toss, a coloring sheet, and a yarn puzzle game.

2. Review and Provide Status Updates to June 2026 Planning Work Session

Chair Thessen reviewed decisions from the previous planning meeting:

- 6:00 p.m. meeting start time will not change
- Alternating regular meetings and work sessions will not change
- Staff presentations will be limited to 10 minutes to allow for more questions and discussion time (Board members are to read materials ahead of time)
- Confirmed a desire for flexibility around Board members sitting at the dais versus on the floor
- Confirmed keeping Board member remarks on the meeting agenda
- Added a “Good of the Order” section to the meeting agenda
- Confirmed allowing 10 speakers during Hearing of the Public at work sessions
- Confirmed allowing public comment related to topics not listed on the meeting agenda
- Agreed to continue having the rolling agenda accessible to all Board members

3. Review and set Board Goals

Chair Thessen engaged the Board in reviewing Board Goals.

- Superintendent Priorities / 4J Focus for 2026-2027 and beyond
- Board Goals:

1. The board will actively support the Superintendent's entry plan and strategic planning process, providing input, feedback, and collaboration as appropriate to advance district goals.

2. Each board member will actively engage in ongoing professional learning to enhance governance effectiveness and understanding of district priorities.

3. *Board members will intentionally participate in school and program visits, as well as community events, to gain a deeper understanding of district operations and student needs.*

4. *The board will conduct an annual self-assessment to evaluate its own governance effectiveness, communication, and alignment with district priorities.*

Ms. Newman suggested that the self-assessment be conducted at the beginning of the school year.

Vice Chair Rabasa recommended making Goal #1 shorter, as in: *The board will actively support the Superintendent.*

Mr. Hamilton expressed that Goal #1 is a given; he suggested the goal be more specific.

Ms. Newman proposed incorporating a goal about stabilizing district resources and budget.

Board members discussed potentially revisiting their previously stated goals for the district. They discussed opportunities to engage in professional learning, including book and podcast sharing.

Chair Thessen said final Board Goals will be presented and approved at a future meeting; Goals #2, #3, and #4 will be maintained and Goal #1 will be revised.

Ms. Newman suggested language for Goal #1: *The Board will actively support the Superintendent's plan, Focus 4J.*

Mr. Di Liberto recommended more detail, incorporating the focus areas themselves.

Vice Chair Rabasa mentioned the possibility of presenting two options for Goal #1 at a future meeting.

Superintendent Mickelson presented the following draft priorities for the 2026-27 school year:

Focus 4J: Strategic Framework for 2026-27 and Beyond

**Finer details were provided in the PowerPoint slide*

1. **Every Student Attends**
Focus: Regular Attendance
2. **Every Student Learns**
Focus: Literacy, Inclusive Practices, and Student Wellbeing
3. **Every Student Graduates**
Focus: Graduation/Completion Rate

- **Goal Post: 90x30**
90% graduation rate by 2030

Citing large budget reductions during the previous school year, Superintendent Mickelson said her focus is on continuity and simplifying expectations. She outlined three foundational pillars guiding the strategic framework: culture and belonging, community engagement, and fiscal sustainability.

Several Board members voiced approval of the Focus 4J strategic framework.

Ms. Newman recommended that the district goals and strategic framework be aligned and presented on the district website.

4. Review and Revise Board Working Agreements

Vice Chair Rabasa engaged the Board in reviewing and revising the Board Working Agreements. She oriented them to supporting documents, including Guiding Beliefs and Values, Policy BBF, and an outline of four proposals.

Board Working Agreements:

- Roles, Responsibilities, and Relationships
- How We Operate and Make Decisions
- How We Communicate
- Governing Law and Policy Document

Vice Chair Rabasa presented the four proposals to guide potentially revising the Board Working Agreements.

**Finer details were provided in the handout*

1. Shake Things Up – Review, Revise, and Approve Guiding Beliefs and Values; craft two versions/documents for training; craft a collection of affirmative statements
2. Maintain Status Quo
3. Deep Dive
4. Adopt one of OSBA's Working Agreements

Mr. Di Liberto cautioned against complicating the Board Working Agreements, he recommended condensing the content, stating that the existing Working Agreements are unwieldy.

Ms. Newman expressed favor for Proposal #2.

Vice Chair Rabasa provided further reasonings and context for Proposal #1, including the need to more easily access pertinent information.

Chair Thessen paused the planning meeting at 5:54 p.m. The planning meeting will resume once the regular meeting concludes.

Chair Thessen resumed the planning meeting at 8:03 p.m.

There was consensus to reject Proposals #3 and #4.

Vice Chair Rabasa summarized components of Proposal #1. She reemphasized accessing information more readily and linking relevant policies.

Board members provided their individual feedback about Proposal #1.

Superintendent Mickelson recommended that the document live on the district website on the BOD page.

Ms. Jonak suggested a Board Manual with hyperlinks and a separate Working Agreements document. She recommended incorporating information related to how the Board Chair should handle complaints/investigations.

