

DISTRICT STRATEGIC
LIBRARY PLAN
(CONTINUED)

it over to Mr. Wright. Mr. Wright introduced himself. He was hired in the Josephine County School District in 1983. He was the librarian at Lorna Byrne and Selma for one year. He then transferred to North Valley High School five years as the librarian. He was then at Lincoln Savage Middle School for seven years as a social studies teacher; then on to Newbridge for eight years. He is now in his fourth year of being retired. He holds an educational media certificate and social studies. There are not that many educational media certificates around. He heard the district needed a library coordinator this year and he applied—he was the only one that applied. He met with Mr. Valenzuela and talked about what the job would be about. The position is about 30 days—one day a week, scattered hours as they are needed. He met with Kate Dwyer and came up with a plan for things that need to be addressed. He provided some information for the board to look at.

Mr. Wright explained that House Bill 2586 is something that the district needs to be aware of as there are things that they need to provide. With that in mind he went around and visited every school. He provided the hours per day of every librarian in the district. He clarified that these are not licensed librarians, they are classified staff. The first thing that came to mind is that the libraries are not open enough. We have two high schools that are open eight hours and in the Illinois Valley the high school is only open seven hours. The big thing is that before school there is no one there for the kids to go—to do their work and hang out—they are short hours. All of the other schools are all short of hours, which is something that needs to be addressed. It's a budget thing but that was the first thing that caught his eye. He went around to every school and met every librarian, met the administrator and explained what he was doing, which was to evaluate every library. The elementary school has their problem, the middle school has their problem, and the high school has their problems. Today there was a district library meeting held at Fruitdale Elementary and they brought in Kate Weber, who is the Southern Oregon ESD Librarian and Kate Dwyer came and talked as well.

Mr. Wright stated the first thing they need to talk about is textbooks. The district has an over-abundance of old textbooks that have been there for years and years. We need to follow district policy to get rid of them. That's the first biggest problem that they have. There is also a big issue with e-waste—16 mm projectors, reel-to-reel things. The district needs to get rid of all of the e-waste. He is working on that to clear out all of the clutter and it is an ongoing thing that he is doing. The next thing is collection development. They have some books; from the TitleWise you can evaluate every book in there—the whole collection. It tells you how many books you have, the last time they were checked out, how old the book is, when you bought it and how long it has been sitting there. He would like to see a library like in the old days at every single school—that's probably not going to happen. He would like to see a librarian in every attendance area—probably not going to happen. You do need to have a person full time—one eight hour a day librarian throughout the whole year that can oversee all these programs is what he recommends to the district. A certified person can evaluate with TitleWise and do what's called a collection development. There is something called 'weeding' that needs to be happening in all of the schools. It's more prevalent in the elementary schools. Also in the elementary schools there is no direct instruction; as far as the library and bringing in the young students to explain what a book is and how to use the library—that's not happening. That is crucial for middle school, elementary and then on to the high school. Middle school hours of operation is an issue. There are times that kids can't get in there when they need to be. Also textbooks, removal of e-waste and direct instruction. Also, the access to technology, which with the new House Bill technology is going to be a big thing. We need to get more computers into the libraries so they can actually do their research there and not someplace else. At the high school also the big thing is access to technology—there's no computers; the teacher could bring them in and do their research in the library instead of going to the other side of the school to get their work done. It's an ongoing process—he's a short time person but goes to each school as much as he can.

He's here to help out any way he can. He recommend to the board that a full time person is something they need. He realizes the district can't really afford it, but one person, eight hours a day would be the first step in what they need to do. He asked if there were questions?

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Ms. Dwyer asked him to tell about some of the TitleWise reports that he had people do and what some of the results were? Mr. Wright responded that some books were older than him. They have been there for a long time and some that are outdated. The scenario is if they get rid of these books then what will they replace them with? There are many books that they need to weed out, but what will they replace them with? A certified person could analyze these situations, pass it on to each school and go from there.

Mr. Holmes asked if he had any data on what the average age of the books are in a certain library—or across the district? Mr. Wright responded that he didn't bring that with him, but does have the data. Most things in the school district were bought in the 80's when the school district had money.

Mr. York said if they came up with the money and posted a position, he was the only applicant for the current position—what's the pool? Director Breckner responded that part of when you post a position is 30 hours is kind of as an extra duty—you're going to get a different pool than if you are posting a full time position. She appreciates Mr. Wright saying he was the only applicant—she emphasized the Mr. Wright was a solid, good employee for us. Even though he was the only applicant, we don't just take people because they are the only applicant. There is a vetting process and there is a minimum standard you do have to meet to be employed by the school district and Mr. Wright exceeds that minimum standard. Ms. Breckner stated the he is right in that finding people that have the library certification is rare because there are very few school districts that have full time library managers that are licensed in their libraries. There are a lot of people that had to, during the recession, make reductions and there are ways to meet those minimum state requirements—which is what we have had to do for quite a while. What we would get if we were to post a full time position would be interesting, but her guess is that we would have more than one applicant.

