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

Date: May 18, 2022

The Board of Directors of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Eugene, Oregon, held an executive session at 5:30 p.m. and a regular board meeting at 7:00 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 Friday, May 13, 2022 and published in *The Register-Guard* on Monday, May 16, 2022.

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS:
Judy Newman, Chair
Maya Rabasa, Vice Chair
Keerti Hasija Kauffman
Alicia Hays
Michelle Hsu
Gordon Lafer (via zoom)
Laural O'Rourke

STAFF:
Cydney Vandercar, Superintendent
Kerry Delf, Chief of Staff
Brooke Wagner, Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services
Jeff Johnson, Director of Elementary Education
Melissa Ibarra, Director of Elementary Education
Andy Dey, Director of Secondary Education
Kat Lange, Director of Educational Support Services
Kyle Tucker, Chief Operations Officer
Eric Anderson, Director of Curriculum
Lisa Fjordbeck, Executive Assistant / Board Secretary

STUDENT ADVISORY PANEL MEMBERS:
Violet Neal, International High School

EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATIONS:
EEA (Sabrina Gordon / Imelda Cortez)

MEDIA:
KRVM

I. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The board convened in executive session to consider records that were exempt by law from public inspection pursuant to ORS 192.660 (2)(f).

All matters discussed during executive sessions are confidential and shall not be disclosed without authorization by the school board.

II. REGULAR BOARD MEETING

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

Chair Newman called the regular board meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. and noted that all board members were present either in-person or via video teleconference. After the board recited the Pledge of Allegiance, Chair Newman read the Land Acknowledgement.

IV. AGENDA REVIEW

Chair Newman asked if there were any changes to the agenda. Vice Chair Rabasa asked to add an item for action regarding a complaint that had been submitted. Ms. Hays seconded the motion. **The motion passed 7:0.**

Vice Chair Rabasa asked to add an item for action to designate a board member to serve on contract negotiations for a future superintendent. Ms. O'Rourke seconded the motion. Ms. Hays asked whether it could be an item for information, instead of action, so that it could be discussed and considered. Chair Newman said that the issue could be moved for a vote on May 25. Ms. O'Rourke said that it was important to make the action soon. Ms. Hays responded that she wanted to follow a process of discussing an issue at one meeting and then voting on it at the next. She said that rushing to vote without time for consideration did not seem transparent.

Mr. Lafer said that in the past the decision regarding which board member would negotiate the contract with a superintendent finalist had been made by Leadership, so to have it on the agenda would be increasing transparency.

Ms. Hasija Kauffman said she needed time to learn and understand what she was voting on.

Ms. Rabasa said she had made the request based on conversation with Leadership and that there was a sense of urgency.

Chair Newman repeated that the action could be taken at the meeting on May 25. Doing so would still give time before negotiation of a superintendent contract would begin.

Ms. Hays asked to amend the motion to have discussion on the item at the board meeting that evening and have a vote on May 25. Vice Chair Rabasa agreed to the amendment. **The amendment passed 7:0. The original motion as amended passed 7.0.** The item would be discussed during Items for Information.

There were no objections to the agenda as changed.

V. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Vandercar said that in the past week, the nation had experienced multiple acts of senseless violence. The events reminded everyone that the nation was too often confronted with hatred and violence. She said that the district was ready to support students and teachers and to reaffirm the commitment to be an anti-racist school district and to work to dismantle systems of racial injustice.

Ms. Vandercar said that the budget had been approved and would be moved forward for public comment before a vote.

VI. COMMENTS BY BOARD CHAIR

Chair Newman also acknowledged the violence occurring across the nation.

She continued that the district had been focusing on the superintendent search and had conducted interviews with four finalists. She said there had been seventy-five to eighty panelists on ten different panels. Participants had been nominated to create a broad and diverse representation that included the voices of typically underserved communities. All panelists received anti-bias training from the Alma Advisory Group and created the questions for their panels. The panels included students, representatives from different bargaining units, and board members.

Chair Newman thanked all those who had been involved in the panels and who listened or watch the interviews and responded to the survey. She also thanked the Alma Advisory Group and the board for the long hours they had committed to the process. Chair Newman said that the board would be conducting site visits and moving towards a final decision in the coming weeks.

Chair Newman had participated in the Respond, Question, Persuade training which focused on the signs and signals that youth demonstrated when they were considering suicide. She said that the most important thing she learned was to respond and to question and to recognize that emotions were real. She concluded that children were experiencing great amounts of depression, anxiety, trauma and hopelessness and there was much work to do to address the crisis.

VII. RECEIVE REPORTS FROM HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Violet Neal, student representative from the International High School, reported on the upcoming gathering that would bring together students from all the IHS campuses in the district and would highlight different student groups. It was also going to be a fundraiser for charitable organizations.

Violet said that students would soon be done with International Baccalaureate testing. There would be field days at the different campuses and there would also be a senior celebration at Sheldon High School. Student elections had occurred and she was excited about the incoming leadership for IHS.

