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

Date: September 4, 2024

The Board of Directors (BOD) of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Oregon, held a regular session at 6:00 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 August 30, 2024.

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:
Jenny Jonak, Chair
Tom Di Liberto, Vice Chair
Maya Rabasa
Ericka Thessen
Judy Newman
Morgan Munro
Rick Hamilton

STAFF:
Colt Gill, Interim Superintendent
Carmen Xiomara Urbina, Chief of Staff
Matt Brown, Director of Finance
Juan Carlos Cuadros, Assistant Superintendent of Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging
Lisa Fjordbeck, Operations Coordinator for the Superintendent's Office
Brooke Wagner, Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services
Sherry Moore, Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff
Debbie McKim, Executive Assistant to the Interim Superintendent and Board

EMPLOYEE GROUPS:
Sabrina Gordon, Eugene Education Association (EEA)
Lisa Jenkins-Easton, Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA)
Sally Duerfeldt, Vice President, Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA)

OTHER:
None.

MEDIA:
KRVM
Register Guard

I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Chair Jenny Jonak called the regular session to order at 6:03 p.m. She said the names of the board members who were present and read the land acknowledgement statement.

II. AGENDA APPROVAL

The agenda was approved as presented.

III. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Interim Superintendent Colt Gill expressed his enthusiasm for the start of a new school year. He presented a welcome video that was shared with Eugene School District 4J staff.

IV. ITEMS RAISED BY THE AUDIENCE

Chloe Chapman, community member, introduced herself as a representative from Summit Bank. She explained that Summit Bank uses deposits to redeploy money to small businesses, nonprofits, and schools. They recently donated more than $250,000. Summit Bank partners with local government municipalities and educational institutions by supporting their operations, growth, and missions. She asked that 4J consider banking locally by partnering with Summit Bank.

Michelle Dunn, 4J physical education specialist, thanked the BOD for their support of unified sports during the previous school year. She acknowledged the many volunteer unified coaches. She encouraged the BOD to question why 4J does not invest financially in unified sports when they represent inclusion, equity, diversity, and belonging. She urged more support of unified sports and other unified activities. She added that unified physical education supports Oregon HB3199.

V. COMMENTS BY EMPLOYEE GROUPS

Eugene Education Association (EEA) President Sabrina Gordon shared her excitement about the start of the school year. She said staff members have been working tirelessly. She raised concern that licensed staff are starting the school year without a contract. She said EEA and 4J engaged in negotiations last spring for a new collective bargaining agreement. They did not finish, and the previous agreement has expired. She explained that the contract is the place where they jointly commit to the teaching and learning conditions and bargaining is an opportunity to make conditions better. She asserted that where they left off at the bargaining table is not yet good enough for 4J students. She described safe learning environments where all staff are trained and systems for behavior support are clearly understood, counselors who not over overburdened by clerical tasks, nurses with more capacity, multilingual staff, and educators who feel supported by their employer, with enough time to do their jobs, and fair compensation. She urged the BOD to demonstrate with dollars the value they place on licensed educators. She highlighted two upcoming public sessions on September 5 and September 12 at 4:30 p.m.

Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) President Lisa Jenkins-Easton and Vice President Sally Duerfeldt introduced themselves.

Ms. Duerfeldt stated that over the past year she has witnessed her colleagues asking for help resolving district issues. She cited a transportation staffing crisis, leading to over 9,000 hours of overtime, a special education (SPED) staffing crisis, and pay inequities in the nutrition department. She said the district's most vulnerable students are not getting their needs met. She described a safe and effective learning environment, safe transportation, and quality healthy meals. She said that previous words of validation have been followed by silence and lack of change. She urged board members to think about their legacy.

