

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

Date: October 9, 2024

The Board of Directors (BOD) of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Oregon, held a regular meeting 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 October 4 2024.

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jenny Jonak, Chair

Tom Di Liberto, Vice Chair

Ericka Thessen

Maya Rabasa

Judy Newman

Morgan Munro

Rick Hamilton

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

STAFF:

Colt Gill, Interim Superintendent

Carmen Xiomara Urbina, Chief of Staff

Matt Brown, Director of Finance

Jill Cuadros, Director of Nutrition Services

Juan Carlos Cuadros, Assistant Superintendent of Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

Larry Williams, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction and Access

Debbie McKim, Executive Assistant to the Interim Superintendent and Board

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:

Autumn Thessen, ECCO

EMPLOYEE GROUPS:

Sabrina Gordon, Eugene Education Association (EEA)

Lisa Jenkins-Easton, Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA)

OTHER GUESTS:

Michael Bradley, Business Liaison, City of Eugene

Amanda D'Souza, Development Programs Manager, City of Eugene

Allison Camp, Economic Development Manager, City of Springfield (online)

MEDIA:

KRVM

Register Guard

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

Chair Jenny Jonak called the regular meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. She said the names of the board members who were present. Interim Superintendent Colt Gill led the flag salute, and Chair Jonak read the land acknowledgement statement.

II. AGENDA APPROVAL

The agenda was approved as amended.

III. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Interim Superintendent Gill and Ms. Thessen introduced the new ECCO student representative, Autumn Thessen.

Interim Superintendent Gill shared a personal story about witnessing an individual working in the transportation department who exemplified Eugene School District 4J's values of being student-centered, focused on the greater good, moving toward hope and resolution, acting as a weathermaker, and holding high expectations.

IV. ITEMS RAISED BY THE AUDIENCE

Two students and members of the HOOTS Youth Action Council (YAC) expressed their concern about HOOTS hours being cut. They said the district's decision has affected students without student input. They described HOOTS as a lifeline—a safe space where students can seek help without fear of judgement and repercussions. In addition to mental health support, HOOTS offers practical resources, such as first aid care, snacks, and connections to other supports. They explained that HOOTS is a resource students have come to depend on to manage the stresses of school and life and urged the district to continue funding HOOTS.

Molly Nord, retired Chavez Elementary School educator, spoke about student dysregulation in the classroom. She described classrooms not being resourced with supports for escalations. She emphasized the impact that it has on student learning. She urged proactive programs to help dysregulated students and said that educators are facing the inability to teach due to the issue.

Eden Van Bloem, registered nurse at 4J, raised concern about the district having less than one dozen registered nurses to support 16,000 students. She said on average the district has one Registered Nurse (RN) for every 1,300 students. Their nursing team is stretched so thin that they have lost sight of things like health promotion, disease prevention, and mental health support. They are expected to train unlicensed staff in their absence,

placing a burden on school secretaries and Educational Assistants (EAs). She added that district health rooms are consistently unstaffed.

Cora Ludwig and Deeya Patel, South Eugene High School Student Government representatives, highlighted the following upcoming events: Pep assembly on Tuesday, October 15, Homecoming football game on Friday, October 18, Homecoming dance on Saturday, October 19, and mock elections on Friday, October 25. They requested that the Board of Directors (BOD) consider a policy change allowing food trucks on campus for two to three events per year.

Kimberly Roellig, registered nurse at 4J, asked for support improving conditions for district nurses. She described issues such as low starting salaries, burn out, lack of support, and problems with recruitment and retention. She said that Sheldon High School was without an assigned nurse for 24-months. She encouraged hiring permanent nurses, offering pay differentials, and sign-on and retention bonuses. She discouraged the use of contract Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs).

Valerie Blood, 4J parent, spoke to continued issues relating to Special Education (SPED). She described unstaffed classrooms and unmet needs. She said her son is not receiving adequate basic care, learning, art, library access, or one-on-one speech therapy. She said that children in life skills should have the same opportunities as other children. Ms. Blood cited staffing as the issue. She said the district is setting teachers and staff up to fail. She urged the BOD to create a policy establishing staffing guidelines for SPED classrooms.

Richard Flores, Life Skills Educational Assistant (EA) at Camas Ridge Elementary School, stated that Senate Bill 756 will secure access for at least one EA in a meeting regarding a student's specialized plan. Until this, SB 756 accounted for one EA to be invited to said meetings. He said there was supposed to be a fair rotation of EAs that would be selected to attend, yet he has yet to be invited to a meeting. He cited assaults and other dangerous situations happening at more frequent rates and said that staffing levels are not appropriate. Mr. Flores described a recent scenario during which he was required to perform the Heimlich maneuver. After the incident, he suggested that the student would benefit from a one-on-one feeding protocol. The suggestion was not implemented, and the student had yet another choking incident. He cited noncompliance and urged increasing staffing immediately.