VIII. ITEMS RAISED BY THE AUDIENCE

Chair Newman read the requirements for making public comment at a School Board meeting.

Roscoe Caron was a retired 4J teacher and a representative of Community Alliance for Public Education. He remembered the day many years ago when all the shop and home economics equipment had been removed from the school he worked in. He had been told that students would not need to learn those skills for the future. There was no consideration given to how

classes in manual arts reinforced theoretical classroom learning. The present demonstrated that there was now a shortage of skilled workers. Mr. Caron continued that standardized teaching and testing had been promoted as a way to remove racial and socioeconomic achievement gaps. He challenged the board to hire a new superintendent who was willing to speak up against experts and group think in order to make real change.

Larry Lewin was also a retired teacher and member of CAPE. He reminded the board that they had voted to clarify to teachers their free speech rights and professional responsibilities regarding standardized testing. He said that the action would foster honest dialog and increased transparency and communication. He disagreed with the term low stakes to describe standardized testing. He also asked for an opt out button to be placed on the district home page and for the district to determine how many teachers were using formative tests to have students show what they knew in positive and creative ways. He wanted 4J to create a balanced assessment system.

Quin Nelson was a teacher in 4J. He had been part of the English Language Arts curriculum adoption team. He wanted to give his support for the Wit and Wisdom curriculum. His classroom trials had been successful. Students were able to battle complex issues with a rigorous and content-rich lesson about the heart. They used metaphorical language to describe how the heart worked. All students had been engaged and he had been able to get creative and have fun with the curriculum. Students also created anatomical hearts out of clay. Mr. Nelson said that while diversity was lacking in the curriculum materials, he felt able to include other materials into the his lessons.

Ericka Thessen was the parent of students in the district. She said that the incidents in Buffalo reminded everyone that racism, hate and bias crimes were on the rise, including in Eugene. Ms. Thessen gave statistics to support her claim. She said that the district could reduce bias and hate crimes by implementing restorative and transformation justice programs; recruiting, hiring and retaining staff from marginalized communities; implementing curriculum that represent diverse communities; increasing mental health supports for students; and by having librarians in high schools and middle schools to teach media literacy and how to recognize dis- or misinformation. She asked for an education rooted in tolerance.

Marion Malcolm was a former teacher who appreciated the opportunity given to Sabrina Gordon to speak at the meeting on May 4. She said that feeling safe, seen and connected was essential to student well-being and the ability to learn, and it was critical to provide time for human connections at school. Using the additional instructional minutes could also provide additional passing time between classes and could raise morale.

Gloria Rojas de Russell was a teacher who had also had the opportunity to pilot new ELA curriculum. She shared some of the highlights, including the ability for students to work in pairs and small groups about a favorite topic, sharing information amongst the different groups. Students learned Spanish vocabulary. Ms. Rojas de Russell said that the curriculum helped to pique students' curiosity which increased their engagement and they learned more. Reading materials were at different levels so students had opportunities to access different texts that met their needs and sustained academic discussion. She added that the program had graphic organizers that help students to organize their thinking.

Ana Diaz Hansen was a teacher who had also piloted ELA curriculum from American Reading Company. She said that her students' work had demonstrated a higher level of thinking and engagement. She explained that bilingual education required teaching in two languages. Teachers were able to work one on one with each student at their level because of the way the curriculum was arranged. She saw her students challenged and learning in a good way.

Cherie (Sherry) Aaron was also a teacher and participated in the ELA adoption process. She was concerned that teachers would not have the skills they needed to use the new curriculum to its fullest. She said that the new adoption represented a fundamental shift from what they were taught before and would require learning how to teach reading all over again. She hoped that teachers would be given support and education so that they could all start on the same page. She added that the curriculum could radically shift reading ability especially for marginalized students, but teachers would need support to do it well.

Tana Bailey was a teacher and had also been on the ELA pilot committee. She used the same Wit and Wisdom curriculum that Quin Nelson had used. Students used socratic seminars and wrote in essays and poems. They learned fifty vocabulary words and about the anatomical functions of the heart. She added that many AVID strategies had been integrated into the lessons. She appreciated the integration of learning, and shared that students were able to choose the level of text that suited them. She recommended the program. She acknowledged all the staff who had worked so hard to implement the curriculum pilot program.

A member of the audience asked why others in the audience would not be able to speak on their concerns that evening. A disruption ensued.

After a recess, the board returned to the dais. Chair Newman said that the board appreciated that people in the audience may not have known how to sign up to make a public comment. The board would remove the item for action for which many of the audience had come to make public comment and would add time at a future meeting for public comment on the issue. She added that staff would make it clear how to sign up on the district website to make public comment.

Vice Chair Rabasa moved to table Policy KGBB – Firearms Prohibited until June 22. Ms. Hays seconded the motion.

Ms. Rabasa said that the item was being tabled to give audience members an opportunity to sign up to make public comment regarding the policy on June 22. Ms. O'Rourke said that people who did not have access to the internet could also call the front desk to sign up. Ms. O'Rourke said that she understood that the topic of discussion was difficult. She asked that those who sent emails criticizing the issue should also include their solutions. She added that public meeting laws did not allow for open dialog between the audience and the board. The board had convened to do business and if the audience insisted on interrupting, the Chair would adjourn the meeting.