Ms. Jenkins-Easton voiced that when OSEA surveyed significant needs Educational Assistants (EAs) last fall, 46% of all respondents indicated that they "arrive at work each day knowing they will be physically assaulted by a student." She highlighted SB756, which she said provides an opportunity to work together to improve learning conditions for students while making the working conditions for staff bearable. Alongside what the law requires as a baseline, OSEA proposed two things:

1. Guarantee one bus aid on all SPED routes
2. Pay a differential to retain SPED staff

Ms. Jenkins-Easton brought up examples of how the district bargaining team has shown a lack of support for the proposed topics. She mentioned that during budget committee meetings, board members asked where the district's values of improving staffing conditions in SPED are reflected in the budget. She explained that the vacancy savings, which make up 4-7% of the district's budget, come at a time when SPED is in a state of crisis, citing 19,000 unfilled substitute hours. She said that for staff and students, vacancies do not represent savings, they represent risk. She brought up negotiations for coaches last fall and said negotiating SB756 has been awful, leading to the pending litigation. Ms. Jenkins-Easton ended by stating that she has the responsibility to uphold the legal, contractual rights guaranteed to every classified staff in the district.

VI. CONSENT GROUP – ITEMS FOR ACTION

1. APPROVE MINUTES FOR AUGUST 1, 2024 BOARD SUMMER RETREAT AND AUGUST 7, 2024 REGULAR BOARD MEETING

2. APPROVE INITIATION OF THE PROPOSED K-12 SCIENCE ADOPTION

3. APPROVE PERSONNEL ACTIONS

MOTION: Vice Chair Di Liberto moved to approve the consent agenda. Ms. Thessen seconded. **The motion passed unanimously, 7:0:0; Chair Jonak, Vice Chair Di Liberto, Ms. Newman, Ms. Thessen, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Munro, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor.**

VII. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

1. CREATING SAFE, INCLUSIVE & WELCOMING LEARNING SPACES

Interim Superintendent Gill and Ms. Carmen Xiomara Urbina presented information via PowerPoint presentation about a guide designed for creating safe, inclusive, and welcoming learning spaces.

The guide, shared widely with school leaders, offers preventative and proactive measures in anticipation of potential challenges in the school environment given the U.S. presidential campaign and global events.

Interim Superintendent Gill elaborated on the following four ideals:

1. Student-centered
2. Move toward hope and resolution
3. Weathermakers
4. Hold high expectations

Interim Superintendent Gill highlighted the following collective principles:

1. Protecting well-being
2. Collective responsibility
3. Equity in education
4. Safe and respectful workplaces
5. Commitment to equity

Ms. Urbina said the guidance assists staff with managing polarized political debates among students while maintaining a neutral environment, addressing bullying tied to political rhetoric, and holding space for multiple perspectives. The guide outlines preventions, interventions, and restorations. It contains policies, procedures, and key resources intended to empower administrators and staff ahead of the 2024-25 school year. Ms. Urbina referenced an internal website: "4J Resources for Preventing and Responding to Bias Incidents/Every Student Belongs." She said the district is committed to continually improving and refining the guidance based on staff feedback.

Members of the BOD expressed their enthusiasm for the proactive districtwide guidance.

2. RECEIVE UPDATE FROM AD HOC SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH BOARD

Ms. Newman provided an update about the ad hoc superintendent search board. The board has met on two occasions. They agreed to hire a search firm and a request for proposals (RFP) was generated.

Applications for a search firm close on Monday, September 23, 2024. Ms. Newman asked if any members of the BOD want to join the subcommittee to screen applications the week of September 30, 2024. She added that ultimately the entire committee will interview finalists. She asked members of the BOD to communicate any additional feedback they have regarding criteria to Interim Superintendent Gill, and it will be communicated to the ad hoc superintendent search board.

Ms. Newman described a detailed and extensive timeline (provided in the meeting packet) for hiring a permanent superintendent. The timeline may shift when a search firm is hired. She said the ad hoc superintendent search board began their work early, and their hope is to identify a new permanent superintendent by March 2025.

Ms. Rabasa asked for clarification about Ms. Newman's invitation to join the subcommittee screening applications.

Ms. Newman responded that the process would involve reviewing and scoring the initial applications.