Ms. Newman suggested including how to get topics on Board agendas.

Vice Chair Rabasa concluded that Board members are in favor of Proposal #1 – creating a Board Manual and generating statements of affirmation.

Board members agreed.

V. ADJOURN PLANNING MEETING

Chair Thessen adjourned the planning meeting at 8:35 p.m.



Miriam Mickelson, Superintendent



Ericka Thessen, Chair

Recorded by Terah Van Dusen, Lane Council of Governments (LCOG)

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

Date: August 5, 2026

The Board of Directors (BOD) of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Eugene, Oregon, held a regular meeting at 6:00 p.m. via live-stream and broadcast on KRVM. Notice of the meeting was emailed to the media and posted on the 4J website on July 31, 2026.

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Tom Di Liberto
Ericka Thessen
Maya Rabasa
Jenny Jonak
Judy Newman
Morgan Munro
Rick Hamilton

ABSENT:

None

STAFF:

Miriam Mickelson, Superintendent
Carmen Xiomara Urbina, Chief of Staff
Bob Blyth, Director of Finance
Kate Marrone, Director of Human Services
Kelly McIver, Director of Communications
Steve Schininger, Network Services Manager
Brooke Wagner, Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services
Jackie Garcia Villa, Executive Assistant to the Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services
Lisa Fjordbeck, Operations Manager for the Superintendent's Office

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:

None

OTHER GUESTS:

None

EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATIONS:

Jamie Myers, Eugene Education Association (EEA) President

MEDIA:

KRVM

I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND LAND ACKNOWLEDMENT

Chair Thessen called the Eugene School District 4J Board of Director's (BOD) regular meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

II. BOARD CHAIR WELCOME

Chair Thessen welcomed attendees to the regular meeting. She highlighted updated components of the meeting agenda, specifically the "Hearing of the Public" and "Good of the Order" sections.

III. AGENDA APPROVAL

There were no changes to the agenda.

IV. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Miriam Mickelson acknowledged summer program educators and facilities, grounds, maintenance, and technology staff for their work and dedication.

V. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC

There were no individuals present to provide public comment.

VI. COMMENTS BY EMPLOYEE GROUPS

Eugene Education Association (EEA) President Jamie Myers highlighted concerns about the ability to provide support with fewer educators this school year.

She offered the following data about district professionals:

- Approximately 80 EEA members who were laid off last spring remain on the recall list, most without a placement
- Approximately 160 members were reassigned to new positions
- Approximately 28 members completed voluntary transfers

Ms. Myers suggested focusing energy where it matters most and said that building trust, relationships, and community will take time.

VII. CONSENT GROUP – ITEMS FOR ACTION

1. APPROVE THE DRAFT BOARD MEETING MINUTES FOR: JUNE 17, 2026 – SPECIAL BOARD MEETING, JUNE 22, 2026 – BOARD WORK SESSION PLANNING MEETING

There was no discussion.

2. BOND PROJECT – GILHAM HVAC IMPROVEMENTS

There was no discussion.

3. APPROVE THE AMENDMENT OF ARTICLE 22 OF THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT WITH OREGON SCHOOL EMPLOYEE

ASSOCIATION (OSEA) CHAPTER 1

There was no discussion.

MOTION: Vice Chair Rabasa moved to approve the consent agenda. Ms. Munro seconded. **The motion passed unanimously: 7:0:0; Chair Thessen, Vice Chair Rabasa, Ms. Jonak, Ms. Newman, Ms. Munro, Mr. Di Liberto, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor of the motion.**

VIII. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

There were none.

IX. ITEMS FOR ACTION

1. BOARD WORKFORCE NEGOTIATIONS AD HOC COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP EXPANSION

Ms. Newman presented information related to Board Workforce Negotiations Ad Hoc Committee Membership Expansion alongside a handout. In addition to the superintendent, the following three Board members are assigned to the Committee: Vice Chair Rabasa, Ms. Newman, and Mr. Di Liberto. The Committee held a meeting on Tuesday, July 14, 2026.

She shared the purpose statement: *The Ad Hoc Workforce Committee is established to conduct a collaborative review of the district's recent collective bargaining experiences. By analyzing what worked well and what presented obstacles over the last negotiation cycle for each employee group, the Committee will evaluate our current approach and recommend an optimized process and structure for future negotiations to the full School Board.*

Ms. Newman said the Committee is recommending revising their policy to expand committee membership to include members of each employee group. She brought attention to Committee Core Members: Board Representatives, Management Leadership, and Labor/Employee Leadership who was part of the bargaining team (representatives from employee groups – EAST, OSEA, EEA, and MAPS).

In response to a question posed by Ms. Munro, Ms. Newman indicated that they are recommending including two members from each employee group.

Ms. Munro noted the likelihood for a weighted voting body.

Vice Chair Rabasa stated that the expectation is for committee members to reach consensus.

Ms. Newman provided further context, including that the BOD will be the body voting on recommendations.