Ms. Rabasa reiterated that the board could not engage in conversation with the audience. She suggested to the group in the audience that they designate a spokesperson to speak. Chair Newman suggested that the audience send emails or even ask to meet with a board member in person. She reiterated that the group board email was board@4j.lane.edu.

Chair Newman called for the vote to table Policy KGBB until June 22. **The motion passed 7:0.**

IX. COMMENTS BY EMPLOYEE GROUPS

Sabrina Gordon, President of Eugene Education Association, extended her gratitude to all the teaching staff and members of the Instruction Department who had been involved in the ELA adoption process which the board would be considering later in the meeting. She said that the work of curriculum adoption was necessary because students needed teachers who were continually improving their practice. The process was also messy because teaching was an art. The combination of the two created joy. She asked the district to provide professional learning opportunities; create time for student interaction and thoughtful lesson planning; and encourage a culture of autonomy within the structure of best practices. She concluded that the best way to experience and deliver joy was through shared power and responsibility.

X. COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS BY INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Hays thanked the Budget Committee for their hard work and for the teachers who came to present at the board meeting. She had attended the Eugene Education Foundation dinner. She had also attended the Instructional Advisory Council meeting and had a chance to review the new curriculum. She said that it met or exceeded the requirements of the administrative rules. The equity tool and the equity lens had been used during the process. A video had been created to send to parents, which increased community participation by four hundred percent. Ms. Hays quoted someone as saying “the curriculum showed them what to teach and allowed them to use their creativity to craft how to teach.” Ms. Hays had also visited the Village School during her charter school review and had seen their outdoor classroom. She was looking forward to visiting the Coburg School.

Ms. Hasija Kauffman recognized Asian-American Pacific Islander Heritage month. She shared that up until the Pandemic, the AAPI was the largest growing community in the nation. She commented that many of the contributions that the community had made were rarely recognized, and history lacked a robust picture of their existence in the nation. She said that social studies educators were pushing to change the narrative and to dismantle structures that led to separation, hierarchy and assimilation. She wanted to continue supporting immersion programs because they recognized the worth of different cultures. She said there was much more to do, including combating the roots of implicit and unconscious bias. She said that the AAPI community was often compared to other communities of color in ways that did not recognize their struggle: they were often held up as a model society and not disruptive. She asked educators to look beyond what they assumed of AAPI students. They were not a demographic checklist, but individuals.

Ms. Rabasa said that her time in Memphis, Tenn. learning more about superintendent candidate Mr. Lin Johnson III had been very informative. She looked forward to having a similar opportunity with the other three finalists for superintendent. Ms. Rabasa also thanked the teachers who made time for their students to learn about the candidates and express their opinions. She said that the correspondence had been thorough and well-written. Ms. Rabasa had attended Kelly Middle School earlier that day and was overwhelmed by the state of the buildings. She said that the educational experience of both Kelly Middle School and Yujin Gakuen Elementary School students had been severely compromised. She described some of the issues and asked that the building be prioritized for attention and resources. She commented that students were in a

constant state of adaptation which was becoming the norm and could have long-term effects on their health. She said that the board needed to believe the people they heard from and take direct and meaningful action to increase trust in stakeholders across the district.

Ms. O'Rourke directed her comments to the lack of resources for mental health. She was concerned that students who had no understanding or ability to access help were at the highest risk of suicide. She said that there were students who had started school in second grade and high school students who had not attended in-person school for their freshman year. She promoted supportive life coaching, which was a preventive method to develop mental health skills before issues became a crisis. She said that while the word coaching seemed strange and elitist to some, regardless of what it was called, it could be a resource for students who felt hopeless and needed a mentor or coach on whom they could rely. She asked the board to think outside the box.

Ms. Hsu thanked Ms. Hasija Kauffman for sharing her feelings about Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. She continued that she and Ms. Hasija Kauffman had met with the Directors of Equity earlier in the morning and they both wanted to be involved in the work wherever they could participate. She wanted to determine why people did not feel like they belonged. She shared the work of the Western State Center <westernstatecenter.org>, which worked nationally to strengthen inclusive democracy and create cultures of acceptance. Their approach was anti-hate and encouraged connecting and relationships. Ms. Hsu opined that the perpetrators of recent atrocities did not feel like they belonged or had anyone to talk to. She hoped the next step in the equity work would be student involvement and she looked forward to hearing the outcomes of the Equity Committee meetings.

Mr. Lafer said that Ms. O'Rourke had been a moral beacon in recognizing the poor and working-class in the community and was the leading voice calling to ensure that no one was being paid a poverty wage. She was asking for the lowest wage to be increased to $18. Mr. Lafer shared the story of a staff member who was leaving the district due to low pay and lack of respect. She had been forced to use credit to be able to purchase necessary items. He said that one could not teach justice and democracy and at the same time pay staff a less than living wage. He said that he would be supporting the $18 wage.

