

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

March 11, 2020

The Board of Directors of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Eugene, Oregon, held a work session at 5:15 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 March 6, 2020, and published in *The Register-Guard* on March 11, 2020.

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mary Walston, Vice Chair
Alicia Hays
Judy Newman
Gordon Lafer
Martina Shabram
Jim Torrey

BOARD MEMBER ABSENT:

Anne Marie Levis, Chair

STAFF:

Dr. Gustavo Balderas, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Charis McGaughy, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction
Chelsea Mabie, Elementary Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA)
Kat Lange, Director Student Services
Andy Dey, High School Director
Dr. Karen Pérez, Equity, Instruction & Partnerships Administrator
Jeff Johnson, PreK-8 Director
Brooke Wagner, PreK-8 Director
Oscar Loureiro, Director of Research and Planning
Cydney Vandercar, Assistant Director for Administrative Services
Kyle Tucker, Chief Operations Officer
Kerry Delf, Chief of Staff
Christine Nesbit, General Counsel
Lisa Fjordbeck, Executive Assistant/Board Secretary

MEDIA: KRVM

I. WORK SESSION: Student Success Act – Student Investment Plan

Ms. Walston convened the work session at 5:15 p.m.

She introduced the item for the work session – the Student Success Act (SSA) and the Student Investment Plan. She said Board members would ask clarifying questions and learn more about the district staff's recommendations for the plan. She said the following week, the Board would formally review the plan and be asked to adopt it or possibly make proposals to amend the staff recommendations. She reiterated the purpose of the SSA funds was to improve students' access and opportunities for students who had been historically underserved in the education system. Chair

Levis had collected questions from Board members about the plan, some of which were posed during the work session.

Dr. Balderas stated that the plan that had been presented to the Board came about after more than 50 community meetings and surveys. He reiterated Ms. Walston's statement about the purpose of the funding plan was to provide services for the students in its district with the most need and had been underserved. He gave the example of instructional minutes of how the 4J School District had struggled to provide equity and access within its system. He mentioned the importance of the Board's and state's goal of elementary students reaching a third-grade reading level, students being at a third-grade level for math and science, and staff being provided the professional development to achieve that goal.

He mentioned that the plan did not include librarians, due to the cost of a licensed staff member (about \$110,000). He also made brief comments about how they could reduce class sizes to have the most impact on students and teachers. He emphasized how fortunate the district was to have passed a bond measure, renew a levy, and use money from Measure 98 to continue to help the district achieve its goals.

The Board members then asked questions about the staff's draft of the funding plan, some of which were given to staff in advance.

Ms. Hays asked staff what the additional administrators included in the plan would be doing and how they would be included in the plan.

Dr. McGaughy explained the plan called for a total of 4.5 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) staff, from the initiatives and in the indirect. That included 3.5 FTE administrators and one professional. This included a 1.5 FTE -- 1.0 FTE Learning for All Administrator and 0.5 FTE Extended Learning to oversee after-school programs and summer school. The 0.5 FTE would be a 1.0 FTE position, but it would be paid for with a combination of two grants, the current one (0.5 FTE), and the new one (0.5 FTE).

Ms. McGaughy said the other position were indirect. They would receive \$500,000 in indirect. About \$20,000 would go to charter school indirect expenses, and the rest of the schools would receive \$480,000 total. Of that total, the district proposed 3.5 positions. Three of those positions would be in the MAPS employee group (Managers, Administrators, Professionals, and Supervisors), and 0.5 in licensed. Those positions would include 1.0 for a fiscal analyst (Professional), 1.0 for a Human Resources Administrator, and 1.0 for a Curriculum Administrator who had an expertise in early literacy in order to oversee elementary curriculum in support third graders achieving their grade level's reading standards. The final 0.5 position would be tasked with keeping track of requirements and evaluating the effectiveness of the grant program. It would be a licensed Teacher on Assignment (TOSA) position working closely with project staff.

Mr. Lafer posed several questions. One was regarding how class sizes would be impacted by additional funds, specifically what would the average class size be for different age groups. He also asked if the proposed 10 reading specialists would be part of reducing class sizes or would they be in addition to other staff. This third question asked how much of the reading specialists' time would be spent directly working with students.

Ms. Wagner replied that the 10 reading specialists would be in addition, and they would be separate from the FTE. The average class size in core classes (math, reading, social studies, and science)

would be 29 students. Each middle school would receive different staff amounts based on their needs. With the new FTE, their average core class sizes would go down to 25.7 students.

