MINUTES OF THE 4J BUDGET COMMITTEE
School District 4J, Lane County, Oregon
200 North Monroe Street – Eugene, Oregon
Virtual via Zoom

April 5, 2021

PRESENT: Josh Burstein, Gary Campbell, Anne Fifield, Elizabeth Price, Maya Rabasa, Juan Carlos Valle, Jennifer Winters, Appointed Committee members; Mary Walston, Judy Newman, Alicia Hays, Martina Shabram, Jim Torrey, Board Committee members; Andrea Belz, Brooke Wagner, Kerry Delf, Lisa Fjordbeck, Charis McGaughy, Holly Langan, Cydney Vandercar, staff.

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Ms. Winters opened the 4J Budget Committee meeting at 6:01 p.m. She called roll and a quorum was present.

II. Items for Action at that Meeting

a. Approval of January 25, 2021 Minutes

MOTION: Mr. Torrey moved, seconded by Ms. Winters, to approve the January 25, 2021 4J Budget Committee meeting minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Items Raised by the Audience

There was no public comment.

IV. Items for Information

a. 2021-22 Budget Planning & Priorities

Superintendent Vandercar shared that State leadership was planning a $9.1 billion Statewide budget allocation. This would not increase their funding and would actually be a cut. They had hoped that the allocation would increase to $9.3 billion which would keep the District at its current budget level. The State had a plan to raise funds to support Summer enrichment courses.

4J has been supported well through the community. Their bond projects would receive an update that night. Superintendent Vandercar noted that all the projects were moving forward and were in different stages. Budgets for those projects would be talked about at their next meeting. She said tonight was dedicated to doing an overview of their different incoming funds.

b. Development of All Funds Budget for District Operations

Ms. Belz said that they usually talked about the General Fund, which made up 44% of the 2021-2022 budget, but tonight they would be talking about what made up the other 56%. Each fund would be covered separately, with particular attention given to the new Federal and State grant programs and to capital projects.

First, they would go over the Federal, State, and Local programs. Those would be the Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) grant, Student Investment Account (SIA), Oregon School Capital Improvement Match (OSCIM) grant, their Title I, II, II, and IV programs, High School Success grant (Measure 98), and the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA).

Ms. Hays asked what they would lose if they chose to gamble on standardized testing. Superintendent replied that it could be any Federal funds, their Title programs or IDEA, and potentially State funds. Ms. Hays just wanted the Board to be aware of what could be lost while they discussed standardized testing.

Ms. Belz said that ESSER II funding in 2021-22 could total as much as $10,400,000. She included a breakdown of those funds:

• Student devices (purchases, repairs, and cleaning)	$2,300,000
• Staffing pool	$1,750,000
• Student connectivity	$900,000
• Instruction software and live streaming	$900,000
• Facilities staffing and increased utilities	$700,000
• Nutrition Services staffing and supplies	$600,000
• Charter Schools	$600,000
• Transportation staffing	$500,000
• Custodial supplies and PPE	$400,000
• Student Services staffing and support	$400,000
• Additional technology staffing	$400,000
• Air quality equipment and supplies	$300,000
• School supplies	$300,000
• Reserved spending	$200,000
• BEST afterschool programing	$100,000
• Communications (interpreting)	$100,000

Ms. Walston asked what the allocation formula for the Charter Schools was. Ms. Belz replied that it was the same as with the State school fund, so they used ADMw.

Ms. Price inquired into if transportation and custodial supplies and staff (allocations) was based on what they had spent the previous year, and whether funds could be shifted as needed. Ms. Belz responded that that was correct. If they found they did not need as much money in custodial supplies, they could put that money somewhere else.

Mr. Valle asked if unused ESSER I funds were being rolled into the ESSER II funding. Ms. Belz replied that ESSER I and ESSER II were separate grants and were not rolled together. If they had funds leftover, they would continue to use the ESSER I fund in the new year.

Ms. Rabasa asked if the communications allocation also included translations. Ms. Belz told her that it did.

Ms. Belz said that the ESSER III fund was still pending. The State expected to receive $1.1 billion in Federal funding. At least 90% of that had to be allocated to school districts. There was no estimate of each school district's allocation from the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) yet, but preliminary estimates of funding were twice the amount received from the previous ESSER grants. She noted that 4J had to reserve at least 20% of their ESSERR III funds to address learning loss. That could be used to fund District match for Summer enrichment grants. Ms. Belz mentioned that the grant would be shared with their Charter Schools, just like with the first two grants. ESSER III funds must be spent by September 2023.

Mr. Burstein asked for more information on what learning loss meant. Ms. Belz replied that it included Summer school and after school programs and tutoring. That 20% of the (ESSER III) funding is to be used to help students achieve outside of the normal school day.

