

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

March 4, 2020

The Board of Directors of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Eugene, Oregon, held a regular session at 6 p.m. at the Education Center, 200 North Monroe Street in Eugene, Oregon. Notice of the meeting was mailed to the media and posted in the Education Center on February 28, 2020, and published in *The Register-Guard* on March 4, 2020.

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Anne Marie Levis, Chair
Mary Walston, Vice Chair
Alicia Hays (via teleconference)
Judy Newman
Gordon Lafer
Martina Shabram
Jim Torrey

STAFF:

Dr. Gustavo Balderas, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Charis McGaughy, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction
Kerry Delf, Chief of Staff
Brooke Wagner, Director of K-8 Education
Andy Dey, Director of Secondary Education
Kat Lange, Director of Student Services
Kyle Tucker, Chief Operations Officer
Cydney Vandercar, Assistant Superintendent for Support Services
Christine Nesbit, General Counsel
Oscar Loureiro, Director of Research and Planning
Jeffry Johnson, Director of K-8 Education
Andrea Belz, Director of Financial Services
Tia Holliday, Curriculum Administrator
Lisa Fjordbeck, Executive Assistant/Board Secretary
Karen Hardin, Director of Human Resources

STUDENT ADVISORY PANEL MEMBERS:

Hannah Mitchell, North Eugene High School
Joel Sadofsky, International High School

MEDIA: KRVM, KEZI

II. REGULAR BOARD MEETING

III. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, FLAG SALUTE, LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Board Chair Levis called the regular meeting to order at 6 p.m., and led everyone present in the pledge of allegiance. She then acknowledged the land on which the meeting was taking place was the Traditional Homelands of the Kalapuya People, who have been stewards of the land for approximately 14,000 years.

IV. AGENDA REVIEW

Chair Levis said she would like to add an item to Items for Action, dealing with the Board's role in creating a process for interviewing and appointing a new Superintendent.

V. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: SCHOOL BOARD APPRECIATION

Dr. Balderas addressed those present regarding Eugene School District 4J's response to the global coronavirus pandemic. He said 4J was working closely with Lane County's Health Department, as well as neighboring school districts, to provide guidance for communication between the District and students and their families, and cleaning efforts—especially in common, high-traffic areas—would be intensified. Finally, Dr. Balderas said the District was also exploring options for long-distance learning, or learning from home.

VI. COMMENTS BY BOARD CHAIR

Chair Levis thanked Dr. Balderas for everything he has done for 4J, and she said she was looking forward to continuing to work with him in the upcoming months, until he left the area for a superintendent position in Washington State.

VII. RECEIVE REPORTS FROM HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Hannah Mitchell, representing North Eugene High School, reported that next week was Finals Week. She also reported that there was a North Choir concert coming up on Tuesday, March 10, and a North band concert the following Wednesday. Ms. Mitchell said North held its first full-length play last week, entitled "Puffs, and she offered a brief winter/spring sports update from North. Finally, on the topic of the 4J Board meeting earlier start times, Ms. Mitchell said, to her, what time the meetings started was not as important as how long the meetings lasted.

Joel Sadofsky, representing International High School (IHS) reported that IHS student government was working on two initiatives designed to unite students from all three IHS campuses.

Vice Chair Walston for Nick Clendenen, representing Churchill High School, announced Churchill High School's disco-themed Winter Formal was a huge success with a great turnout. She offered those present a brief report on winter/spring sports at Churchill High School.

Mr. Torrey for Kassidy Hampton, representing Sheldon High School, reported that Sheldon's Black Student Union decorated a hallway at Sheldon to bring awareness to Black History Month.

Mr. Lafer for Noa Ablow-Measelle, representing South Eugene High School, reported that South recently held its Winter Assembly, at which South's winter athletes were honored. He also reported South's play "Wonders of the World—a Comedy" closed last weekend and was a huge success. Finally, for Ms. Ablow-Measelle, Mr. Lafer offered a brief update on winter/spring sports at South.

VIII. ITEMS RAISED BY THE AUDIENCE

Hector Cash of Eugene, addressed the Board concerning the Kelly Middle School / Yujin Gakuen co-location. He, representing the staffs of Kelly Middle School and Yujin Gakuen, urged the Board to sign off on portables for the co-location of KMS/YG.

