

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

Date: August 4, 2021

The Board of Directors of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Eugene, Oregon, held a work session at 5:30 p.m., a regular meeting at 7 p.m., and an executive session 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 July 30, 2021, and published in *The Register-Guard* August 4, 2021

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS:

Judy Newman, Chair
Martina Shabram, Vice Chair
Alicia Hays
Gordon Lafer
Laural O'Rourke
Maya Rabasa (via zoom)
Mary Walston (via zoom)

STAFF:

Cydney Vandercar, Superintendent
José Salgado, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction
Kerry Delf, Chief of Staff
Brooke Wagner, Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services
Jeff Johnson, Director of K-8 Education
Melissa Ibarra, Director of Elementary Education
Andy Dey, Director of Secondary Education
Kat Lange, Director of Educational Support Services
Christine Nesbit, General Counsel
Ryan Spain, Director of Facilities Management
Steve Menachemson, Director of Technology
Kyle Tucker, Chief Operations Officer
Karen Hardin, Director of Human Resources
Oscar Loureiro, Director of Research and Planning
Art Hart, Director for Transportation
Andrea Belz, Director of Finance
Misael Flores Gutierrez, Director of Equity
Larry Williams, Director of Equity
Eric Anderson, Director of Curriculum
Kari Skinner, Director of Public Safety
Lisa Fjordbeck, Executive Assistant / Board Secretary

MEDIA: KRVM, KVAL

EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATIONS:

EEA Sabrina Gordon

OTHER:

I. **WORK SESSION:** Receive Update on All Students Belong Assessment
Presenters: Pooja Baht, SeeChange; Aimee Craig, SeeChange; Monica Cox, SeeChange

Chair Newman began the work session at 5:30 p.m. All board members were present. Chair Newman presented background to the presentation: During the October 14th, 2020, and December 16th, 2020 board meetings, the board developed a goal to: “Reorient our discipline and student safety practices towards transformative justice so that all students feel safe at school. Practices should not disproportionately harm students of color, LBGTQ students, students with disabilities or any other groups of students.” This work was titled “All Students Belong.”

In order to provide the workgroup with information about what is already working well, what was not working and for whom, what opportunities existed, and what promising practice had been developed, a consulting team called SeeChange LLC was hired to do an initial assessment of data and policies related to safety and belonging. Representatives were present to give their report and answer questions.

Ms. Baht invited all board members to explore with curiosity their role in the process. She referred to the report that had been distributed earlier, and provided information on the Oregon Department of Education Every Student Belongs Rule, which was enacted in September 2020 and stated:

The Oregon Department of Education recognizes that **student health and safety are the cornerstone of education and that all students are entitled to a high-quality educational experience, free from discrimination or harassment based on perceived race, color, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or national origin, and without fear or hatred, racism or violence.** All staff and leaders are also entitled to work in environments that are free from discrimination or harassment, and visitors should be able to participate in school activities without fear for their safety. The Every Student Belongs rule was an important step in creating safe and inclusive school climates where all who participate in our school communities feel welcome.

The Every Student Belongs rule prohibits hate symbols, specifically three of the most recognizable symbols of hate in the U.S.—the swastika (outside of a religious context), the Confederate flag, and the noose. The temporary rule takes effect on September 18, 2020. It requires districts to adopt and implement policies and procedures that prohibit the use or display of the noose, swastika, or confederate flag in any program or school-sponsored activity except where used in teaching curricula that are aligned with the Oregon State Standards by January 1, 2021. (ODE Website).

Baht continued that in April, Lane County declared racism a public health crisis. She then reviewed the contents of the report including an executive summary; methods and participation; definitions; findings; and process recommendations. The purpose of the work was to promote a shared understanding of safety and to create solutions.

Aimee Craig shared that there was a disconnect between what students felt are the most pressing safety issues and what the district was addressing. She referred to quotes they had gathered from students. She shared that while there were promising practices happening in pockets throughout the district, districtwide systemic barriers that prevented every student from experiencing safety and belonging still remained.

The three domains the group reviewed were safety, engagement, and school environment.