Mr. Di Liberto expressed favor for the recommendation, highlighting the potential for greater representation of voices.

Ms. Jonak said having insights from employee groups feels invaluable to her, especially ahead of a bargaining cycle.

Vice Chair Rabasa pointed out that minus the MAPS employee groups, there would be six representatives from the labor side of negotiations and six representatives from management.

Ms. Newman said the first meeting of the Board Workforce Negotiations Ad Hoc Committee is scheduled for Monday, August 17, 2026.

MOTION: Vice Chair Rabasa moved to approve having the membership of the Board Workforce Negotiations Ad Hoc Committee being made up of three Board representatives, the superintendent, two representatives of management leadership, and two representatives of each employee group – EAST, OSEA, EEA, and MAPS. Ms. Jonak seconded. **The motion passed 6:1:0; Chair Thessen, Vice Chair Rabasa, Ms. Jonak, Ms. Newman, Mr. Di Liberto, and Mr. Hamilton voting in favor; Ms. Munro voting against.**

2. INFORMAL MEETINGS BETWEEN BOARD MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEE GROUPS

Chair Thessen engaged the Board in a discussion about Informal Meetings Between Board Members and Employee Groups.

Ms. Jonak expressed a strong desire to hold meetings while honoring employee group needs.

Ms. Munro pointed out that in previous meetings, topics were directed toward the superintendent and not the Board; thus, having the superintendent present at meetings is helpful.

Mr. Di Liberto expressed favor for holding informal meetings between Board members and employee groups.

Superintendent Mickelson stated a preference for participating in conversations and provided her reasonings.

Chair Thessen invited EEA President Ms. Myers to share her perspective.

Ms. Myers provided historical context, including that EEA members expressed that in years when former superintendents were involved, the meetings felt not productive but repetitive. She noted that previous configurations of the meeting did not include the

superintendent. She clarified that EEA is not currently opposed to including the superintendent, if desired.

Ms. Jonak suggested considering a rotating Board membership.

Vice Chair Rabasa countered Ms. Jonak's statement by pointing out that employee groups expressed they did not prefer rotating Board membership.

Ms. Jonak agreed about honoring employee group preferences.

Ms. Newman recommended that other Board members find ways to build relationships with employee groups.

There was discussion about how to disseminate information from the Board Workforce Negotiations Ad Hoc Committee to the Board.

Superintendent Mickelson recommended including an FYI in the weekly superintendent memorandum to the BOD.

Board members expressed no objections to Board Workforce Negotiations Ad Hoc Committee membership expansion.

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board will convene in Executive Session to consult with counsel concerning the legal rights and duties of a public body with regard to current litigation or litigation likely to be filed.

The BOD convened for Executive Session at 6:52 p.m.

The BOD resumed the regular meeting at 7:44 p.m.

XI. ITEMS FOR ACTION AT A FUTURE MEETING

1. BOARD MEETING AGENDA PLANNING

Chair Thessen raised the topic of having a rotating Board member at agenda planning meetings. She reported that Oregon Government Ethics Commission (OGE) confirmed that if agenda planning meetings, and any related communications, do not expand beyond three Board members they would not involve a quorum nor be in violation of Oregon Public Meetings Law.

Superintendent Mickelson added that most often the agenda setting is straightforward and often set by requirements.

2. EUGENE SCHOOL DISTRICT 4J ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Superintendent Mickelson described components of the 2026-27 4J Organizational Chart. The chart reflects the executive leadership budget reductions presented to the Board last school year. She said once approved by the BOD a version of the chart will be published

on the district website. She described the role of the Superintendent's Cabinet.

XII. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Newman provided a report from the Legislative Committee. Ms. Newman was appointed as Chair. At their first meeting, the Committee discussed goals, which will be presented to the Board in the near future. She said the time and date for the Legislative Breakfast is still pending.

XIII. CONSIDER BOARD REQUESTS FOR AGENDA ITEMS OR INFORMATION/SUGGESTIONS BY THE BOARD FOR CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS AT A FUTURE MEETING

Ms. Munro requested information about policies related to potential wildfire smoke and/or heat impacting sports activities, outdoor facilities projects, and classroom safety.

Chair Thessen agreed; additionally, she requested information pertinent to district schools which may be designated safe spaces.

Superintendent Mickelson said she will follow up with the information in a Friday memo.

XIV. FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

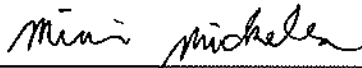
Chair Thessen shared that signups for Project Hope open mid-August. She directed families to their website.

Staff confirmed that they can put the information on the district website.

Chair Thessen paused the regular meeting and resumed the planning meeting at 8:03 p.m.

XV. ADJOURN

Chair Thessen adjourned the regular meeting at 8:35 p.m.



Miriam Mickelson, Superintendent



Ericka Thessen, Chair

Recorded by Terah Van Dusen, Lane Council of Governments (LCOG)