Jen Scott of Eugene, said the community would like to see more FTEs for 4J teachers, in order to reduce class sizes, and she said, in the interest of District transparency, the community would like to see *actual* class size numbers on the 4J website, and not median class sizes. Ms. Scott also spoke in favor of: more librarians within 4J, portables for the Kelly Middle School / Yujin Gakuen site, developmentally appropriate courses instead of expensive corporate read/write programs

Roscoe Caron of Eugene, and a retired 4J teacher, addressed the Board about 3rd-grade reading proficiency as part of the District's Student Investment Account (SIA) proposal. Mr. Caron offered that extensive standardized testing in primary grades does not meet the Student Success Act's (SSA) well-rounded education guidelines.

Larry Lewin of Eugene, and a retired 4J teacher, advocated for the addition of funds to help 4J teachers develop quality classroom assessments. He asked the Board if they were receiving statements from a person or persons mischaracterizing the families and faculties of Kelly Middle School / Yujin Gakuen as spreading misinformation about the costs of the Kelly Middle School / Yujin Gakuen co-location. He asked the Board to make a public statement eschewing that misinformation.

Carrie Ann Naumoff of Eugene, and a newly retired 4J teacher, addressed the Board concerning the proposal(s) for SIA funds. She asserted more funds needed to be allocated to hire more teachers in order to shrink class sizes, instead of adding more paid administrative positions for testing and data gathering.

Julie Vignoul of Eugene, and a teacher-librarian in 4J, spoke about Student Success Act (SSA) funds. She expressed disappointment at school libraries and librarians not being included in the SSA proposal. Ms. Vignoul said she was definitely a proponent of books in the classroom, but that was *not* the same as a library.

Joy Wells of Eugene, and a 4J teacher, addressed the Board concerning the omission of elementary library/librarian funding within the Student Success Act funds. She offered there was a definite connection between elementary librarians, and reading, literacy, and high school graduation.

Kristina Payne of Eugene, and appearing in an official capacity as the Executive Director of Lane Workforce Partnership, recognized Dr. Balderas for his work and commitment to 4J. She said she was afraid the community may not have been as welcoming to Dr. Balderas as they could or should have been. Ms. Payne urged the community to be as welcoming as possible to the new 4J Superintendent, whoever that may be.

Lisa Miyake of Eugene, addressed the Board concerning the imminent lack of space at the new Kelly Middle School / Yujin Gakuen co-location site. She advocated for portable classrooms at that location to mitigate the space issue.

Stephanie Birmingham of Eugene, and a teacher at Kelly Middle School, thanked the Board members who had been attending the Kelly Middle School / Yujin Gakuen meetings, and taking an active role in listening and responding to the issues surrounding the Kelly Middle School / Yujin Gakuen co-location.

Zack Page of Eugene, read a letter written by Kelly Prince, a Language Arts teacher in 4J, who emphasized the important role librarians play in the education and scholastic success of 4J students. Ms. Prince's letter went on to say there should be librarians in every 4J school.

Tiffany Wright of Eugene, and the Parent Volunteer Library Assistant at Churchill High School, spoke to the Board about the importance of funding libraries and librarians in all 4J schools. She offered that her, and other 4J parents volunteering in this capacity, were no substitute for actual librarians within the schools.

Kory Kunz of Eugene, and a 4J teacher, read a letter from 4J student Larry Wells, which addressed the importance of funding libraries and librarians in all 4J schools. The letter emphasized the important role librarians play in the education and scholastic success of students.

Julie Butler of Eugene, expressed disappointment at school libraries and librarians not being included in the SSA proposal. She said she had been volunteering in a 4J library since 2005, and although she held an education degree, she and other volunteers were no substitute for librarians.

Joshua Berstein of Eugene thanked Dr. Balderas for his dedication to 4J, especially where the SSA and SIA were concerned. He said he had been studying SSA materials online, and was looking forward to the SSA presentation later in the evening. Mr. Burstein commended Dr. Balderas, the Board, and 4J staff, for remaining focused on the kids in 4J.

Erin Troberg of Eugene urged the Board to fund librarians in all 4J schools. She said she was grateful to be able to volunteer, and grateful for all who volunteer their time in 4J libraries, but it was not a substitute for actual librarians.

David Wines of Eugene, and an 18-year 4J teacher, asked the Board to use SSA funds for teachers themselves, instead of administrative positions, in an effort to reduce class sizes.