Mr. Holmes stated that when this House Bill goes in to effect every district is going to be in the same position we are because there are very few districts across the state that have licensed librarians and they aren't out there. So, the schools, whether it is Southern Oregon or Western Oregon, and their teaching programs are going to have to get up to speed to provide that bulk of those types of people. That's where we are headed eventually and it is a budgetary concern. As we look forward he believes the goal at this point is to create a long term library plan. Mr. Wright responded that is correct. He is here to evaluate and give the district some ideas and direction on which way to go as you are making the budget. Mr. Holmes asked if he had a time frame that he thinks he should be sitting down with himself, Director Valenzuela and Director Alderson to create that plan? Mr. Wright should have a draft of the plan in the next few months. They could get together after the first of the year.

Mr. York stated that right now the libraries are basically funded out of the school's discretionary funds at each individual school so whether they would take that money and pool it or ? Mr. Holmes said how do we look at earmarking specific budgetary items in the future so that it doesn't just get left up to the building principal out of their discretionary funds. It's easier to do that before it gets to those discretionary funds as opposed to him telling them they need to spend a certain amount, and then doing the follow up and those kinds of things. Mr. York said it would be nice to have someone that knows what the rules are that are coming down. Ms. Breckner added that it's also nice when the legislature makes those rules, they also look at what the budgetary impact might be. Mr. York said they call that an unfunded mandate. Ms. Breckner stated the Mr. Wright is right in that our

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elementary schools probably have more current books simply because they have Title I dollars, where we do purchase newer books—Scholastic Book Fairs as well. The elementary libraries probably have a newer collection than the middle and high schools because those middle and high schools don't necessarily have access to that. Mr. Wright said that elementary libraries are making their own money in their book fairs to buy newer collections. Mr. York said it gives the community an opportunity to invest in to the schools through those book fairs. What he wouldn't want to see is that we eliminate book fairs. Ms. Dwyer added we still need them—\$1,000 a year for collection development for a school library is still needed. The board thanked Mr. Wright and look forward to hearing more from him in the future.

Ms. Dwyer stated that she gave each of the board members a copy of the improvement indicators under House Bill 2586 and the two that relate specifically to libraries are highlighted. The district needs to show that they are taking steps in those directions. Kate Weber from the ESD showed each of our school librarians how to do Title Wise reports in Follett packages called Destiny. Today they viewed a report by Heather Saeman in which all of the non-fiction were listed by Dewey number and saw all of the computer books from 1980. You can look at her library and say that she has computer books—but they are computer books from 1980 which is really not useful for the kids. Those need to come out and they need to be replaced with modern resources. We have been so pressed for funding that there has been very little collection development and Common Core has a big emphasis on fiction, quality fiction and getting fiction that kids will read readily so there's a lot of development that needs to happen. That's really in the job description of a certified teacher librarian more than it is the job description of a classified. The hope is long term to end up with three certified teacher librarians—over time, one in each of the geographic areas. But the place to start is one full time certified teacher librarian who would then write that plan for the district. That's the one big budget item. The other budget item is moving book purchasing out of discretionary funds and into a line item to make sure that each school library has an opportunity for collection development. The other one is hours for library staffs to make sure that they're covered; to make sure that their library time is prioritized over other duties. Those are the money items in the plan.

Member Olmo said hearing that there is a requirement for computers in the libraries, is that a requirement that something like a Chromebook or tablet could be kept with librarian and then checked out and used throughout the library and then brought back at the end of the period? Mr. Holmes said that the district has been making some huge strides particularly with the admin using Chromebooks. The whole Google platform in terms of communication and sharing is really phenomenal in the educational setting. They will serve many purposes. It's not the \$1,000 machine any more. You can get a cart with twenty Chromebooks on it for a few thousand dollars and it becomes mobile and it's useful all over. It can go from room to room and library. He is not purposing that he is running Director Valenzuela's plan for technology but they have talked and that is one of the directions we are looking at. Mr. Valenzuela said they spoke about this last month and will be talking about it more. Chromebooks are great but our libraries don't have a wireless presence and so they won't work. Mr. Holmes clarified that in looking and the legality of Construction Excise Tax, it can be used to fund infrastructure around technology. So that may be something that he may propose to them in the next set of ten as they move toward the Spring and in to the Summer because the district is doing very well on those projects that he has listed for them already. In fact just today we sent the purchase order off for the bleacher repair that will be done December 29, 30 and 31. That was \$150,000 line item in that original top ten and the purchase order went out today for \$78,000. There are others like that. He gave the original numbers as the best shot and best guess and it has taken a long time to get from point A to point B, but part of that process was really trying to search out how we can do it the most efficiently and save the most dollars and spread those dollars out. In monitoring that, he will give the board a

more in-depth report coming up in the next couple of months where they may look at all of those things that we have accomplished, what they cost, what they were budgeted at and the CET fund and how much is coming in and what we have spent and where the balance is at. There is a bunch of stuff in the hopper right now but dollar for dollar our fund balance has not even gone down this year. We have done all of these projects without even losing the fund balance. Looking forward he and Mr. Valenzuela will have that conversation toward the Spring of what would it look like? What would those dollars involve? and bring that to the board.