Monica Cox shared the methodology of their research including focus groups, interviews, review of data and meeting with key groups in the district. The study participants represented a diverse group. The research focused on proportionality and outcomes and treated patterns of difference as signals of inequity.

The group's literature review focused on safety and belonging in prior research. Research showed that when students felt like they belong, they did better in school.

The findings showed that some students faced more barriers to accessing a feeling of belonging. The group reviewed suggestions for reducing barriers. They also shared that disciplinary patterns disproportionately affect students of color and students with disabilities, that there was a districtwide culture of exclusion, and that each school responded differently to the presence of School Resource Officers.

They shared districtwide improvements in training regarding inclusion and bias, family resource staff, focus on social and emotional needs, and increase in staff diversity. They reviewed that the challenge was there was a lack of a north star in the district, and a lack of effort to focus on one thing well and over time. They commented that these challenges were not unique to the district, but were found in districts statewide.

They asked the board to reflect on what resonated with them, what was surprising in the report and what was not.

SeeChange recommendations were to: Begin a community visioning process to develop a shared goal for safety and belonging; develop a plan to align policies, practices, and resources according to the defined goal; and implement the plan, ensuring that building-level leaders had clear expectations regarding their role in carrying out district priorities and were supported to translate them to local school community contexts.

They also recommended further exploration in the areas of discipline, data, and practices; reaching a greater understanding for data capacity strengths and needs for strategic use of school- and district-level data; and assessing translation and interpretation services across the district.

In response to a question by Ms. O'Rourke, the presenters shared that communities other than white were not named because of the small numbers of respondents. Ms. O'Rourke also asked that the district further examine the use of SROs. She cautioned against using anecdotal information as prediction of the future.

Mr. Lafer commended the work and the report. He expressed concern that the first recommendation to begin a visioning process would be too large an undertaking. He wondered what actions could be taken prior to beginning a visioning process. He suggested that they examine and define appropriate discipline processes. Chair Newman responded that the purpose of the work session was to receive the results of the report and there would be time to develop action steps later. The presenters responded that it was okay to start the work prior to a visioning processing, but they cautioned not to lose sight of the big picture.

Ms. Rabasa shared that prior work in the Equity Committee had been stalled because they were not sure what were best practices to recruit community members. The presenters cautioned that application processes without targeted recruitment often resulted in selecting persons who had the most time to be involved, not a representation of diversity.

Ms. Walston shared her concern that the issue of school safety was not being fully addressed prior to the start of school. Superintendent Vandercar responded that the district did not have a

current contract for SROs and would be using district staff instead. Chair Newman asked for a report at a future date.

Ms. Hays commented that the district should keep in mind the diversity of their community when making policy and procedure decisions.

Ms. Shabram suggested creating small staff working groups to examine how current work could be expanded, i.e., exploring diverse teacher retention and community liaisons.

Mr. Lafer asked whether SeeChange could provide examples of activities that have been effective in other districts. The group from SeeChange suggested that the board approach district staff whose efforts had been identified as promising practices. They also reported that Beaverton, OR and San Antonio, TX were districts whose work might be examined.

Chair Newman thanked SeeChange for their illuminating report and ended the work session at 6:45 p.m.

II. REGULAR MEETING – CALL TO ORDER

Chair Newman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

III. ROLL CALL, FLAG SALUTE, LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Chair Newman noted that all Board members were present. After reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, Chair Newman read the Land Acknowledgement.

IV. AGENDA REVIEW

Chair Newman asked for changes or corrections. Mr. Lafer asked that the Items for Action-Consent Group and Items for Action be moved earlier in the agenda to follow the Public Hearing. There was no objection.

V. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Interim Superintendent Vandercar welcomed the board members to the first regular board meeting of the 2021-22 school year. She also welcomed the audience members who attended in person. Superintendent Vandercar welcomed Dr. José Salgado as the new Assistant Superintendent for Instruction. She then reported that students would attend full-time, in person beginning in September. She expressed concerns regarding the continuing issue with the COVID-19 virus. Everyone would be required to wear face coverings. The district would also take additional measures to keep everyone as safe as possible. Additional information would be given later in the meeting. She also mentioned that the state had passed SB 732 requiring all districts to form equity committees. Some changes would need to be made to the current Equity Committee in order to comply with the new state law. More information would be given at the August 18 Board meeting.