Dani Schlageter, Significant Needs Educational Assistant (EA) and 4J parent, detailed the challenges her significant needs child is experiencing within the district, including being physically assaulted in the school environment and having no access to a school nurse. She has witnessed at least one other student who is unable to attend school altogether because the district cannot meet his medical needs due to inadequate nursing staffing. Ms. Schlageter cited EA's being consistently assigned duties that would otherwise be performed by a Licensed Nurse (RN).

Patrick Lucas, 4J parent of a student at South Eugene High School, expressed concern about the lack of care being provided for his daughter, who experiences a chronic health condition. He said she needs a place to go when she is feeling dizzy, nauseous, and in pain. Despite having a 504 plan, the school has not been able to consistently provide that for her. He cited staffing issues and lack of training. He has spoken with two school nurses, one EA, and an educator who all cite tremendous challenges, including lacking clear 4J-sanctioned policies. He said the staff at lower levels are being tasked with making critical decisions, which imposes a personal risk. He said the risk should fall on the system. Mr. Lucas urged clear policies, procedures, and guidelines.

Cielle Lucas, 4J nurse and parent, highlighted concerns about the state of nursing in the district. She emphasized that the nursing department first came before the BOD in 2019 to address their concerns, and the situation has only worsened. She said the district policies are lacking. They cannot “protect and enhance student health” under the current model as it does not align with good health practices in school nursing. Ms. Lucas urged the BOD to engage in ongoing learning about the nursing issues and solutions that have been brought forward; and in collaboration with nurses, reevaluate and update the document of guiding beliefs and values and reevaluate the district’s health services policies.

V. COMMENTS BY EMPLOYEE GROUPS

Eugene Education Association (EEA) President Sabrina Gordon spoke on behalf of licensed staff, including school nurses. She echoed public comments stating that recruitment and retention of school nurses is an urgent matter, directly connected to the health and safety of students. She said the district has been plagued by vacant nursing positions year after year. School nurses have been working under extreme pressure barely able to meet critical and safety needs for some of the district’s most vulnerable students. She said the use of contract agency nurses is an expensive and ineffective practice. EEA has assisted over the past several years with repeated requests from school nurses who have tried to collaborate with administration but ultimately have been sidelined in decision-making processes. Ms. Gordon offered the following solutions: more competitive salaries, improved advertising of hiring opportunities, assisting in creating reasonable assignments and coverage for vacancies and absences, development and clear communication of nursing practices and policies, upholding contractual and legal rights such as preparation time and duty-free lunch breaks, and mentorship support for new hires. Ms. Gordon said the failure to address the issues is a failure to protect students. If left unmet, 4J is jeopardizing the health and wellbeing of students. She urged 4J to treat the recruitment and retention of school nurses as a top priority.

Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) President Lisa Jenkins-Easton spoke to the approval of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between Eugene School District 4J and OSEA Eugene Chapter 1. She said that while negotiating SB 756 has been heart

wrenching and often confusing she proud that the team's tenacity and perseverance to stand up for the rights of the classified support staff prevailed. It is her hope that the agreement will be fully realized for what it is. She said the accomplishment will be more impactful than the legislation on its own. The agreement means they have fundamentally changed the way students with specialized plans are supported and provides equity for staff to be part of the team. Given her experience, Ms. Jenkins-Easton feels connected to the labor community and views the labor agreements established to address working conditions in education as a singular baseline way to improve outcomes for students and retain staff. She added that the risk from vacancy savings should be eliminated from the budget vernacular and replaced with the vacancy reinvestments for the district's most vulnerable students; agreements like SB 756 change the culture of who and what gets prioritized.

VI. CONSENT GROUP - ITEMS FOR ACTION

1. APPROVE THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES FOR 9/4/2024

2. APPROVE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN EUGENE SCHOOL DISTRICT 4J AND OREGON SCHOOL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION (OSEA)

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

VII. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

1. AD HOC SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH BOARD SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Newman reported on Ad Hoc Superintendent Search Board Subcommittee activities. She announced that they have narrowed the search down to three finalists. The interviews will occur in a public meeting on October 16 at 4:30 p.m. She revealed the interview questions, as follows:

- How do you define community engagement? Who do you consider important communities to engage? What are some successful strategies you've used to get community and district input? What pitfalls have you encountered? How do you share the information gathered with the school board? Provide examples.
- Tell us how about how your diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts impacted and improved a search you led in the last three years.