Carrie Frazier of Eugene urged the Board to fund teacher-librarians in all 4J schools. She asserted that teacher-librarians were very important to the literary development of schoolchildren of all ages. Ms. Frazier also stated that, at the middle and high school levels, there is not enough time for the librarians there to teach the kids about how to use a library, making elementary teacher-librarians that much more important.

Lisa Easton of Eugene said she had spent many hours recently in her child's library in 4J. She was grateful for all who volunteered their time in 4J libraries, but it was not a substitute for actual librarians. She urged the Board to fund librarians through the SSA.

Alison Johnson of Eugene, and a parent of two kids at Yujin Gakuen, addressed the Board concerning the imminent lack of space at the new Kelly Middle School / Yujin Gakuen co-location site. She advocated for portable classrooms at that location to mitigate the space issue. Ms. Johnson expressed frustration at how long the District was taking to mitigate the issues surrounding the Kelly Middle School / Yujin Gakuen co-location.

Carol Hachey of Eugene, and a parent of three 4J students, urged the Board to fund librarians. She volunteered at 4J libraries, and was grateful for all who volunteered their time, but she said, it was not a substitute for actual librarians. She urged the Board to fund librarians through the SSA, asserting it was a disservice to the kids of 4J not to.

Deanna Belcher of Eugene, spoke to the Board about SIA funds, and using them to increase instructional time, instead of standardized testing time. She asked the Board to design the 4J curriculum to move away from standardized test preparation, and toward actual classroom instruction.

IX. COMMENTS BY EMPLOYEE GROUPS

Tom Horn, current President of the 4J employee group Managers, Administrators, Professionals, and Supervisors (MAPS), and former MAPS President Eric Anderson, introduced themselves and the group, and offered those present a brief overview of what MAPS does.

Sheila Wagner, representing the Classified employee group Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA), congratulated Dr. Balderas on his National recognition. She asked the Superintendent if 4J had a pandemic plan.

Dr. Balderas answered yes.

Sabrina Gordon, President of the Eugene Education Association, read the following prepared comments to the Board:

"Tonight, I will be sharing with you some of EEA's thoughts on the district's Student Investment Account application. But before I do, I'd like to briefly address the Kelly/YG merger. EEA is aware that the Board has received emails criticizing teachers and Board members for advocating for the needs of Kelly and YG students. We hope that the heartfelt statements of students, parents, teachers and Board members will be treated with respect, even by those who hold other views. Efforts by educators, parents and community members to advocate for the needs of students should be celebrated and encouraged, not labeled as bullying or blamed for negative outcomes. In the words of author Suzy Kassem: 'Strong people stand up for themselves. Stronger people stand up for others.'

And speaking of standing up for others, let's talk about the Student Success Act. This historic funding for education in Oregon became a reality after tens of thousands of educators, parents, and community members stood up for students. Seas of red (like all of the red in the audience tonight) gathered and marched, chanted and held up signs to communicate the needs of Oregon students. And now here we are, almost a year later reviewing 4J's plan for some of these funds. Starting on a positive note, parts of this plan address needs that educators have been advocating for, such as:

- Regional care teams and wrap-around services for students and families
- Plans for supporting emerging bi-lingual students, including professional development
- Enhancing the NATIVES program
- Adding three nurses
- *Some* class size reduction
- A total of 69 Licensed positions

And now to a list of 'wonderings.' These are things that have caused me to think back to May 8th and wonder if any teachers were holding signs asking for these things for students:

- Were there signs for Reading Curriculum? Input gathered by 4J and EEA, from our members, parents, and community, ranked Class Size Reduction and Student Health & Safety as the clear top priorities. But this plan spends the largest amount on the Well-Rounded Education category, and the majority of that on elementary reading initiatives. More of this funding should be going to Class Size Reduction. Of the 69 licensed positions added under this plan, only 22 go to class size reduction (18 elementary and 4 middle). Additionally, the focus on early literacy without any librarians sends mixed messages about how we expect students to become successful and

engaged readers. The plan spends half a million dollars for reading curriculum. Could this come from the general fund and SIA funds be used instead to hire librarians?

- Were there signs for Professional Development? More than \$1 million is proposed for professional development. Yes, teachers need PD. They need it to be valuable and need time for professional learning as well as time to implement that learning. But when teachers walked out on May 8th, no one held a sign asking for more PD. In fact, input gathered by 4J ranks adding librarians higher than adding PD. More of this funding should be going to Class Size Reduction and/or restoring librarians.