Superintendent Vandercar was happy to share that the building that housed Kelly and Yujin Gakuen School was repaired and was ready to receive students except in the inner gym. Modifications would be made until the inner gym was also available. She added that modular classrooms would be moved to the same site to accommodate an increase in staff. Site prep was being done and two modular would be delivered before the beginning of school.

She was very excited about the CTE program and the property purchase on the agenda.

VI. COMMENTS BY BOARD CHAIR

Chair Newman reflected that she was overwhelmed with a feeling of gratitude for the commitment and dedication of the staff, parents, students and the Board. She extended her heartfelt thanks to the community for navigating change with grace and kindness. She was excited that students would be back in person full time. She had recently met with all the board members to learn their hopes for the upcoming year. She reminded the Board of the district's mission statement: To do what is best for all 4J students, to continue to learn and grow, and to respect and care for each other.

VII. PUBLIC HEARING

Chair Newman opened the public hearing on the proposed findings of fact for the purchase of two residential lots in the area of Northwest Expressway and Park Avenue and Filbert Avenue. Information was sent to residents in the area. Ms. Delf said that there were no requests to speak regarding the proposed findings of fact. Chair Newman officially closed the public hearing.

VIII. ITEM FOR ACTION

Approve Resolution Authorizing Purchase of Property

Presenters: Kerry Delf, Chief of Staff and Christine Nesbit, General Counsel

Ms. Nesbit asked the Board to approve Resolution 2022-08 authorizing the district's purchase and acquisition of two vacant lots, approve proposed findings of fact relating to the property acquisition, and authorize the district clerk or deputy clerks to execute the necessary legal documents on the district's behalf. The properties were tax lots 17-04-23-42-06402 ("Park Avenue lot") and 17-04-23-44-04000 ("Filbert Avenue lot"). The lots were located between Filbert Avenue and Northwest Expressway on the block between Park Avenue and Cherry Avenue. She continued that staff were prepared to move forward with the sale. During due diligence they determined that one of the lots was a buildable lot and the other would require a legal lot verification, which staff were doing. As a result, they would close on one lot on August 13, and the other as soon as the verification was completed.

Mr. Lafer moved and Ms. Hays seconded that Resolution 2022-08 be approved. Ms. Hays said that she was excited to be moving forward quickly with the purchase. Chair Newman called for the vote. **The motion passed unanimously 7:0.**

IX. ITEMS FOR ACTION - CONSENT GROUP

1. Approve Personnel Actions
Presenter: Karen Hardin, Director of Human Resources
2. Award Modern Building Systems for the addition of Modular Buildings at Kelly Middle School
Presenter: Ryan Spain, Director of Facilities
3. Subsidize The Replacement Of Devices For All Secondary Students Drawing On The Emergency Connectivity Funds Made Available By The Federal Communications Commission (FCC)
Presenters: Steve Menachemson, Director of Technology; Andrea Belz, Director of Financial Services
4. Approve Meeting Minutes: March 17, 2021; June 2, 2021; June 16, 2021; June 23, 2021; July 1, 2021
Presenter: Cydney Vandercar, Interim Superintendent

Ms. Shabram moved and Ms. Hays seconded approval of the items on the consent agenda.
The motion passed unanimously 7:0

X. ITEMS RAISED BY THE AUDIENCE

There were ten speakers randomly chosen from those who requested to speak, and who also had not made public comment at recent Board meetings. Chair Newman read the requirements for making public comment.

Amelia Reising spoke in support of requiring masks in schools and referred to studies that supported the efficacy of masks in schools.

Chair Newman reminded the audience to refrain from commenting while someone else was speaking.

Dennis Reynolds commented that it was great to be at the Board meeting in person to represent Earthkeepers. He asked that the district take action to design buildings with more energy efficient heating and cooling systems that could be models of use in the community.