Ms. Belz said that the SIA grant would have an overall budget of $11.1 million for the district's 2021-2022 budget. It would support the following activities:

• 3rd grade reading	$2,300,000	27.25 FTE
• Learning for All Model	$2,000,000	13.50 FTE
• Behavior framework	$1,900,000	20.00 FTE
• BEST after school & Summer programs	$1,400,000	4.25 FTE
• Wraparound support teams	$1,300,000	10.00 FTE
• Emergency Bilingual Student Success Plan	$600,000	4.00 FTE
• Grant oversight	$500,000	2.0 FTE
• Charter Schools	$400,000	
• Class size reduction for middle schools	$300,000	
• NATIVES program	$200,000	1.8 FTE
• High school supports	$200,000	

Ms. Belz said that 4J would have $1.4 million carryover funding from their 2020-21 Measure 98 (High School Success) grant in addition to the $4.3 million for the 2021-2022 funds. Spending would be focused as followed:

• Career & technical education classes	$1,200,000	8.00 FTE
• College opportunities	$100,000	
• Dropout prevention	$4,400,000	
○ 9th grade academy		8.0 FTE
○ Teaching staff		5.6 FTE
○ Educational assistants		5.0 FTE
○ 9th grade transition coordinators		4.0 FTE
○ Counselors		3.0 FTE
○ Program coordinator		0.5 FTE
○ Program supports	$1,700,000	

Mr. Valle asked what had evolved concerning college opportunities. Ms. Belz replied that helping students find college opportunities in high school through advanced placement.

Ms. Belz said that they had three Summer Enrichment grants pending (from the Oregon Department of Education). The first was the Summer Academic Support grant. District allocations assumed all districts served 50% of high school population for six weeks of instruction. There was estimated funding at $1,068 per student (75% provided by ODE and 25% by district matching). The second was the Summer Enrichment/Academic Program Grant which would cover kindergarten through eighth grade activities over eight weeks. The District's allocation was based on ADMw plus poverty. The estimated funding was $1,800 per student (75% provided by ODE and 25% district matching). The third was the Summer Child Care grant which was available to districts that were eligible to receive Title I funds. It was funded at $1,320 per child for eight weeks ($2,122 for children with disabilities). It would provide funding for approximately 15% of kindergarten through fifth grade students in districts receiving Title I. Ms. Belz shared that the funds were 100% of the estimated cost to support low-income families with kindergarten through fifth grade students that wished to participate in the Summer Enrichment program but would need wrap around childcare.

Ms. Rabasa asked if a student who was eligible for Title I funds through income but went to a school that did not, if they would be eligible for the Summer Child Care grant. Ms. Belz responded that those details had not been figured out yet. Ms. Fifield asked when they would have more information. Ms. Belz replied that the funds were being reviewed by the State Legislature and after it was approved then ODE would create their allocations to districts and communicate the grant requirements.

Mr. Valle knew that to get these grants 4J had to show need for them. He asked if there was anywhere he could find the data on those families who qualified. Superintendent Vandercar said that they could get him the information on how many students they had who qualified and the breakdown by school.

Mr. Burstein inquired into if there was funding with those grants to get students fed over the Summer, or if 4J had Nutrition Services set up to run. Ms. Belz replied that they normally had nutrition programs that ran over the Summer. Ms. Langan said that they got a waiver from the Federal government so they could feed all students for free until September.

Ms. Belz went over the special purpose reserves, which were funds the District set aside for larger purchases. First was the District Operations reserve which the District saved to purchases of curriculum, staff technology, and helped them prioritize projects that supported district-wide operations. Second was the Capital Purchases reserve which funded large purchases of equipment, fleets (buses, activity vans, and maintenance vehicles), and student technology.

The Student Body funds helped each school maintain a student body account to manage and support the financial activities of: Student Government, school cubs, events, and athletic teams, scholarships, donations, and other accounts for the benefit of students, and fundraising.

Mr. Valle wanted to know more about student scholarships. Ms. Belz did not have that information on hand but said that there was information in the final budget. They provided District-wide and school-wide scholarships. They were hoping to provide more students the opportunity to get scholarships.

Ms. Belz shared information for the Pension Bond Debt service. In 2004 the District paid the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) bond principal and interest of 5.19% charge against payroll. In return they got a reduction of 5.56% in their PERS rate applied to eligible employee salaries. She said they were expecting a net savings of approximately $370,000 in personnel costs for the next school year (as a result of this pension bonding).

Ms. Fifield asked what the total bond issued was. Ms. Belz told her that she would need check and noted that they bonded half their unfunded actuarial liability.