Ms. Rabasa commented that she imagines there would be conversation about the applications rather than just turning in a score sheet. She is unsure how that process would happen given how the [ad hoc superintendent search board] numbers are set up.

Ms. Newman responded that she is assuming all the applications will go to the subcommittee.

Ms. Rabasa stated that as she understands it, additional members would contribute to the scoring component of the process, but not to the conversation component of the process.

Ms. Newman responded affirmatively.

Ms. Munro added that the ad hoc superintendent search board has not yet determined the process for search firm finalist interviews, but the BOD will be involved. She clarified that the purpose of the ad hoc superintendent search board is largely administrative, and decisions are the responsibility of the BOD. She said the ad hoc superintendent search board will present a plan to the BOD as it relates to board member involvement in the interview process.

Ms. Newman added that interviews for the search firm are scheduled for October 11-23, 2024.

In a response directed toward Ms. Rabasa, Interim Superintendent Gill offered that the scoring criteria for the initial screening starts on page 5 of the RFP. He said there is an

opportunity in the timeline for a screening to happen and for the ad hoc superintendent search board to bring recommendations to the BOD. The BOD can then determine which search firms will be interviewed.

Ms. Rabasa responded that she is more inclined to consider providing input if she knows it can go beyond the scoring component.

Ms. Munro brought up that the ad hoc superintendent search board discussed the possibility of using a ranking system since some board members score more generously compared with others.

Ms. Newman summarized that the ad hoc superintendent search board is asking members of the BOD to determine if they will help with scoring, provide input on criteria for the interview process, and provide input about the feasibility of the March 2025 deadline for hiring a permanent superintendent.

VIII. ITEMS FOR ACTION

1. ADOPT BOARD, SUPERINTENDENT, AND DISTRICT GOALS

The BOD conducted a final edit and review of the board, superintendent, and district goals.

> **MOTION:** Di Liberto moved to approve the adoption of board, superintendent, and district goals as amended. Seconded by Ms. Thessen. **The motion passed unanimously, 7:0:0; Chair Jonak, Vice Chair Di Liberto, Ms. Newman, Ms. Thessen, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Munro, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor.**

2. LINES OF AUTHORITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Interim Superintendent Gill introduced the topic of lines of authority and organizational chart. The BOD reviewed the organizational chart during their most recent work session. He explained that the executive leadership team had three primary aims for the organizational chart: create clarity, restore equity, inclusion and belonging, and create equitable access to high quality and relevant teaching and learning. He said the district has designed systems around the organizational chart.

Interim Superintendent Gill explained that 4J policy CCB requires the BOD to approve lines of direct authority, thereby affirming the district's commitment to the organizational chart.

> **MOTION:** Mr. Di Liberto moved to approve the proposed lines of authority, positions, and titles. Seconded by Mr. Hamilton. **The motion passed unanimously, 7:0:0; Chair Jonak, Vice Chair Di Liberto, Ms. Newman, Ms. Thessen, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Munro, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor.**

3. APPROVE POLICY BCFA—EDUCATIONAL EQUITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Interim Superintendent Gill introduced policy BCFA (Educational Equity Advisory Committee) for a second read.

There was discussion about the need for a process for developing a pool of nominees.

The BOD further refined language clarifying the role of individual board members as they relate to nominations to the Educational Equity Advisory Committee.

There was consensus to remove policy language requiring the involvement of a school leader in the nomination process.

> **MOTION:** Ms. Munro moved to approve the proposed policy BCFA as amended. Seconded by Ms. Thessen. **The motion passed unanimously, 7:0:0; Chair Jonak, Vice Chair Di Liberto, Ms. Newman, Ms. Thessen, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Munro, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor.**

4. APPROVE REVISIONS TO BOARD POLICY BBAA – INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS' AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILTIIES (SECOND READ)

Interim Superintendent Gill introduced policy BBAA (individual board members' authority and responsibilities) for a second read.

He noted some of the key proposed changes, such as protocol for board members sharing opinions publicly and protocol for requesting legal advice.