XI. CONSENT GROUP - ITEMS FOR ACTION

1. Approve Routine Personnel Actions
   Presenter: Karen Hardin, Director of Human Resources

2. Approve Meeting Minutes for May 1, 2022; May 2, 2022; May 9, 2022 and May 12, 2022

Vice Chair Rabasa and Ms. Hsu seconded the consent agenda. Ms. O'Rourke asked to learn more about the resignations on the consent agenda. She asked what the district was doing to retain staff. Chair Newman suggested putting the topic as an item for information at the next meeting. Ms. Hsu asked to receive an analysis of the exit surveys. Ms. Rabasa also asked to hear how many persons in the last two years have availed themselves of the exit survey. Chair Newman said she would bring the topic up in the section suggesting items for a future meeting.

Chair Newman called for the vote to approve the consent agenda, **which passed 7:0.**

XII. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

1. Receive an update on (CTE) Career Technical Education
   Presenters: Andy Dey, Director of Secondary Education and Tia Holliday-Odegard, Curriculum Administrator

Mr. Dey said that he would organize his presentation through three areas: graduation—offering multiple pathways to high school graduation; career—preparing students for their goals after high school; and community—connecting students to the community. Mr. Dey reported that students who had two or more credits in CTE pathways had a higher graduation rate. Programs that appealed to a broad range of students or had core content included in their curriculum were very popular. Not all four high schools offered the same programs, but all CTE courses were available to students regardless of their neighborhood school.

Mr. Dey continued that the objective of the CTE program was to ultimately connect students to high wage, high demand work opportunities through training that was relevant and had real-world applications. Students left school with the skills they needed to be competitive and connected to issues that they cared about in their community. Skills were applied, not theoretical.

Mr. Dey reviewed the areas of improvement. Foremost was the need to expand communication about the program, which would lead to proportionate representation of the student population. He hoped to expand to allow easier access to students who were interested in a program that might not be in their neighborhood school. Additionally, there would be an ongoing need to ensure that programs were aligned with industry standards, which would occur through system-level planning and support. Staff also recognized the need to increase access to work-based learning opportunities through internships. The final area of improvement was community support: Mr. Dey indicated the need to make community partnerships integral to the program by removing barriers to their participation. He added that it would be important to highlight issues in the community that students could address through the programs of study.

Mr. Dey showed graphically how the district was not taking advantage of community and industry partnerships. The process to improve would include a cycle that included identifying projects and defining key outcomes, creating curriculum, doing the work, and then improving the program by determining whether students had learned the skills to complete the project.

Included in the board packet was a list of programs at each of the high schools, including computer science, culinary arts, graphic arts, journaling and broadcasting, architecture and construction, early childhood education, engineering, health sciences, and natural resources management.

Ms. O'Rourke asked how many students left school with certificates to show their skills to employers. Mr. Dey said that the program did not have at the moment industry-recognized certifications in all the programs, but the Oregon Department of Education expected it in the future. The program was designed so that students would be ready for an entry-level job in a high-demand field, however, additional training and certification might still be required.

Ms. Hasija Kauffman asked how the programs were chosen for each school. Mr. Dey said that the programs had been in place at different schools and had been enhanced through the CTE program. Construction technology had recently been added, and health sciences would be added soon at North Eugene High School. Staff planned to survey students to see what they wanted to add.

Vice Chair Rabasa asked whether someone had been hired for the "Kids Down South" position and whether it would become part of the CTE program. She also asked about whether a teacher needed to be certified to teach CTE, to which Mr. Dey responded that teachers did indeed need to be certified to teach CTE specific program, and explained the process. He was not certain whether the position in question had been filled. Ms. Rabasa also wondered whether the district was reaching out to local unions to see whether apprenticeship positions were available to students after school. Mr. Dey responded that they were beginning to make contact with different unions, but would be better prepared once they had a proven CTE program.

Mr. Lafer asked what it would take to move onto a bigger construction program; and would there eventually be programs that combined construction skills with policy education; and how could the district make courses that were not at a student's neighborhood school more accessible.

Mr. Dey said that they were already exploring the possibility to get involved in a tiny home build program in the South Eugene region. In addition, teachers who had CTE certification along with other certifications in language arts, mathematics, and social sciences were being sought. The hope was to allow a student to combine interests. He gave examples of innovative ways that students could combine CTE programs on building sites. Mr. Dey believed that scheduling logistics would be part of future conversations to reduce barriers for student to take courses at other locations.

Ms. O'Rourke asked whether a person would be hired to focus solely on the CTE program. Ms. Tia Holliday-Odegard, the college and career readiness coordinator, was responsible for managing the program. Mr. Dey added that the district had just entered into agreement with Elevate, a Connected Lane County initiative, that focused on career-connected learning. They had partners in technology, design, construction, and manufacturing. Ms. O'Rourke expressed her frustration that the need for CTE programs was so great. She wanted to see more effort put into career education so that students could graduate with job-ready skills. She also referred to the diagram that included the relationship between the district and community and industry partners and asked that government partnerships also be included.