Next was the General Obligation Bond Debt service, which was an annual debt service levy approved by the Board, which funds principal and interest payments on bonds issued under the 2002, 2011, 2013, and 2018 bond measures. There was an advanced refunding bond sale in the Fall of 2020 and a delay of the second General Obligation bond sale (2018 bond measure) to the Spring of 2022. The 2021-2022 budget resources and requirements would be $26,300,000. Ms. Belz informed the Committee that one of their jobs would be approving the debt service levy.

Ms. Winters asked if taxpayers were paying less, or if the District just had more funds. Ms. Belz told her that the District would not get any more money than what they were allocated. Taxpayers would just pay less as years went by.

Mr. Torrey noted that staff had done a great job getting this service done. While it might not seem like a big decrease, the District was doing what it could for its community.

Ms. Belz said that they had five capital project funds. The first two were outside of bond measures. The first fund will provide 2.25 FTE (9 custodial positions at .25 FTE/each) for ongoing athletic field maintenance. It would also go towards buildings and athletic field repairs and maintenance. That fund was $1,200,000. The second fund will provide for building and site improvements, real estate and property consulting, program relocation moving costs, and preventative maintenance (1.5 FTE). That fund had a budget of $3,300,000.
The remaining capital funds are related to bond measures and include:

2013 Bond Measure funds:

- Athletic Fields $2,900,000
- Curriculum $400,000
- Capital repairs & improvements $1,500,000

2011 Bond Measure funds:

- Re-roofing $1,600,000
- Building improvements and upgrades $1,300,000

2018 Bond Measure funds:

- Technology upgrades $1,200,000
- Curriculum adoptions $2,700,000
- Equity and CTE $9,000,000
- Safety & Security $4,000,000
- Facilities upgrades $8,000,000
- School rebuild/program moves $7,000,000
- North Eugene HS rebuild $54,000,000
- Edison rebuild $35,000,000
- Camas Ridge rebuild $10,000,000
- Gilham addition $3,000,000
- School buses $500,000
- Bond administration $1,500,000
- Bond premium $13,300,000

Ms. Belz noted that the projects might end up costing more than projected.

Ms. Rabasa asked if everything had to be spent in the next school year. Ms. Belz replied that all the projects they were talking about at the meeting were for the 2021-2022 school year. Ms. Rabasa asked what would happen if Camas Ridge construction did not start before the end of the 2022 school year. Ms. Belz said that if needed, funds could be shifted to pay for other projects if there was an issue. Superintendent Vandercar added that they were in the planning stages with Camas Ridge. Ms. Hays mentioned that when they went out for the bond measure, they told the community that they would save money on the planning of the buildings. She thought there was some confusion around what they meant. Superintendent Vandercar replied that they wanted to make sure each elementary school had the resources they needed. Ms. Wagner said that they took information from other districts that had built new elementary schools and came up with a plan for what every elementary school in 4J needed to have.

4J had 31 kitchens across the District which were serving breakfast and lunch and multiple locations. Ms. Belz shared that 20 schools were part of the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program (13 elementary locations, four middle school locations, and three other program locations).

Mr. Burstein wanted to see what the District needed to provide free meals to all their students.

Ms. Belz moved on to Risk Management which covered workers compensation and unemployment insurance payments, return to work and other employee programs, replacement of lost/stolen/damaged District property, payment of claims and settlements, and investigations and other risk-related legal services. Ms. Belz noted that their workers compensation and unemployment spending more than doubled in 2020.

Mz. Belz noted the Insurance Reserve Funds covered insurance for their employees and included the Wellness Clinic, located at the District's Education Center, which provided health care service that is available to most 4J employees.

Ms. Belz shared the Postemployment Benefits fund which was $1,000,000 for 2021-2022. It included the early termination stipend benefit, which offered an early retirement incentive plan previously offered to licensed and administrative employees. It also provided postemployment medical and life insurance benefit. It was available to licensed, classified, and administrative employees and their dependents. Coverage typically continued until Medicare eligibility.

Ms. Belz said that staff was tracking the legislative session and the factors that would impact the State School fund (enrollment, Common School Fund, teacher experience, and SAIPE data).

c. Budget Committee Discussion

Mr. Valle asked why the Board did not give direction to the Superintendent to provide free meals for all their students. He thought what Mr. Burstein brought up was an important discussion that they should have. Superintendent Vandercar replied that they could get data together to figure out preliminary numbers for how much that would cost. She said it might be hard with the pandemic to get the numbers right. Ms. Rabasa asked for data on if they just wanted to provide lunch for half the students.

V. Adjournment

Ms. Winters adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

(Minutes recorded by Lydia Dysart)