- Share an example of a time when you supported a board who had some disagreement about what they were looking for in a superintendent, and how was that resolved?
- Share one or two examples of how you recruited diverse and highly qualified candidates for positions.
- Is there anything we have not yet covered that you would like to share with us.

Ms. Newman invited feedback from the BOD as it relates to the interview questions.

Chair Jonak responded with a suggestion to include the question, “What do you look for in a long-term candidate for the district?”

Ms. Newman detailed aspects of the proposed selection process. She noted that the board must deliberate and vote in a public meeting. She explained that after the interviews take place, there will be a fifteen-minute break, before the BOD reconvenes in a public meeting to discuss each applicant’s strengths with the goal of ultimately reaching a unanimous consensus. Lastly, a formal motion will be made to confirm the top choice.

Ms. Munro clarified that while it would be ideal to reach a consensus on first choice, it is not a requirement.

1. DIVISION 22 STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS 2023-24 ASSURANCES

Assistant Superintendent of Instruction and Access Larry Williams, Chief of Staff Carmen Xiomara Urbina, and Interim Superintendent Gill reported information about Division 22 standards for public elementary and secondary schools via PowerPoint presentation.

Ms. Urbina explained that Division 22 represents a set of standards established by the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to ensure that school districts are providing quality education and maintaining compliance with the law. The standards cover everything from curriculum, instruction materials, and graduation requirements to health and safety regulations.

She explained that 4J oversees numerous programs that fall under the scope of Division 22. The district is currently in compliance with 57 out of the 62 standards. The following are five areas where the district is still in the process of achieving full compliance:

1. Menstrual dignity for students (full compliance by Fall 2025)
2. Equity Committee (full compliance by Fall 2024)

3. Instructional materials adoption and postponement (full compliance by Fall 2025)
4. Assessment of essential skills (full compliance by 2024-25)
5. Corrective action plan (full compliance by 2024-25)

Mr. Williams spoke about the new revised rules and requirements for the 2024-25 school year. He said the district must have a K12 instructional program for social emotional learning, adding that each level is currently using a social emotional learning curriculum: elementary is using Conscious Discipline, middle school is using Wayfinder, and high school is using Character Strong. The district is working on full compliance regarding personal finance, higher education, and career path skills content standards.

Ms. Newman asked for more information on the local performance assessment.

Interim Superintendent Gill responded that local performance assessments are what existed prior; local work samples supported with common statewide rubrics. They are supposed to continue to do those because that's our measurement of students and their progress with essential skills.

Ms. Newman asked if the Second Steps curriculum is still being used.

Mr. Williams responded that Second Steps is being used at the elementary level.

Vice Chair Di Liberto asked about the status of Conscious Discipline.

Mr. Williams responded that while the Conscious Discipline curriculum suits some educators better than others, the goal is to ensure that all educators have access to it.

VIII. ITEMS FOR ACTION

1. APPROVE REVISIONS TO POLICY BBAA – INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER'S AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Interim Superintendent Gill updated the BOD on revisions to policy BBAA – Board Member's authority and responsibilities. He referenced language clarifications outlined in the meeting packet—specifically providing clarity to individual authority regarding requests for legal advice.

The BOD further deliberated policy BBAA language and reached consensus to bring the item back at a future meeting.

2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE

Ms. Thessen provided an update on the Community Engagement Committee. The committee discussed the process for community chats and identified a preference for one of three options. Their recommendation—Option 1—allows board members to engage directly with their communities. She described it as board-led and individual member organized—allowing each board member to facilitate their own community chats. The

conversations themselves will center on wellness and belonging, framed around the essential question: “What are your dreams for your children in Eugene School District 4J?”

The BOD deliberated the pros and cons of Option 1.

Ms. Thessen noted that as long as the community chats strictly informational, they will not be subject to public meeting laws. The community chats are scheduled to occur the weeks of October 21, November 11, and February 10. Student chats are scheduled to occur in March, date/time TBD.

The district is preparing a toolkit to guide board members in the community chat process.

Ms. Newman requested that the toolkit include tips for notetaking.

