

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

Date: May 13, 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 May 8, 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
Christine Nesbit, General Counsel
Bob Blyth, Assistant Director of Finance
Kevin Gordon, César Chávez Elementary School Principal
Mike Yocum, Roosevelt Middle School Principal
Jeff Johnson, Director of Elementary Education
Sebastian Bolden, Director of Secondary Education
Steve Shininger, Network Services Manager
Kate Marrone, Director of Human Resources
Kelly McIver, Director of Communications
Brooke Wagner, Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services (online)
Oscar Loureiro, Director of Research and Planning
Jackie Garcia Villa, Executive Assistant to the Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services
Lisa Fjordbeck, Operations Manager for the Superintendent's Office

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:

Sheridan Schilling, Churchill High School
Katheryn Hehman, International High School
Deeya Patel, South Eugene High School
Josiah Mckinley, North Eugene High School

OTHER GUESTS:

None

EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATIONS:

Jamie Myers, Eugene Education Association (EEA) President
David Wines, Eugene Education Association (EEA) Vice President
Lisa Jenkins-Easton, Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) President

MEDIA:

KRVM
Register Guard (online)
Lookout Eugene-Springfield

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

Chair Di Liberto called the Eugene School District 4J Board of Director's (BOD) regular meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. He said the names of the members who were present and read a land acknowledgement statement.

II. BOARD CHAIR WELCOME

Chair Di Liberto opened with a recognition of Teacher Appreciation Week – May 4-8, 2026. He acknowledged the timing of the week alongside difficult budget cuts. He pleaded that Oregon leaders should fully fund and stabilize education. He thanked Eugene School District 4J educators.

Chair Di Liberto acknowledged the passing of former 4J educator and Eugene Education Association (EEA) President Paul Duchin and spoke about Duchin's influence in the community.

III. AGENDA APPROVAL

Vice Chair Thessen suggested moving the Superintendent Evaluation from Items for Information to Items for Action. There were no objections.

Chair Di Liberto suggested adding an additional item to the Consent Agenda – to designate an additional deputy clerk and budget officer for the remainder of the current fiscal year. There were no objections.

IV. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Miriam Mickelson announced that Oregon School Employees Association

(OSEA) Chapter 1 is hosting a free Reading Opens the World Book Drive and Literacy Fair at North Eugene High School on Saturday, May 30, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

She mentioned that this school year the district piloted an electronic hall pass program at district high schools; after deliberation and a review of data, the program will be sunseting.

Superintendent Mickelson introduced César Chávez Elementary School and Roosevelt Middle School principals and students for a musical performance.

V. RECEIVE REPORTS FROM HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Deeya Patel, South Eugene Student Representative, reported that their Red Cross Club was honored as the Most Influential Red Cross Club in the region. She said students are feeling the stress of exams, citing scheduling issues and urging the district to work with principals to develop more coordinated final exam schedules. She addressed district budget cuts and urged clear communication with the student body.

Katheryn Hehman, International High School (IHS) Student Representative, reported that exams are currently taking place. She reported higher retainment at IHS and lower withdrawal rates. She said the annual IHS Celebration is happening on Wednesday, May 20, 2026. Ms. Hehman noted that their school recently drafted an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy.

Josiah Mckinley, North Eugene High School Student Representative, reported on student achievements, upcoming events, successes, and challenges. He mentioned the dedication and perseverance of IB students and honored educators during Teacher Appreciation Week. He announced that the musical, Fiddler on the Roof, opens on Thursday, May 21, 2026. He highlighted music educator Mr. Farnell and challenged the district's decision to reduce his position from full-time to half-time. Mr. Mckinley said that a Disc Golf Extravaganza is happening on Saturday, May 16, 2026, Senior Awards Night is on Wednesday, May 27, 2026, and the Pride Festival is on Friday, May 29, 2026.

Sheridan Schilling, Churchill High School Student Representative, reported that spring sports and performances are going very well. She reflected on her service as a Student Representative – culminating in attendance at more than 40 school board meetings. She provided a final statement for district leadership, emphasizing the importance of excellence, education, and democracy.