Lashun Woodard claimed that mask mandates were illegal according to the First Amendment and were not OSHA compliant, and also referred to ADA issues. He continued that masks were an illegal restriction against breathing.

Jennifer Jonak proposed safety precautions to accommodate children with high risks: in person school should have children separated into cohorts; there should be no school-wide lunches; and activities should be staggered.

After a break called by Chair Newman to restore order in the board room, Ms. Jonak continued that measures should be taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19 schoolwide. She also urged that there be more opportunities for online school equivalent to in person school.

Christiana Dancer asked that the district remain cautious. She recommended that masks be worn on school grounds, that testing be accessible and timely, and that schools use outdoor spaces as much as possible. She added that buildings should be well ventilated and that the district remain proactive and nimble.

Derek Ross claimed that there was less harm and death from the Delta variant and that children were not spreading the variant. He suggested drafting and passing a resolution that included the rights of parents to choose whether or not to use masks and not conform to a blanket approach.

Melissa Graboyes advocated for additional safety measures in a layered approach of multiple strategies in additions to masking; mandated vaccine mandate for children 12 and older with exemptions; increased ventilation; creating stable cohorts to facilitate contact tracing and quarantine if exposed; maintaining social distancing; and implementing screening testing to provide safe, continuous in person instruction.

Molly Mae Culligan believed in medical freedom, but asked that all children, staff, and others be fully masked, with exceptions, until COVID was not a threat and all persons were vaccinated.

Amanda Evans was apprehensive about allowing her son to attend in person school. She hoped that he and his fellow students remain masked in indoor spaces until children under 12 could also be vaccinated.

Leah Rosin spoke for the continued need for the best protection of all students. She advocated following all measures proposed by the CDC. She hoped that there would be voluntary testing. She asked that the district share more information about how COVID was affecting students.

Chair Newman concluded the public comment period by reminding the audience that they could contact the Board by email at any time.

XI. COMMENTS BY EMPLOYEE GROUPS

Sabrina Gordon spoke for Eugene Education Association. She offered a heartfelt welcome to the new Board members. She thanked community members who signed up and commented respectfully. She was happy to report that there was excitement for the upcoming year and teachers were ready to share lessons that they had learned about technology, personal growth and social and emotional learning. She looked forward to continuing the strong partnership that was forged during challenging times in 2020.

XII. COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS BY INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS

Chair Newman welcomed all board members to speak. Mary Walston welcomed the new Board members. She was looking forward to the retreat. She added her concern that the district take a definitive position on climate change. She thanked Chair Newman for stepping in while she was gone.

Maya Rabasa asked the district to plan beyond the physical needs of the coming school year. She said that it was important to focus on the needs of parents such as equity especially around services offered and communication. She said that the district needed to recognize that community input was necessary and also that some students thrived in alternative teaching settings. She hoped that the district remember that it had learned lessons and could not go back to what once was.

Alicia Hays welcomed new board and staff members and thanked new leadership. She recognized the different opinions expressed at the meeting.

Martina Shabram said that she was proud to be part of the functioning of a healthy democracy and hoped that the board would move forward with respect.

Gordon Lafer recognized that parents had differing needs to protect their children. He acknowledged the toll the past year had taken on social and emotional well-being. He added that he hoped that the district would be able to offer same-school online options. He stated that the increased standardization of teaching makes school boring. He suggested offering sabbaticals, grants and professional development to create opportunities for teacher learning.

Laural O'Rourke was happy to join the board. She appreciated the report on All Students Belong. She said that she could relate to the parents who were concerned about their students' safety, and also hoped that communication would be improved.

Judy Newman reported that the Legislative Committee would issue a summary on legislation that would effect district work, including SB 732, which would require changes to the current Equity Committee. She echoed that there was nothing more emotional than advocating for children and she appreciated the efforts of the parents who attended the meeting.

XIII. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

1. Receive an Update on KRVM Radio Program and Diversity Plan
Presenters: Stuart Grenfell, KRVM General Operations Manager and Holly Langan, Director for Support Services

Holly Langan reported as the administrative link for KRVM. She introduced Stuart Grenfell. Mr. Grenfell gave information on KRVM's history, audience, and area of coverage. He shared that the station was instrumental in providing coverage during the Holiday Farm Fire in 2020.