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Ms. Dwyer added that the digital literacy piece is so strong in Common Core and the Smarter Balanced. Digital Literacy is what she does in her grant partnership with the schools. Right now they don't have certified teacher librarians who can deliver curriculum on information literacy and teach kids how to use that resource in the library. Being able to deliver that piece of learning would be huge. When you read through the information she provided you will see there are a lot of places that need to be re-funded as money comes back. But the state has really identified school libraries as a key item because they recognize through all the research that especially for schools in poverty or schools with high minorities that school libraries can make such a gigantic difference when they have trained teacher librarians available to students. There are a lot of things that need to be re-funded but to get started on rebuilding our school libraries would be a tremendous piece of fulfilling this plan and meeting our goals.

Superintendent Holmes stated that this relates to a statewide campaign that is designed to encourage our legislature to fund schools at the appropriate level for K-12 education. It's a statewide movement. Grants Pass board approved a resolution last month at their meeting and it says something to the nature that the Grants Pass School Board supports the Promise of Oregon campaign to—and then it lists a couple of three key components of that campaign that they are trying to do which is primarily fund K-12 schools at the appropriate levels so that we can meet the needs of all of our kids. He put this on the agenda because he wanted to get a sense of whether they were interested as a board of having a similar resolution that we would send off. It goes to the Governor's office and the State Legislature and it may just be one more piece of paper in a folder—but it's one more number. So if the Promise of Oregon can say out of 176 districts in the state of Oregon we have 173 resolutions supporting that kind of thing. He spent a fair amount of time the last previous two weeks at Southern Oregon ESD. A couple of those meetings were just speaking with the area superintendents. One of those was speaking with the area superintendents with leadership from COSA, and then last week they had a meeting with Rob Saxton which is the Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction. Those conversations all revolved around funding for this upcoming biennium. Coming from a state where the funding of K-12 education is part of the Constitution—which means the Legislature is bound by the Constitution to fund K-12 education prior to funding anything else. In this state that's not the case so education is on a level playing field with transportation, road improvements, parks and recreation and all those other entities that are all at the table looking for a piece of the pie. The conversations are very important at this state where the amount of input and direction and conversation in people's ears that the legislator's get from the entities that have a stake in these things is vitally important. That's why he put it on the agenda—if the board is interested he will draft one and have it ready for the next board meeting on November 18th. He will get it to them prior and try to email it out early in the week so if they have any concern about the language and want him to change something he can do that. It's pretty important to get it done fairly quickly to get it in the hopper and get it moving to support what they are trying to do. From a positive perspective, that last year's state budget for K-12 education was \$6.65 billion and his understanding is that the state's perspective of the initial offering from their side is going to be north of the \$7 billion mark. So even if we get somewhere near what their initial offering is, which he believes is probably a low water mark, they should see some pretty significant funding increases coming our way that will allow us to do some of these things that we

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have been long needing to do. They will also see at the 18th board meeting, a calendar for the budget committee and the budget process that he would like to get approved at that meeting so that we can start doing work. He really wants to get, with the idea that we may have some additional funding on the table, it's important that we get a lot of stakeholders in this K-12 system at the table to discuss priorities. Not specifics, not dollars, just whatever our priorities and have those conversations early on. What are those things that we really value as a system that once we get to the table to talk dollars and cents we have some direction of where those different stakeholders are at.

Ms. Olmo asked if he recalled the organization behind the campaign? Is it "Stand for Children" that's supporting it? Mr. Holmes said everything he could find in terms of the organization was just "The Promise of Oregon." He could not find an umbrella group. He will do some more research and see what he can find. Ms. Olmo responded that it certainly sounds like something that she would be interested in hearing more about. The other board members concurred. Mr. Holmes said he would move forward with that get them the appropriate stuff.

RECESS

Board Chair York recessed the meeting to Executive Session at 5:36 PM.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Board Chair York called the meeting into Executive Session under ORS 192.660(2)(d) "Bargaining". At 5:45 PM.

ADJOURN

The Board returned to open session and Board Chair York adjourned the meeting at 6:40 PM.

Danny York
Chairperson of the Board

David Holmes
Superintendent-Clerk