VI. CONDUCT A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED 2025-26 BUDGET

This hearing is on the 2026-27 budget as approved by the Budget Committee on May 6, 2026. Notice of this budget hearing and the 2026-27 budget totals were published in the Eugene Weekly on May 7, 2026. There will be a total of 30 minutes of public comment regarding the 2026-27 budget.

Chair Di Liberto opened the public hearing at 6:45 p.m.

Ethan Tibbs provided testimony in opposition to proposed budget cuts, specifically changes impacting physical education, music education, and library services. He mentioned that he is an elementary-level Teacher Librarian who is being reassigned to two different elementary schools.

Curtis Czarniak provided neutral testimony related to proposed budget cuts, encouraging all parties to keep the best interests of students in mind during the decision-making process.

Jenni Wilmot provided testimony in opposition to proposed budget cuts, specifically changes impacting physical education, music education, library services, and behavioral support. She described the importance of consistent educator-student relationships, especially for neurodivergent children. She cautioned against the use of itinerant staff.

Kerry Patton provided testimony in opposition to proposed budget cuts, specifically changes impacting physical education, music education, and library services. She described the importance of maintaining educator-student relationships, of teacher retention, and music and arts programming.

Anna Nothum provided testimony in opposition to proposed budget cuts, specifically changes impacting physical education, music education, library services and behavioral support. She shared her perspective as the parent of an elementary school student. Ms. Nothum highlighted the positive impact of the Check In/Check Out Program. She urged collaboration with educators and support specialists.

Jenny Jackson provided testimony in opposition to proposed budget cuts, specifically reductions impacting the Integrated Outdoor Program (IOP) at South Eugene High School. She shared her perspective as an educator for IOP, including its long history, positive impact, and crucial role for underserved students. She stated that for some students, IOP is their only path to graduation. Ms. Jackson read aloud student testimonials.

Amy Page provided testimony in opposition to proposed budget cuts, specifically changes impacting physical education, music education, and library services. She shared her perspective as a district librarian and challenged the current plan to displace or move a large percentage of librarians. She requested that the Human Resources department formally accept the collaborative librarian replacement proposal.

Shira Fadeley provided testimony in opposition to proposed budget cuts, specifically changes impacting physical education, music education, and library services. She highlighted the benefits that elementary school specialists have on building culture. She cautioned against the use of itinerant staff.

Neena Bauer provided testimony in opposition to proposed budget cuts, specifically reductions impacting the South Eugene High School performing arts department. She shared her perspective as the grandparent of a theater arts student.

Chair Di Liberto closed the public hearing at 7:17 p.m.

VII. ITEMS RAISED BY THE AUDIENCE

Britni D'Eliso, 4J parent, provided comments in opposition to proposed budget cuts, specifically changes impacting physical education and music education. She shared her perspective as the parent of an elementary school student, highlighting the importance of maintaining educator-student relationships.

Katrina Allen, 4J specialist, provided comments in opposition to proposed budget cuts, specifically changes impacting physical education, music education, and library services. She shared her perspective as a specialist. She urged collaboration and centering students in the decision-making process.

Joel Korin provided comments in opposition to the barring of Dr. Johnny Lake from 4J property and the elimination of his "Through the Eyes of a Child" program districtwide. He shared his perspective, highlighting the positive impact of Dr. Lake's influence, and challenging the district's decision.

Rowan Madar provided comments in opposition to proposed budget cuts, specifically reductions impacting the Integrated Outdoor Program (IOP) at South Eugene High School. He shared his perspective as a Student Leader for IOP, emphasizing how colossal the impact will be on the current and future student body.

Poppy Yznaga and two other Willagillespie Elementary School students (Emma and Avery), provided comments in opposition to proposed budget cuts, specifically changes impacting music education. They urged reconsidering staff and specialist reassignments.

Max Karson provided comments related to 4J public records and transparency policies. He described challenges accessing information pertaining to educational curriculum. He referenced an email he received from the 4J public records department.