He continued that the main reason for holding a license was the student broadcasting program, which was self-supporting and provided training in radio broadcasting to any high school student in the district. Students learned and practiced the skills necessary to broadcast and run a station. During the times that students were not on air, there were volunteer hosts. More than 50% of content was selected by women. He referred to the diversity goals which were in the meeting packet: to continue with proactive measures to expand the cultural, socio-economic and ethnic base of volunteer programmers (and others in support roles); to provide compelling musical programming for a wide audience, with even more diversity in hosts and content; and to find effective ways to reduce barriers to volunteering by members of underserved groups, and to accommodate them at KRVM in particular. He explained that they achieved their goals by active outreach to recruit students and volunteers; providing information from diverse non-profit organizations; and through surveys to listeners.

Their budget was \$550,000 with 45% being covered by donations, and the rest through grants and underwriting. Some grants were provided only through proof of diversity programming. Mr. Grenfell also gave information about expenses and read the mission statement.

Chair Newman asked for questions. Ms. Hays asked for clarification on staffing at a later meeting.

Mr. Lafer asked for more information on student participation. Mr. Grenfell shared information on the sequencing of skills that students learned as part of the program. He added that they would like to expand the program into other schools if possible. Ms. Langan added that they had explored collaborating with other districts as well.

Ms. O'Rourke asked whether this was a CTE program. Ms. Langan responded that they were exploring it. In addition, Mr. Grenfell responded that the program was at Sheldon High School and there was no transportation from other high schools, but Spencer Butte prerecorded their program. Ms. O'Rourke asked for clarification on the program's definition of diversity. Ms. Hays agreed that she would like to get more information on outreach to other schools and actively recruiting volunteer DJs.

Ms. Rabasa said she was an avid listener. She said that the station was a great resource to provide skills that students could use in future jobs. She asked staff to dive deeper into targeting diverse audiences. She added that she would like to hear more about outreach to underserved groups and suggested reaching out to groups that served those populations.

Chair Newman asked Ms. Langan and Mr. Grenfell to provide responses to questions at a later time.

2. Receive an Update on the ODE Resiliency Framework for 2021–22
Presenters: Cydney Vandercar, Superintendent and Kerry Delf, Chief of Staff

Superintendent Vandercar shared the possible financial penalties levied on the district if they did not follow the mandates by the state regarding COVID safety measures.

Ms. Delf shared an overview of the state guidelines for 2021-22 and referred to information in the meeting packet. She said that of the families who responded to the survey, 97% planned to have their students attend in person, but the district would provide online options for those who were not ready to return in person.

Ms. Delf referred to the new state Resiliency Framework that was more advisory in nature and provided more local control and decision-making to create layered protection strategies including vaccination, distancing, ventilation improvements, health hygiene, and cohorting students. Requirements included returning to full-time, in person education, the use of face masks during the school day and during school activities, maintaining a communicable disease management plan, submitting an operations plan to the state, keeping a process to quarantine, and to meet all standard instructional time. She added that there were also federal requirements on school transportation.

Ms. Delf reviewed quarantine definitions and requirements and added that there would be more information provided at future meetings.

Superintendent Vandercar added that requirements and recommendations would be reviewed every month as hospitalizations and case-loads changed.

Ms. Shabram shared concern about teachers being responsible for monitoring appropriate mask wearing and quarantining. Ms. Delf responded that district and public health staff would be responsible for contact tracing and that seating charts would help. Requiring mask wearing would help staff to mitigate contact. Ms. Delf confirmed that there are specific staff in each school who are trained to do contact tracing and work with public health officials.

Ms. O'Rourke asked how the staff would communicate to parents if there were an outbreak in schools. Ms. Delf responded that parents would be notified if there is possible exposure. In response to Ms. O'Rourke's question about high school cohorts, Ms. Delf said that staff would contact the parents of all students exposed in different classes. Ms. O'Rourke added that it seemed a lot of pressure to put on teachers.