- Were there signs for District-level jobs? At least \$800K is planned to create jobs based at the district office (admin and licensed support staff). More of this funding should be closer to the classroom. This could be almost 8 more classroom teachers to reduce class size, or a combination of classroom teachers and librarians.

- Were there signs asking for Special Ed administrators? The Learning for All plan that pilots a program change for Special Education services adds 6.5 licensed 'support' staff and another SPED administrator. 4J's SPED department already has 6 administrators. More of this funding should be closer to the classroom, such as hiring SPED teachers for Case Load Reduction.

- And finally, The Crisis of Disrupted Learning report published by OEA last year after community forums across the state gave key recommendations for addressing students' needs. One of these recommendations was to 'decrease prescriptive academic requirements' such as mandated instructional blocks and time spent on standardized tests. It recommends 'time in the school day for deliberate and intentional social and emotional learning, community building, and creative thinking, learning, and play.' While the SIA plan is not the only vehicle for making these recommendations a reality for our students, EEA fears that the focus on 3rd grade reading scores will lead the district toward more prescriptive requirements and less time for creative thinking, learning and play. Since the Student Success Act became a reality, the district has tempered the excitement over increased funding with cautions that 'it won't go far enough' and 'we can't address everything that students need.' So now that we're here with this proposal we must ask: Does this plan use every dollar in ways that will have the best possible impact for students? If we can't lower class size to match the QEM, or provide all the supports students need, are we making the right choices as Oregon begins to re-invest in schools? Are we focusing first on the top priority areas?

We must also keep in mind how interconnected the strands of potential spending areas are. Class size and caseload have huge impacts on student health and safety. A truly well rounded Education, that includes arts, librarians, and opportunities for creativity can have enormously positive impacts on students' emotional health and desire to engage at school. The educators who fought for this funding want the SIA plan to reflect these truths. We've come this far for our students, and will continue to stand with and for them to create the schools that they deserve."

X. COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS BY INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. Torrey reported that he had attended the Oregon Department of Education's (ODE) meeting on March 2. He offered the purpose of that meeting was to give ODE a two-hour Work Session to talk about state assessments. Mr. Torrey said ODE was asked to consider a survey of the best formative assessments they could find in the state, and to identify within Oregon those schools that put together career technical education (CTE) classes that integrate core credit requirements into the CTE classes.

Ms. Hays thanked everyone who offered testimony about SSA funds, and she assured those present that the Board would have more time to sit down and go more in-depth into SSA funding. She said she had looked at the emails mentioned in public testimony, which supposedly accused the faculties and families of KMS and YG of bullying behavior and spreading misinformation about the merger, but she, in her scan of them, did not see any evidence of this herself.

Ms. Newman offered she had recently attended the Eugene Education Foundation's (EEF) fundraising dinner, and she said it was a very heartening experience for her. She thanked the teachers, staff, and members of the 4J community that had been coming out to voice their opinions and concerns around SSA funding.

Ms. Shabram said she appreciated the 4J classified staff, especially during the advent of the coronavirus, as they were responsible for keeping 4J spaces clean and inhabitable.

Mr. Lafer asserted he too would like to see SSA funds spent on librarians and smaller class sizes, and he advocated for portables at the KMS/YG co-location site. He urged those members of the public who spoke about SSA funding to stay for the presentation and discussion on that topic later in the meeting.

Vice Chair Walston thanked 4J staff for their rapid response to the impending coronavirus pandemic. She reported the Oregon Battle of the Books (OBOB) regional finals were being held at North Eugene High School on March 14, 2020, and she encouraged attendance.

XI. CONSENT GROUP – ITEMS FOR ACTION

Information about the consent group items was included in the board packet.

1. Approve Personnel Actions

MOTION: Vice Chair Walston moved, seconded by Mr. Lafer, to approve the item in the Consent Group as presented.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously - 7:0.

Chair Levis called for a break at 7:35 p.m. The meeting resumed at 7:40 p.m.

XII. ITEMS FOR ACTION

1. Approve Revisions to Board Policies: JEA Compulsory Attendance, JEC Admission of Resident Students and EEA Student Transportation Services

Ms. Nesbit offered the Board a report on revisions to the following Board policies: JEA, JEC, and EEA.