Ibrahim Coulibaly provided comments in opposition to the barring of Dr. Johnny Lake from 4J property. He offered his perspective of the incident and challenged the allegation. Mr. Coulibaly encouraged launching an investigation into the matter.

Emily Gilkey Palmer, school librarian, provided comments in opposition to proposed budget cuts, specifically changes impacting physical education, music education, and library services. She shared her perspective as a librarian who will be impacted by proposed changes, describing the intricacies of her role. She cautioned that proposed changes will impact students.

Jenoge Khatter (online), 4J specialist, provided comments related to school name changes. He stated his general support for school name changes and recommended making the financial impact and decision-making rubric public. He noted the following: of the 18 district schools bearing a person's name, 94% are named after men and 94% are named after white individuals, reinforcing a pattern whereby women and people of color are not recognized. He said schools should reflect the full community they serve. Mr. Khatter also echoed comments opposing proposed reductions impacting the Integrated Outdoor Program (IOP) at South Eugene High School.

VIII. COMMENTS BY EMPLOYEE GROUPS

Lisa Jenkins-Easton, Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) Chapter 1 President provided comments. Her comments centered on collectively addressing the state's education funding structure, the upcoming Book Drive at North Eugene High School, and employee matters related to the budget reduction process. Regarding bumping charts, she said her organization learned that HR uses a process that is not defined in contract. She voiced OSEA concerns related to the RIF process including, but not limited to, seniority status. She listed specific requests on behalf of OSEA members – with a focus on deeply reviewing the system with fidelity and transparency. In closing, OSEA members presented a colorful paper chain, each link representing the daily average so far this school year of 1,027 non-reimbursable meals that will not be served next school year.

David Wines, Eugene Education Association (EEA) Vice President, provided a statement honoring former EEA President Paul Duchin. Regarding budget cuts, Mr. Wines urged leadership to give space for making thoughtful, student-centered adjustments. He cited unintended consequences from recent decisions impacting elementary counselors, physical education, music education, and library services. He expressed concern about counselor-to-student ratios and challenged district transparency. Mr. Wines advocated for PE and music education and said the cuts should justify the savings.

IX. CONSENT GROUP – ITEMS FOR ACTION

1. APPROVE DRAFT BOARD MEETING MINUTES FOR: APRIL 29, 2026 BOARD WORK SESSION

There was no discussion.

2. APPROVE BOND PROJECT – CHARLEMAGNE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ROOFING

There was no discussion.

3. RESOLUTION NO. 2025-26-10 – DESIGNATE THE ASSOCIATE FINANCE DIRECTOR AS AN ADDITIONAL DEPUTY CLERK AND 4J BUDGET OFFICER FOR REMAINDER OF CURRENT FISCAL YEAR

There was no discussion.

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

X. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

1. RECEIVE AN UPDATE REGARDING CÉSAR CHÁVEZ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NAMING REVIEW

Chief of Staff Carmen Xiomara Urbina provided information about the César Chávez Elementary School naming review.

Ms. Urbina said that following April 15, 2026, district staff worked collaboratively with leadership on a focused engagement process centered on the César Chávez Elementary School community. A survey was launched on May 5, 2026. A preliminary sub-committee reviewed initial input and discussed the broader questions and complexities surrounding a potential renaming process. A listening session was held on May 11, 2026.

Ms. Urbina said that a preliminary finding update is currently being developed and will be shared with the BOD at a later date. At this time, no formal renaming process has been identified.

XI. ITEMS FOR ACTION

1. APPROVE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT WITH EUGENE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION CONCERNING GUEST TEACHERS (EAST)

Kate Marrone, Director of Human Resources recommended approving the Collective Bargaining Agreement with Eugene Education Association Concerning Guest Teachers (EAST).