Chair Newman thanked Mr. Dey for his presentation.

2. Receive an Update on the North Region Planning for 850 Howard Avenue
   Presenters: Cydney Vandercar, Interim Superintendent and Brooke Wagner, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction

Superintendent Vandercar shared that Ms. Wagner would present the plan as it existed, review the meetings that they had already attended, and review next steps in the process.

Ms. Wagner reported that she and Superintendent Vandercar had met in April with the North Eugene Regional steering committee—which included teachers and administrators from both buldings, instructional and facilities staff—to have in-depth conversation with both schools and to make plans for the spring. As a result, staff determined that the two schools wanted to

have in-person meetings separately and together. Staff had also been sent an anonymous survey. In June, Ms. Wagner would meet with staff from both programs to report what had been learned so far and to plan how to proceed with community engagement.

She said that the possible options were to collocate the two schools, separate them, or move them to a different location, but nothing would happen in the fall. She added that they had noted many of the issues that Vice Chair Rabasa had mentioned and would be focusing on them in the immediate future. Dates for all the meetings had been provided in the past Friday Memo.

Ms. Rabasa asked who would be held responsible for the decision of the final program locations: was it a board or superintendent decision? She also wondered whether the immediate needs would be in place by the end of the year. She was hearing urgency from parents who were making decisions for the upcoming school year.

Ms. Wagner clarified that Ms. Rabasa was looking for concrete information about changes the upcoming year in a timeframe that would allow families to make decisions. They would communicate those decisions to the staff and families prior to the year ending.

Superintendent Vandercar said that the board would be asked to make final program decisions. There would be financial implications attached to the decisions.

Ms. Rabasa urged the district to look at staffing through the equity lens before they made decisions. She hoped that the programs would be prioritized.

Mr. Lafer agreed that the issues needed to be treated with urgency. Families were choosing to withdraw their children from the program. He remembered that there had been an agreement made that staffing would not be cut even if enrollment fell. He asked that Vice Chair Rabasa be officially added to the committee to fill the spot that Ms. Walston held. He also wanted to clarify the role of the committee. He did not want to ask people to give input if there was no action taken. He shared the suggestions of a parent: to be clear about the role of the committee; to add parents as a permanent part of the committee; to have the funds from the last bond be made available; and to include the Kelly and Yujin Gakuen programs be included in the next bond.

Ms. O'Rourke proposed to add Vice Chair Rabasa to the committee. Chair Newman said that it was her decision to make whether a board member should join the committee, and she wanted to determine whether either of the new board members were interested in being added. Ms. O'Rourke said that the issue had been a mess all year and there was a board member who was interested. She wanted to show that the board was paying attention and was doing their due diligence. Ms. Rabasa affirmed that she was interested, so Chair Newman agreed she should be added to the committee.

Superintendent Vandercar also clarified that after they had time to fully hear from staff, they would add parents to the committee as well.

Mr. Lafer asked to whom the committee reported to. He said that it had not been defined. Chair Newman said that it was not a committee of the board.

Ms. O'Rourke made a motion to create a joint superintendent/board committee to discuss the issues of the Yujin Gakuen and Kelly Middle School programs. Ms. Hays said that if it was a board committee, there would be additional rules.

Chair Newman reminded Ms. O'Rourke that they were discussing an item for information. She asked that if Ms. O'Rourke wished to make a motion, she add it to the items for action. Ms. O'Rourke agreed.

Chair Newman added her concern that the topic had not been discussed prior to the meeting.

Ms. Hays said she could sense how passionately Ms. O'Rourke's felt about the issue. She looked forward to hearing reports from Ms. Rabasa who would be on the committee, and to determine the best way forward.

Ms. Rabasa said that Ms. O'Rourke could make a motion for whatever she wished. She said that to make the committee a board committee would add some oversight that was needed.

Mr. Lafer seconded the motion that Ms. O'Rourke made earlier to have the committee regarding the Kelly and Yujin Gakuen communities be a board committee. Ms. O' Rourke restated her motion: to add to the items for action to make the Kelly/Yujin Gukuen transition committee a joint committee of the superintendent and board.

Ms. Hays asked what the rules were determining a board committee: she specifically wanted to know whether the board would need to vote to determine the make-up of the committee. Ms. O'Rourke called for the question. Chair Newman asked for a vote to see whether there would be additional discussion. **The call for the question passed 5:2** with Vice Chair Rabasa, Ms. O'Rourke, Ms. Hsu, Mr. Lafer and Ms. Hasija Kauffman voting yes, and Chair Newman and Ms. Hays voting no.

Chair Newman asked for a vote to make the North committee a joint superintendent and board committee. **The motion passed 5:2** with Vice Chair Rabasa, Ms. O'Rourke, Ms. Hsu, Mr. Lafer and Ms. Hasija Kauffman voting yes, and Chair Newman and Ms. Hays voting no.

