

MINUTES OF 4J BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPRING RETREAT SESSION II

SCHOOL DISTRICT 4J, LANE COUNTY, OREGON

Date: June 6, 2024

The Board of Directors (BOD) of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Eugene, Oregon, held a spring retreat at 4:30 p.m. in-person at the Education Center, 200 North Monroe Street in Eugene, Oregon, via live-stream and broadcast on KRVM. Notice of the meeting was emailed to the media and posted on the 4J website on May 31, 2024.

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chair Maya Rabasa
Vice Chair Jenny Jonak
Judy Newman
Ericka Thessen
Tom Di Liberto
Morgan Munro
Rick Hamilton

STAFF:

Colt Gill, Interim Superintendent
Carmen Xiomara Urbina, Chief of Staff
Debbie McKim, Executive Assistant to the Interim Superintendent and Board

OTHER GUESTS:

Vince Adams, Board Development Specialist, Oregon School Boards Association (OSBA)

EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATIONS:

None.

MEDIA:

None.

I. CALL 4J BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPRING RETREAT TO ORDER

Chair Maya Rabasa called the 4J Board of Directors Spring Retreat Session II to order at 4:37 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Chair Rabasa said the names of the board members and attendees who were present.

III. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

1. FINALIZING BOARD WORKING AGREEMENTS

Board Development Specialist Vince Adams from the Oregon School Boards Association

(OSBA) explained that, with his guidance, one goal of the retreat is to finalize the board working agreements. At their previous retreat on May 8, 2024, Mr. Adams and the Board of Directors (BOD) reviewed the draft working agreements, including norms, board roles, responsibilities, and relationships, operations and decision-making, communications, and governing law and policy documents. In that meeting, adjustments were made to refine language and offer more clarity. There is further work to be done to finalize the working agreements. Mr. Adams referenced a handout titled Eugene School District 4J Board Working Agreements/Norms. He explained that the areas highlighted in blue still require attention and the italicized text are possible norms suggested by Spano.

The group refined the “board roles, responsibilities, and relationships” section in the working agreements/norms document by clarifying language and adjusting formatting. They spent time defining what an “ambassador” means to them, including being present at school events and functions, receiving and sharing information, holding selves to a high standard (reflecting open and collaborative discourse, ethical conduct, speaking responsibly to support students, district, and board) and serving as an interface between the district and the community. They added regular self-assessment and board membership consulting with members and giving committee assignments to the working agreements.

The group refined the “how we operate and make decisions” section in the working agreements/norms document by clarifying language and adjusting formatting. There was impetus on incoming board members receiving an initial orientation, an orientation binder, and a mentor. The group came to consensus to have working agreement language reflect that meetings will start and end on time, instead of beginning and ending at a *specific* time. Discussion ensued about how to best facilitate board member visits to district schools. In addition to establishing a formal process for coordinating visits, Mr. Adams urged that board members notify the Superintendent before visiting a school excepting routine parental visits or scheduled volunteer shifts. He advised including the Superintendent in all communication with principals and staff. He emphasized that there are three main actions that school board members can take: hire a Superintendent, adopt policies, and approve budgets.

Chair Rabasa articulated the need to do a mass campaign teaching staff, families, and the entire community what a school board does. She said there are profound misconceptions about that.

Ms. McKim offered to make a Google Doc of schools for tracking board member visits.

Interim Superintendent Gill suggested a slightly different type of tracking system, one where staff invite board members to events and their attendance is recorded.

There was consensus to add an agreement reflecting the district's commitment to using an equity lens.

The group refined the "how we communicate" section in the working agreements/norms document by clarifying language and adjusting formatting. There was agreement to grant the Vice Chair (in addition to the Chair) the responsibility of responding to group emails sent to the board.

2. FINALIZING CALENDAR

There was a discussion about the school board calendar and meeting structures. Mr. Adams mentioned that decisions can be made outside of regular board meetings, in work sessions, training, etc. Chair Rabasa explained that the current practice at 4J is that no decisions can be made outside of regular and work sessions. Discussion ensued about the structure of listening sessions and the process for receiving public comment. There was agreement about messaging any changes appropriately. There was consensus to hold two meetings per month, one business, one work session (if only one monthly meeting is held it will be a business meeting); begin meetings at six o'clock, allow decision making in work sessions, add listening sessions and coffee chats to the calendar, and invite employee groups to work sessions to receive their input on specific topics.

Ms. McKim provided a draft calendar handout for review.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Rabasa adjourned the spring retreat at 9:09 p.m.



Colt Gill
District Clerk



Maya Rabasa
Board Chair

(Recorded by LCOG)
Approved on 07/03/2024