Mr. Johnson gave some examples of how class sizes would change for elementary schools. In Grades 1 and 2 at Awbrey Park (a Title 1 school), the average was 23 students per class. With the grant, it would receive an additional facilitating teacher who would split their time between the two grades, which would result in class sizes decreasing to 17.5 students per class. Gilham Elementary, a larger school, would receive 1 FTE for Grades 1 and 2. Right now, its average class size was 22.8 for Grade 1 and 29.3 for Grade 2. The grant would decrease average class size to 22 students for each class. A high-poverty Title 1 school, Howard Elementary, would start out with an average 22.7 students in Grade 1 and 26.7 students in Grade 2. With the grant, it would receive 1.5 FTE to reduce average class sizes to 17 to 20 students.

Dr. Balderas clarified that with the grant, class sizes would change depending on the school and what each school would need.

Mr. Lafer asked if the average class sizes given were for core classes. Staff confirmed, saying that the average class sizes illustrated were based on current figures and not projections.

Ms. Mabie explained how much time staff would spend reading to students. The district would hire nine reading specialists. Some schools might receive part of a FTE, but they would support people in multiple schools. Some might co-teach or help diagnose students. These reading specialists might travel to other sites as well.

Ms. Wagner clarified that a lot of the 4J schools did not have reading specialists because they were not Title 1 schools.

Mr. Torrey asked if they provided full schedules for juniors and seniors in high school, would they add a range of electives such as Personal Finance and CTE classes.

Andy Dey, High School Director, said they would add new classes such as economics, civics, and personal finance. The grant would add staff to implement programs and build on ones they had that the students would need to be successful after graduation.

Ms. Shabram asked for more details about implementing full schedules for high school juniors and seniors and the challenges in place.

Mr. Dey explained that they would start with a seminar for freshmen to possibly connect it with their health curriculum. They would explain the programs they offered as well as the purpose of their time in high school and what they would want to accomplish while they were there. They would encourage students to take electives when they were upperclassmen. The district would also implement ways to include apprenticeships, internships, and work experiences for them to earn graduation credits, and offer more elective courses based on what the students said they would want. Another idea Mr. Dey mentioned was offering a diploma with distinction if students earned 30 credits in high school, as an incentive to take more classes.

Dr. Balderas mentioned additional options the district was exploring, including going to a semester schedule district-wide or even an A/B block semester schedule instead of a three-by-five schedule.

Ms. McGaughy said staff had been considering other options for students' 12th grade year. Some of those ideas included internships, volunteer work, apprenticeships, online learning, and other credit-bearing opportunities.

Ms. Newman inquired if parents would be included and how they would be informed about these options.

Mr. Dey explained they would inform them at parent nights for each grade at the high schools. He emphasized that the transition to high school needed to be a process, starting with a ninth-grade seminar to work with families and support them during that transition.

Ms. Newman requested more information about Learning for All and how it would be implemented.

Ms. Kat Lang, Director Ed Support Services, explained that the pilot schools for this model included Churchill High School, Spencer Butte Middle School, and Edgewood Elementary School. Currently, there was currently no specific model. However, the Learning for All Model pulled from many different evidence-based practices to increase access and inclusion for all students, specifically including students who received special education services. Ms. Lang provided packets to the Board about it. Their goal was to bring the best practices together, and during the first year build a model that was best for 4J. Different schools had different needs. District staff would determine what would be best for each school and help train staff to meet those needs.

Joyce Smith-Johnson, Education Administrator, explained the process that had taken place at Churchill High School. They held multiple sessions with the school's services staff. They also learned where they had been losing students who were failing, out of class, skipping, or dropping out. They made a proposal to address increasing access to general education and support that would keep students in class. They asked for feedback on a skeleton model; they were on version five of that document. Later, they would take that to a staff and solicit more feedback. Key components included core classes that would be co-taught in Language Arts and Math, and the same for special education classes. They would provide drop-in access centers where students could receive help from a teacher or educational assistant. They would also have services for students who started attending that school in the middle of the year.

Dr. Balderas reiterated that co-teaching was a best practice. He said it cost money to do it well, but it had been worth it to meet students' needs. Dr. Lang offered documents for the Board to read more about co-teaching.

Ms. Walston read a question submitted by Ms. Levis in advance, asking if the TOSAs' would be at the schools.

Ms. McGaughy explained that part of the TOSAs' responsibilities were to support staff and students in the schools. However, they would not have a home base and would be divided into licensed and classified staff among the schools. She then broke down the number of staff for those positions.

Ms. Hays asked if this would be funded by money from SSI and SSA. She also asked if there were any gaps in the proposed plan, and what they would add first if they had more funds.