XIII. ITEMS FOR ACTION

1. Consider Revisions to Board Policies GBA – Equal Employment Opportunity; IGBB – Talented and Gifted Program; JFCJ – Weapons in Schools; and adoption of Board Policy KGBB – Firearms Prohibited
   Presenter: Christine Nesbit, General Counsel

Chair Newman clarified that Board Policy KGBB-Firearms Prohibited had been removed from the docket for that evening.

Ms. Delf said that board policies GBA-Equal Employment Opportunity; IGBB-Talented and Gifted Program; and JFCJ-Weapons in Schools, had minor changes that had been added for clarity.

Chair Newman entertained questions. Ms. O'Rourke said that Policy GBA seemed to be missing important language. She asked to amend the policy to have someone in charge of overseeing all the protected classes not covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Title IX. Ms.

Delf clarified that the second paragraph would include language that the appointed coordinator would oversee all protected classes and that they would be listed.

After a question from Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Delf clarified that the board could either create the amended language that evening, or table the policy until Ms. Nesbit amended the language. Ms. Rabasa moved to table until Ms. Nesbit could address the issues that Ms. O'Rourke had made. Ms. Hasija Kauffman seconded the motion.

Ms. O'Rourke said that she wanted to list specifically those items not mentioned in paragraph two. Chair Newman said that Ms. O'Rourke's requests would be forwarded to Ms. Nesbit.

Chair Newman called the vote to table the policy until June 1. **The motion carried 7:0.**

Ms. Rabasa moved to accept the revisions to Board Policy IGBB-Talented and Gifted Program. Ms. Hasija Kauffman seconded the motion. **The motion carried 7:0.**

Vice Chair Rabasa moved to accept Board Policy JFCJ – Weapons in Schools. Ms. Hasija Kauffman seconded the motion. There was no discussion. **The motion carried 7:0.**

XIV. ITEMS FOR ACTION AT A FUTURE MEETING

1. Consider for Adoption – Elementary Language Arts Curriculum
   Presenters: Eric Anderson, Director of Curriculum; Katie Stiles, Literacy TOSA; Lynette Williams DLI TOSA

Eric Anderson thanked the adoption team. He introduced Cherie Aaron, a teacher leader who had worked on the adoption, and Teachers on Special Assignment Katie Stiles, Eileen Thomas, Leah Willow, Sarah Knudsen and Lynette Williams (World Languages). They had led the process with integrity and passion.

Katie Stiles said that the process had taken nine months. She thanked the teachers on the pilot team who had been dedicated and committed to finding high-quality materials.

Ms. Stiles showed data indicating that the proficiency rate in third grade language arts had declined in the last five years with the highest decline being among underserved communities and ethnicities, students with limited English proficiency, homeless, and migrant students. The data had d helped to ground the team in determining who the new curriculum was for. The purpose was to create equitable outcomes and improve achievement for all students.

The current curriculum was fifteen years old and many teachers had to supplement it with newer material. Instead of asking teachers to enhance sub-par curriculum, the district had worked to determine a new materials adoption that would be provided to all teachers.

Ms. Stiles then showed the process overview: Launch the process in August-December 2021; Pilot in January to May 2022; Evaluate and Report in May 2022; Adopt in May 2022; and Impement in August 2022. She reported that the team had presented to the Instructional Advisory Council who had reviewed the process and given positive feedback. The Instructional Leadership Team reported to the Superintendent, who was bringing forward the recommendation to approve the adoption.

Equity was at the forefront of decisions throughout the process, including in the composition of the pilot team, by using culturally responsive materials, equal access to literacy, teacher input and feedback, culturally responsive instruction, community input and through the use of the 4J Equity tool and lens. Ms. Stiles shared a quote from the National Equity Project. She added that the team had recently used the equity lens to examine how the use of the chosen curriculum would impact underserved groups and how the team could eliminate barriers. The board was given time to read quotes from the process.

Ms. Stiles that the pilot team had met to rate the process. More than ninety percent of teachers said that they had sufficient ooportunity to share input and feedback. Eighty-four percent chose the Wit and Wisdom/Fundations/Geodes suite as the new curriculum, and some teachers chose to keep the current curriculum. Ms. Stiles shared particulars of the suite, included in the slides. Skills taught included reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Ms. Stiles reported that one hundred percent of the Spanish Language Arts teachers recommended the American Reading Company (ARC Core), an aligned Spanish/English program that included teacher guides, core texts, thematic libraries, foundational skills, decodable texts and trade books.

The cost to the district would be 4.8 million for curriculum for grades K-5 for seven years.

Ms. Stiles moved onto a slide that showed the implementation plan. She said that the well thought out plan included time to plan as teams and individuals, received professional development and make adjustments as needed.

Chair Newman thanked the group for the presentation and asked if there were any questions from the board.

Ms. O'Rourke asked whether teachers would be able to adopt the new curriculum into their classroom work as they saw fit. She wanted to respect teacher’s individual teaching style. Ms. Hasija Kauffman also asked how prescriptive the curriculum was, whether teachers were prescribed a certain amount time every day, and whether they could integrate their pedagogical style.