It was clarified that, with the exception the Chair or designated point-of-contact, individual board members must not contact attorneys without approval of the entire BOD.

There was further discussion about the various roles of legal counsel and protocol for requesting legal advice.

There was consensus to postpone approving policy BBAA until policy language has been refined for more clarification.

5. APPROVE REVISIONS TO BOARD POLICY BDC – EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

Interim Superintendent Gill introduced policy BDC (executive sessions) for a second read.

He explained that key changes to the policy include new two reasons to call an executive session: 1. Matters relating to the safety of the governing body and 2. Matters relating to cyber security.

MOTION: Mr. Di Liberto moved to approve policy BDC (executive sessions) as amended. Seconded by Ms. Thessen. **The motion passed unanimously, 7:0:0; Chair Jonak, Vice Chair Di Liberto, Ms. Newman, Ms. Thessen, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Munro, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor.**

6. APPROVE REVISIONS TO BOARD POLICY BDDG – MINUTES OF BOARD MEETINGS

Interim Superintendent Gill introduced policy BDDG (minutes of board meetings).

He explained two minor language adjustments to the policy.

MOTION: Mr. Di Liberto moved to approve revisions to board policy BDDG. Ms. Newman seconded. **The motion passed unanimously, 7:0:0; Chair Jonak, Vice Chair Di Liberto, Ms. Newman, Ms. Thessen, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Munro, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor.**

7. APPROVE FOR ADOPTION POLICY CB – SUPERINTENDENT

Interim Superintendent Gill introduced policy CB (superintendent) for a second read.

He explained that the new policy defines the role of the superintendency in the school district. The language is congruent with the Oregon School Board Association's (OSBA) recommendations and with other districts across the state. The policy incorporates SB283, which states that a district cannot direct a superintendent to take action conflicting with local, state, or federal law.

MOTION: Mr. Di Liberto moved to approve the adoption of policy CB. Seconded by Ms. Newman. **The motion passed unanimously, 7:0:0; Chair Jonak, Vice Chair Di Liberto, Ms. Newman, Ms. Thessen, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Munro, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor.**

8. APPROVE REVISIONS TO POLICY CBG – EVALUATION OF SUPERINTENDENT

Interim Superintendent Gill introduced policy CBG (evaluation of superintendent) for a second read.

MOTION: Mr. Di Liberto moved to approve policy CBG (evaluation of the superintendent). Seconded by Ms. Munro. **The motion passed unanimously, 7:0:0; Chair Jonak, Vice Chair Di Liberto, Ms. Newman, Ms. Thessen, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Munro, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor.**

IX. ITEMS AT A FUTURE MEETING

None.

X. COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS BY INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS

Vice Chair Di Liberto thanked district employees who worked over the summer, stating that their contributions do not go unnoticed. He spoke to the excitement and anticipation of a new school year and thanked returning educators and staff.

Ms. Newman said she appreciated the district's new welcome video. She reported that the Student Voice Committee met, and they are recruiting representatives.

Ms. Munro highlighted the district's ombuds program and praised audit season work.

Ms. Rabasa attended the OSBA summer conference. She mentioned the importance and role of charter schools informing district culture.

Ms. Thessen reported activities from the Charter School Committee.

Chair Jonak echoed gratitude for educators, staff, and fellow members of the BOD.

XI. SUGGESTIONS BY THE BOARD FOR ITEMS FOR ACTION AT A FUTURE MEETING

Ms. Munro requested information about the form and structure of proactive superintendent supervision.

Ms. Newman requested more detailed information about the district's inclusion plan, specifically regarding Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs) and 504s.

Ms. Thessen requested a Friday memorandum about the procedure for communicating high school student schedules.

Vice Chair Di Liberto requested a Friday memorandum about what measures the district is taking to collect data from staff.

XII. ADJORN

Chair Jonak adjourned the regular session at 8:21 p.m.

Colt Gill
District Clerk

Jenny Jonak
Board Chair

(Recorded by LCOG)
Approved on 10/09/2024