MOTION: Vice Chair Walston moved, seconded by Ms. Newman, to approve the revisions to Board policies: JEA, JEC, and EEA.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously - 7:0.

Chair Levis, after sharing a copy of the Board policy for recruitment and appointment of a Superintendent with all the Board members, suggested appointment of an interim Superintendent until such time as a permanent Superintendent can be found. She said the Board would need to reach out to a consultant to help them with this process. Chair Levis asked the Board to authorize Board leadership to do pre-work between now and March 18, 2020, in order to come back to the Board with criteria, process, etc., for selecting a consultant or consultants to help them appoint an interim Superintendent.

MOTION: Vice Chair Walston moved, seconded by Mr. Torrey, to authorize Board leadership to consider and select a consultant to help the Board appoint an interim Superintendent for the 2020-21 school year.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously - 7:0.

XIII. ITEMS FOR ACTION AT A FUTURE MEETING

1. Proposed Student Success Act - Student Investment Account Plan

Ms. McGaughy offered the Board a report and Power Point presentation on the Proposed Student Success Act - Student Investment Account Plan.

Ms. Newman asked if it was true the skills mentioned in the first part of the presentation were no longer being taught as explicitly as in the past.

Ms. Vandercar said that was correct.

Ms. Newman wondered if the licensed reading specialists working with 4J worked directly with the kids.

Ms. McGaughy said yes.

Ms. Shabram asked why there was no mention of funding for new librarians in the proposal.

Ms. McGaughy offered that 4J staff believed librarians were critically important to the schools in the District, but they ultimately had to go with the strategy within the limited amount of money allotted that would make the largest impacts across student achievement, closing disparities, and addressing mental health and behavioral needs. She reiterated that librarians' omission from the proposal did not mean 4J staff thought them unimportant, and that there were other means to explore in order to mitigate the shortage of librarians.

Chair Levis asked if it would be possible to add librarians to 4J's regular budget.

Dr. Balderas said it would be possible to use the 4J budget he will propose to augment library services, by braiding together the SIA and 4J's operating budget.

Mr. Lafer asked, under this proposal, what percentage of a reading specialist's time would be spent teaching kids in the classroom.

Ms. McGaughy said they were still envisioning what the reading specialists in practice would look like, but there was a co-teaching component where they would work alongside teachers in the classroom.

Ms. Newman was in support of adding librarians to the 4J budget. She asked how many new Kids in Transition to School (KITS) groups there would be under this proposal.

Ms. Vandercar said the number of KITS group would be almost doubled, and there would be a pilot of KITS during the school day at one of 4J's highest-needs elementary schools.

Ms. Shabram asked about the professional development time built into the proposal; she wondered if that was time for teacher collaboration, bringing in outside educators, and sending 4J staff to training.

Ms. Lange replied that all of the things Ms. Shabram mentioned were correct.

Mr. Lafer asked for clarification on the Learning for All model.

Ms. Lange said the Learning for All model would be used to embed instructional strategies and practices into the classroom, supporting teachers with best strategies for meeting the needs of the diverse students in their classrooms.

Ms. Shabram asked in what way would the faculty brought in to assist with behavioral issues in the classrooms be handling things such as room clearing.

Ms. Wagner offered that, with another adult in the classroom, a room clear might not be necessary, and that staff person would try to facilitate keeping a child in the classroom through co-regulation.

Mr. Torrey asked how this proposal would address ongoing behavioral issues.

Dr. Balderas answered the Behavior Framework and Support Services piece laid out in the proposal, was designed to address that specific issue. He said the new proposal augments behavioral health models 4J had been working on now for a few years.

XIV. SUGGESTIONS BY THE BOARD FOR CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS AT A FUTURE MEETING

Chair Levis suggested March 11, 2020 for a Board Work Session; she said, from what she was hearing from her colleagues, the earlier the meeting could be held, the better. She suggested 5:30 p.m.

Ms. Shabram said she would have to leave that meeting in order to be present at a previous engagement that was to begin at 6 p.m.

The Board settled on 5:15 p.m. for the March 11 Work Session.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Levis adjourned the meeting at 9:40 pm.

(Recorded by Rodney Cimburke)

Dr. Gustavo Balderas
District Clerk

Anne Marie Levis
Board Chair