MOTION: Vice Chair Thessen moved to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement with Eugene Education Association Concerning Guest Teachers (EAST). Ms. Jonak seconded. **The motion passed unanimously, 7:0:0; Chair Di Liberto, Vice Chair Thessen, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Newman, Ms. Jonak, Ms. Munro, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor.**

2. SET THE DATE FOR THE JUNE BOARD PLANNING/HOUSEKEEPING MEETING

The BOD discussed setting a date for the June Board planning/housekeeping meeting. They set a tentative date of Monday, June 22, 2026.

MOTION: Vice Chair Thessen moved that the Board schedule a BOD planning work session on Monday, June 22, to discuss and review board procedure changes that have been made in the past year, pending Board member confirmation. Mr. Hamilton seconded. **The motion passed**

unanimously, 7:0:0; Chair Di Liberto, Vice Chair Thessen, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Newman, Ms. Jonak, Ms. Munro, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor.

3. APPROVE THE SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNUAL EVALUATION

Chair Di Liberto presented the superintendent's annual evaluation for approval. He read a statement aloud, expressing favor of Superintendent Mickelson's leadership during the school year.

MOTION: Vice Chair Thessen moved to approve the superintendent's annual evaluation for the 2025-26 school year, as discussed in executive session, and authorize the Board Chair to finalize and sign the evaluation document on behalf of the Board. Mr. Hamilton seconded. **The motion passed unanimously, 7:0:0; Chair Di Liberto, Vice Chair Thessen, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Newman, Ms. Jonak, Ms. Munro, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor.**

XII. ITEMS FOR ACTION AT A FUTURE MEETING

1. CONSIDER ADOPTING RESOLUTION 2027-01 ADOPTING THE 2026-27 BUDGET, MAKING APPROPRIATIONS, IMPOSING AND CATEGORIZING TAXES

Superintendent Mickelson, Associate Director of Finance Bob Blyth, Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services Brooke Wagner, Human Resources Director Kate Marrone, Director of Secondary Education Sebastian Bolden, Director of Elementary Education Jeff Johnson, and Ms. Urbina presented information regarding Resolution 2027-01 Adopting the 2026-27 Budget, Making Appropriations, Imposing And Categorizing Taxes via PowerPoint presentation.

Superintendent Mickelson briefly presented a timeline for the budget process. She outlined budget reduction values, considerations, and priorities.

She outlined budgetary requirements and pressures:

- Balanced budget as required by state law but structural deficit exists
- Board policy requires 3% contingency and 2% unappropriated of total operating expenditures
- Enrollment declining faster than state decline rate
- One-time funds used to fund staffing have ended but staffing have been sustained
- Inadequate state and federal funding to fully meet complex student needs
- Unfunded mandates

She said the factors create a fiscal environment that requires ongoing adjustments and long-term strategic planning.

Mr. Blyth outlined tax rates:

- General Fund tax rate: \$4.7485 per \$1,000 assessed valuation of the district

- Local Option Levy tax rate: \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation of the district
- Debt Service tax levy: \$37,385,792

He outlined General Fund 2026-27:

- Beginning Balance: \$18,120,000
- Transfer in: \$12,900,000
- Misc. revenue: \$12,814,200
- Local Option Levy: \$27,834,100
- Local revenue: \$96,927,800
- State School Fund: \$121,022,700
- **Total Resources: \$289,618,800**
- Salaries and benefits: \$236,879,274
- Materials and services: \$36,412,708
- Transfers-out: \$1,700,000
- Contingency: \$8,876,818
- Unappropriated: \$5,750,000
- **Total Requirements: \$289,618,800**

Mr. Blyth summarized Funds Totals:

- General Fund (100): \$289,618,800
- Special Purpose (200s): \$58,217,404
- Debt Service (300s): \$56,166,000
- Capital Funds (400s): \$73,199,734
- Insurance Reserves (600s): \$54,546,000
- Private Trust (700s): \$170,000
- Other Funds Total: \$242,299,138

Ms. Wagner outlined 2026-27 staffing (i.e. positions that will continue).