Mr. Lafer asked for clarification on the synchronous online option. Ms. Delf said that the option would be available for K–5 students and more information would be sent to parents soon.

Ms. Rabasa asked about class size at the middle and high school levels and distancing. Superintendent Vandercar responded that more staff would be added to accommodate distance requirements.

Chair Newman reminded board members that they could email their questions to Superintendent Vandercar.

XIV. ITEMS FOR ACTION AT A FUTURE MEETING

1. Initiate Process for an Elementary Language Arts and Social Studies Curriculum Adoption
Presenter: Eric Anderson, Director of Curriculum; Sarah Knudsen, Teacher on Special Assignment; Katie Stiles, Teacher on Special Assignment
2. Initiate Process for a Secondary Language Arts Curriculum Adoption

Presenters: Eric Anderson, Director of Curriculum; Tammy Steeves,
Teacher on Special Assignment

Mr. Anderson explained that due to the similarity of the adoption processes for both levels, the group would present and then answer questions regarding both adoptions. At the next meeting the board would have the opportunity to initiate the adoption process. He referred to information in the meeting packet. He shared that this was the first time a full adoption had been made since 2007. He said that classroom teachers from every school would be included in the adoption process, a total of more than eighty in both levels. He shared that the process including all agendas, notes, meetings, etc. were available online to the Board.

He shared the timeline for the process and asked for clarifying questions from the Board.

In response to a question from Ms. Shabram, Mr. Anderson clarified that there would be an instructional advisory committee which would give input. Ms. Shabram suggested looking at the work provided earlier by SeeChange in regards to curriculum.

Mr. Lafer asked whether there would be an evaluation process after adoption. Mr. Anderson said it was part of the timeline. Mr. Lafer asked whether the new adoption would be required across the district. Mr. Anderson referred to Administrative Rules regarding curriculum adoption and added that the curriculum was a tool that would include textbooks and supplemental materials to provide support for scope and sequence.

Ms. Hays asked how teachers would be selected for the evaluation. Ms. Stiles and Ms. Steeves said that there were a variety of teachers leaders chosen. Ms. Hays asked how the School Board would be involved. Mr. Anderson said the Superintendent would ask for Board member participation in the Instructional Advisory Council.

In response to Ms. Rabasa, Mr. Anderson clarified that Administrative Rules indicated that one curriculum would be chosen for the district. He added that adoption was a year-long process for elementary and two-year for secondary.

Chair Newman asked whether there were curricula that met the new state standards in ethnic studies. Mr. Anderson said they might need to add supplemental materials.

3. Consider Revisions to Board Policies IIBGA–Electronic Communication Systems; INDB– Flag Displays and Salutes; and JGA–Corporal Punishment
Presenter: Christine Nesbit, General Counsel

Ms. Nesbit said that clarifications were being added to Board Policy IIBGA in order to comply with the Children’s Internet Protection Act. In addition, there was a new requirement to display POW and MIA flags at buildings where there was capacity, so Board Policy INDB would be changed in order to reflect the new law. Finally, Policy JGA would be changed to align with restraint and seclusion laws already in place in order to provide more clarification for teachers.

Ms. Nesbit responded to Ms. O’Rourke that the district would not add new flag poles to existing buildings, but all new construction would include enough places to be in compliance with the new law.

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

Chair Newman reviewed dates for the upcoming board meetings and retreat. Chair Newman asked that the policy regarding dogs and pets on school grounds be included in a

future meeting. Mr. Lafer added that he would like to receive more information on the Community Benefits Work with regards to new legislation.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT OF PUBLIC MEETING

Chair Newman adjourned the Public Meeting.

XVII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The board met in executive session to conduct deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to carry on labor negotiations, pursuant to ORS 192.660 (2)(d).

Executive Sessions are closed to the public. All matters discussed during executive sessions are confidential and shall not be disclosed by any representative of the news media without authorization by the school board.

Cydney Vandercar
District Clerk

Judy Newman
Board Chair

(Recorded by Eliza Drummond)