The panel answered that Wit and Wisdom provided the structure, but teachers were able to create their own lesson plans. There were four modules for the year, each of which were eight weeks. There were also trade books available.

Mr. Lafer gave his appreciation for the hard work of the staff. He wanted to know what the balance was between using additional materials and teaching the curriculum to fidelity. He wondered how much choice there was, and how much teachers could choose to use their materials. Additionally, Mr. Lafer wanted to know how much reading would be made available for the pleasure of reading.

The panel responded that the staff had voted resoundingly to adopt the Wit and Wisdom curriculum and added that schools all had instructional minutes set aside for different subjects each day. The curriculum provided ways to break down those minutes into certain areas of learning to give structure but allowed flexibility and professional autonomy to do what was best for students.

The group shared that there were core texts, assessments and lesson plans, and then there were additional books that a student could choose to further explore a topic of interest.

Ms. Williams added that the American Reading Company, the curriculum chose for the Spanish Language immersion programs had a similar structure. Teachers were excited about students' enthusiasm for the materials. She said it would take time to create new courses, but that with support from instructional staff she felt that they could have a positive start to the year.

Mr. Lafer was still not clear how much teachers would be able to use different materials if they determined that it would support their students' learning and whether they needed to show that they had spent a certain amount of time on certain curricular materials.

The group responded that the curriculum was interdisciplinary and allowed time for the teacher and students to explore a topic deeply and pursue their passion in different ways. Most often a lack of foundational skills was the barrier to a student reading for pleasure, and ensuring that foundational learning happened removed the barrier to pursuing topics of interest through reading, which had the benefit of increasing students' skills.

Ms. Aaron shared her student's success with foundational learning through the new materials. She was excited to see their enthusiasm for learning. She added that students enter school with radically different fine motor skills, so the use of magnetic letters allowed them to be successful as they also improved skills. She gave an example of creating news stories from different topics in a child's life.

Ms. Rabasa appreciated the process to find a new curriculum that was inclusive, and especially that teachers had been included in the pilots. She asked whether staff knew why some teachers had voted to keep the current curriculum Journeys and also what input staff had received regarding teachers who did not feel like they had been included in the process. Ms. Stiles said that they had not asked the teachers who wished to keep the current curriculum what their reasons were. She said that on a scale from one to five with five being the highest, they received very few ones and the answers were anonymous. Ms. Rabasa asked that in the future, staff give the opportunity for people to give their reasons for voting the way they did.

Ms. Rabasa continued that she was very excited that the new curriculum would provide support for teachers who were new, or needed assistance in developing their lesson plans, but at the same time she was concerned that veteran teachers would have to learn a whole new system and would be asked to stop using the curriculum that they had developed over the years. She wondered whether it might force some veteran teachers to leave the profession.

Mr. Anderson said that the skillset of teachers with twenty years of experience would be unreplaceable. Those teachers would be important in the implementation of the new curriculum. He said that the team understood that no curriculum would be perfect and that is where the experience of master teachers would be invaluable as the district pursued a three-year goal to fully develop the curriculum. New teachers needed mentors and fabulous teachers to show them the way. The team was asking for a commitment to give the new curriculum a chance. Data showed that complete autonomy had not work across the district. The new curriculum would provide a foundation on which everyone could build.

Mr. Anderson said that through the process, teachers were rethinking how to teach reading. New methods would enable them to use their skills and talents in teaching.

In response to a question from Ms. Rabasa regarding whether using curriculum was mandated, Mr. Anderson said that board policy stated that teachers would follow board approved adopted materials, so it could be considered a mandate, but there would be time to add additional resources and to scaffold learning. The team was looking for a collegial and collaborative environment to build a scope and sequence. The love and ability of a teacher would come through. The hope was that the new adoption would provide the same tools for everyone regardless of their experience.

Ms. Hasija Kauffman asked how often the metrics that the team showed at the beginning of the presentation would be measured and taken into account. How would they know if it was working for everyone. Ms. Stiles responded that there were formative assessments built into the program as well as the assessment that was done during third grade. Ms. Williams added that the formative assessments built into the ARC program allowed a teacher to give students additional goals to increase their reading and abilities. The goals were designed to be used by all students regardless of their abilities.

In response to a question from Ms. O'Rourke regarding whether special education students would have access to the same curriculum, the panel responded that the curriculum provided foundational skills that were learned through different methods such as talking about art and using language in ways other than writing. The purpose was to create learning communities so that everyone had information to share and learn from and to level the playing field. Ms. O'Rourke asked how technology such as speech to text would be used. She was concerned that there would be only certain ways in which students would be assessed on their abilities and knowledge. A panel member said that as soon as the curriculum was adopted, the team would begin to adapt texts for different learning methods and she was excited to demonstrate to the board.

Ms. Wiliams said that library services would be able to adapt texts for auditory and other learning modes quickly, as they had always done. Ms. Stiles added that in her experience, if a student was provided appropriate teaching in foundational skills at an early age, many of the struggles with literacy did not manifest later in life. Ms. O'Rourke added that she hoped the grammatical errors that had been found would be fixed before the materials were distributed to students. Ms. O'Rourke also asked whether there would be enough materials for all students.