Ms. Marrone presented information related to questions asked at a previous meeting:

- MAPS reductions
 - Total FTE reduced: 31.85 (up to 32 approved by the Board)
 - 21 positions eliminated
 - Resulted in either staff bumping into another position or layoff
 - 10 staff retired or resigned
 - 8 staff reassigned to other positions
 - 11 vacant positions were eliminated
 - 9 staff laid off

- Elementary Specialists – Percentage of staff retained in at least one original location:
 - Music: 10/17 staff members = 59%
 - PE: 12/16 staff members = 75%
 - Librarians: 2/10 staff members = 20%

Ms. Wagner presented a table depicting grant funding shifts in 2026-27.

Mr. Johnson provided an update on Camas Ridge and Family School co-location transition:

- Transition team recommendation
- Classroom assignments and building utilization for 2026-27
- Reviewing and co-creating building-wide expectations
- Community building opportunities
 - May 2
 - June 9
- June meetings
- Group leadership will transition to incoming principal Carlos Sequeira

Mr. Bolden presented Budget Reduction and RIF updates for Eugene Online Academy (EOA) in 2026-27, including:

- Clarifying the mission and purpose of EOA
- Reimagining course design, progression, and credit recovery
- Ensuring student-centered access, referral and placement practices
- Evaluating middle school alternative programming and system capacity

Ms. Urbina presented systemwide facilitation and alignment underway:

- Major facilitation efforts:
 - Multilingual learner systems alignment framework
 - Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Action Plan
 - “Uncensored Data” ThoughtExchange
 - Instructional framework refinement
 - MTSS and SB141 alignment work
 - EOA redesign facilitation
 - Student Services think tank
 - HR and Financial Services calibration work
- Current areas of Focus:
 - *Finer details provided in the PowerPoint presentation*
 - Instruction and learning
 - Student Support
 - HR and Operations

Superintendent Mickelson outlined Budget Work Ahead:

- Systematically assess reduction decisions in the fall and make adjustments within budget constraints as needed
- Communicate a clear plan and timeline for future budget reductions and adjustments
- Strengthen forecasting, staffing position controls, and financial monitoring systems

She announced that anticipated budget adoption is scheduled for the BOD meeting on Wednesday, May 27, 2026.

Superintendent Mickelson and staff responded to questions and comments from the BOD.

Ms. Jonak requested further details about savings related to reductions in FTE impacting PE, music, and library services, suggesting that the cost might not justify the savings.

Ms. Wagner said they can follow up with more information.

Responding to a question from Ms. Jonak about Nutrition Services, Superintendent Mickelson mentioned that district leadership is evaluating input regarding a new system for paying for seconds prior to next school year.

Ms. Newman raised the topic of potentially collaborating with district specialists and employee groups regarding budgetary decisions. She referenced public testimony.

Responding to inquiries from Ms. Rabasa, Mr. Blyth said he will work to report solid numbers back to the Board.

Responding to inquiries from Ms. Rabasa, staff said they will provide further details about allocations for itinerant staff travel time.

Ms. Rabasa raised the challenge of aligning instruction scheduling given the proposed changes.

Ms. Munro and Ms. Newman shared final reflections, thanking the community for their engagement and recognizing staff for their work throughout the budget process.

2. APPROVE FOR ADOPTION THE BOARD MEETING CALENDAR FOR THE 2026-27 SCHOOL YEAR

Superintendent Mickelson briefly presented a first read of the Board meeting calendar draft for the 2026-27 school year. She noted suggested amendments.

XIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS BY INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS

Vice Chair Thessen reported attending a Lane ESD meeting on Monday, May 11, 2026. She announced that Lane ESD is holding their Youth Voice Summit on Thursday, May

28, 2026. She also chaperoned Pink Party (middle school) Pink Prom (high school) and commented on its success.

Ms. Newman provided an update on the Eugene Education Foundation (EEF) grant review process. She reported attending a Kids in Transition to Kindergarten (KITS) meeting.

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

There were none.

XV. ADJOURN

Chair Di Liberto adjourned the regular meeting at 9:49 p.m.



Miriam Mickelson, Superintendent



Tom Di Liberto, Chair

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