Dr. Balderas answered that the timeline for putting the grant application together had been a big challenge. He said the preparation process has been very fast in order to complete it by the middle of April. They prioritized where the biggest needs were, and if they had more money, they would

continue to help the students that were the most marginalized and include programs such as more summer school and pre-K.

Mr. Lafer asked, of the \$400,000 budgeted for purchasing classroom books, what portion would be for books for English Language Learners or emerging bilingual students. He also asked what the evidence research suggested about classroom books improving third-grade reading levels.

Chelsea Mabie, Elementary Humanities Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) and Dr. Karen Perez, Equity, Instruction & Partnerships Administrator, explained the research that suggested having a classroom library improved the amount that students read. They said they hoped to purchase classroom libraries with the grant money. There would be \$950 per classroom in grades K-5, \$500 for a base library, \$450 for diversifying the collection of library books to match the students that were in each classroom, and \$250 for books for dual language programs due to the higher cost of those books. They said they would want more teacher input in the books that were purchased because each school could want different books based on the students who attended.

Mr. Torrey asked about professional development and the new reading program's curriculum. He wanted to know how the district would provide professional development for teachers who were going to implement the new curriculum.

Ms. Wagner and Ms. Mabie said teachers would be provided professional development to learn the science of reading. They would work with a large group and then with a team of teachers. They said the pilot program would begin in 2021 and start in the classroom in 2022. They also said classified staff could also complete professional development.

Ms. Newman asked if there would be something available for culturally responsive teams for Latinx families. Staff explained that they were currently providing wraparound services and participating in the immigration network to provide resources for those families, including bus tickets, taxies, and parent meetings, and connecting them to community groups. They emphasized the importance of maintaining communication with parents, teachers, and social workers.

Ms. Newman asked about the reason behind budgeting money for CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistant Helping Out On The Streets). Dr. Perez clarified that it was not only for CAHOOTS but also other groups as well. Dr. Lang said it has been harder for them to address crisis in schools, so that was why they had worked with community partners such as CAHOOTS.

Ms. McGaughy said the district had been building a network of crisis teams depending on its needs, but it had expanded to community partnerships to provide services. She said that there were flexible funds within grant to contract. CAHOOTS was identified. 4J currently had a contract with them to provide services to their high schools. Other resources they had sought to provide were addiction support, housing support, and mental health crisis support. Ms. Newman suggested they add a sentence in the plan about that.

Ms. Hays asked if they would require an RFP for these resources. Dr. Balderas clarified that the district already worked with various community partners, including Looking Glass and reassured that a process was in place.

Seth Pfaefflin, 4J Education Administrator, said they had also partnered with the University of Oregon for help. 4J had also started a training program at some middle schools called Instructional Suspension Learning Alternative (ISLA), which addressed implicit bias. He said staff had appreciated

that training. Dr. Perez said staff could choose specific trainings to take to learn more culturally responsive practices.

Ms. Shabram said it was important to including community partners to teach students what resources were available because those students would often reach out to people who were not their classroom teachers for help.

Ms. Walston asked what components or tools would be used to document and measure student achievement as it related to the specific intent of the enacting legislation, and how it would be shared with the Board and public.

Oscar Lourerio, the Director of Research and Planning, said there would be a staff position that would evaluate how the district would spend the money. They would also update the Board and community about any other goals they would set for the funds that they would want to track.

Mr. Lafer asked if staff could respond to the other questions from the Board in writing. Dr. Balderas said yes, and he emphasized that staff had wanted to make sure the Board had as much information as possible before making a position.

Ms. Shabram asked, as they begin broader conversations about the budget, if they could have an explanation about the things staff would have spent money on in the regular budget versus SIA money. Dr. Balderas said that 4J was one of the few districts that are not cutting its budget in the way that districts in the Portland area had been.

Ms. Walston said the next 4J Budget Committee Meeting would be on March 30, 2020.

Mr. Torrey recognized staff for their efforts in holding many public meetings to gain input.

Dr. Balderas concluded the meeting by also recognizing 4J staff for their hard work in putting together the plan for the grant. He said that there could always be more to include, but he hoped that the money received would be sustainable. He encouraged staff to make sure they were equitable when soliciting input, making sure to include other groups such as classified staff. He believed they should assure that everyone had an equal voice.

Ms. Hays said that last year, when they heard from the nurses, she had appreciated hearing their perspective. She hoped that they could continue to challenge each other to listen to people who they might had not been aware of.

Ms. Walston mentioned another community forum that would be held Wednesday evening that week at El River Road/ El Camino del Rio School. She ended the work session at 6:15 p.m.

(Recorded by Lane Campbell)

Dr. Gustavo Balderas
District Clerk

Anne Marie Levis
Board Chair