The group clarified all the ways in which students would be able to show their learning. Special education students would be able to develop their skills more deeply because of the breadth of the curriculum. Ms. Stiles added explained that the group had considered the amount of books needed to ensure optimum learning at each grade level and it was included in the price that had been given earlier. Mr. Anderson said that he would provide additional information in the Friday Memo.

Ms. O'Rourke said that she had not been able to find any reviews of the program online and asked whether the team had been able to find any to use as references. Ms. Stiles responded that they had been able to find other districts that were using the curriculum and that their feedback had been helpful. She was not sure whether the equity lens had been used with

reviews from the other districts. Ms. O'Rourke added that when the equity tool was used in the future, she wanted to see the results in writing.

Chair Newman thanked the pilot team for all their work. She appreciated the inclusiveness and the use of the equity tool. She was looking forward to seeing that the formative tests showed an increase in grade level reading. She reminded the team that they were going to send the revised presentation they had used, the breakdown in costs for materials at the various grades, and the information from their use of the equity tool.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR ACTION AS A RESULT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE EARLIER IN THE DAY

Chair Newman stated that the board had overlooked items that had been added during the executive session.

Ms. Rabasa moved that the board hold an open public hearing in response to a complaint they received on March 17, 2022. The hearing would be held before June 15. The date, format and ground rules for the hearing would be determined by the board during an intervening meet of the board and would be communicated by written notice to the complainant and respondent before the hearing. Ms. Hsu seconded the motion, **The motion passed 7:0.**

Chair Newman added that the board needed to choose a person to work with staff to finalize contract arrangements with the finalists for superintendent. She reminded the board that they would still vote for the finalist and to ratify the contract. Ms. Hays said that usually the person chosen was the chair, but if Chair Newman had a reason she decided not to do it, the board could discuss another person.

Mr. Lafer remembered that the board ultimately voted to approve the contract, but did not have any input in creating the contract. Chair Newman summarized Ms. Hay's past experience when the board chose their finalist, the board member who had been chosen to negotiate the contract met with the candidate to finalize the contract and brought back questions to the board, and finally, the board ratified the contract.

Ms. O'Rourke said that she was concerned when she heard that something was being done the way it was always done. She wanted to discuss how the board would decide to have their own process. She wanted to send someone who was experienced in negotiations to be the person to act as a negotiator. She also wanted the process to happen in real time. Ms. Hasija Kauffman asked whether the board designated the process and contractual terms. She wanted to know what she was making a decision about. Chair Newman said that she would ask staff to send examples of contractual language.

Ms. Hsu agreed that she had no clarity on the process, who would do the work, and how decisions would be made. Ms. Hasija Kauffman asked for a list of responsibilities.

Ms. Hays suggested that the board gather to determine what their terms of hire would be. She added that it was important to her to follow past protocol because there was a history of process available.

Ms. O'Rourke was concerned that the process sounded messy. She said that Ms. Hasija Kauffman and Ms. Hsu were experiencing the same issues she had confronted when she was a new board member and she though that it had planned that way to create confusion.

Ms. Hasija Kauffman asked for a list of her responsibilities for the process of hiring a superintendent.

Chair Newman apologized that she had not sent the information earlier. She again suggested that the board look at past contracts so that they could use them as examples.

Ms. O'Rourke wanted to determine the guidelines for negotiation. Ms. Hays and Ms. Hsu agreed.

There was additional discussion about how to move forward. The board would meet to look at past contracts, discussion the negotiation process, and decide on a representative for negotiations.

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

Chair Newman summarized that there would be executive sessions and meetings in the week of May 22.

Ms. Delf added that the board had tabled discussion on Board Policy GBA – Equal Employment Opportunity until June 1, and Board Policy KGBB – Firearms Prohibited until June 22. The board would meet to decide the date, format and ground rules for the public hearing on the complaint. Mr. Lafer remembered that they would also vote at the June 1 meeting on instructional minutes and the policy version of a memo regarding teacher rights to free speech.

Ms. O'Rourke asked whether there would be future action to determine who would be on the North Region committee. Ms. Hays appreciated having a board and staff committee, but she wanted to know all the requirements for creating a new public committee.

Ms. O'Rourke also wanted a discussion about the complaint process and how it would be used equitably with board members. She considered the current system to be racist. She thought that the structure was being used to suppress a board member. There was board support for Ms. O'Rourke's request.

Mr. Lafer remembered that the board had voted in the affirmative to create a board committee about the North region meeting. He wanted to have further discussion about how it would be organized. There was board support for Mr. Lafer's request.

2021–22 Board Meeting Dates:
MAY: Wednesday, May 25
JUNE: Wednesday, June 1; Wednesday, June 8; Wednesday, June 22

XVI. ADJOURN

Chair Newman adjourned the meeting at 11:53 p.m.

Cydney Vandercar District Clerk	Judy Newman Board Chair

(Recorded by Eliza Drummond)