MOTION: Ms. Munro moved to approve the recommendation of Option 1 for the process of community chats. Seconded by Mr. Hamilton. **The motion passed unanimously, 7:0:0; Chair Jonak, Vice Chair Di Liberto, Ms. Thessen, Ms. Newman, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Munro, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor.**

3. SELECTION OF SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH FIRM FINALISTS

Ms. Newman provided an update on the selection of superintendent search firm finalists. She reported that the committee reviewed seven applicants and they recommend the following three firms for the finalist interviews: McPhearson and Jacobson, Ray and Associates, and Human Capital Enterprises.

MOTION: Ms. Newman moved to select the three firms listed for final interviews on October 16, 2024. Vice Chair Di Liberto seconded. **The motion passed unanimously, 7:0:0; Chair Jonak, Vice Chair Di Liberto, Ms. Thessen, Ms. Newman, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Munro, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor.**

4. RESOLUTION REAFFIRMING COMMITMENT TO SAFE, INCLUSIVE, AND SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT FOR EACH STUDENT, WELCOMING STUDENTS OF ALL NATIONAL ORIGINS, WITHOUT IMMIGRATION OR DOUMENTATION STATUS BARRIERS

Chair Rabasa and Ms. Urbina provided information via PowerPoint presentation.

Chair Rabasa explained that the district is revisiting a resolution passed in 2017 committing to a safe, inclusive, and supportive school environment for each student. She said their intention is to reaffirm that commitment and she cited the growth and expansion of district values, as well as an updated 2024 resolution.

Ms. Urbina provided an overview of the updated 2024 resolution:

- Reaffirms the district's commitment to a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment
- Expands focus to address systemic discrimination based on language, accent, skin color, and other visible/invisible traits
- Emphasizes dismantling systemic racism, ableism, xenophobia, and other injustices affecting student well-being and success

Ms. Urbina highlighted the key differences in the 2017 resolution and the 2024 resolution.

Language and focus of 2017 resolution:

- Focused on protecting students from the impact of immigration enforcement, especially ICE actions
- Emphasized cultural responsiveness and safeguarding student records from ICE requests

Language and focus of 2024 resolution:

- Expands protections beyond immigration status to address systemic barriers related to race, language, and socioeconomic status
- Focuses on dismantling barriers across multiple dimensions and promoting inclusivity and respect for all identities

Commitment to Action (2017)

- Emphasized privacy protections related to immigration status

Commitment to Action (2024)

- Reiterates legal protections but expands to include comprehensive training for staff
- Introduces stronger partnerships with local and national organizations for family support, fostering a collaborative system

Responding to the National Climate (2017)

- Focused on the impact of immigration enforcement and national political anxiety

Responding to the National Climate (2024)

- Expands beyond immigration issues to address systemic challenges like racism, ableism, sexism, and xenophobia

- Reinforces the district’s commitment to fostering inclusion and equity for all students, regardless of identity.

Building Trust and Transparency (2017)

- Established transparency around legal requests from ICE and protected student records

Building Trust and Transparency (2024)

- Builds on these protections by committing to clear, accessible communication in multiple languages to build trust with families
- Ensures no family is left out due to language barriers, fostering a welcoming environment for all

Final Resolution (2017)

- Concluded by acknowledging the Board’s responsibility to respond to national immigration issues

Final Resolution (2024)

- Retains this responsibility but expands to focus on dismantling all forms of discrimination and bias
- Commits to creating a truly inclusive and welcoming environment for every student, family, and staff member

In closing, Ms. Rabasa stated that the updated 2024 resolution demonstrates a powerful statement about standing alongside 4J students and families by reaffirming that equity, inclusion, and safety are values the district lives by.

MOTION: Ms. Rabasa moved to pass the 2024 version of the resolution as presented in the board packet. Ms. Thessen seconded. **The motion passed unanimously, 7:0:0; Chair Jonak, Vice Chair Di Liberto, Ms. Thessen, Ms. Newman, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Munro, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor.**

MOTION: Ms. Rabasa moved to direct the interim superintendent to implement the steps associated with the 2024 resolution within the next 90 days. Ms. Thessen seconded. **The motion passed unanimously, 7:0:0; Chair Jonak, Vice Chair Di Liberto, Ms. Thessen, Ms. Newman, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Munro, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor.**

IX. ITEMS FOR ACTION AT A FUTURE MEETING

1. ENTERPRISE ZONE SCHOOL SUPPORT FEE

Michael Bradley, Business Liaison at City of Eugene, provided information about the enterprise zone school support fee for fiscal year 2024 via PowerPoint presentation.

Mr. Bradley explained that an enterprise zone is a state-enabled tax abatement program. In 2023, the Oregon legislature passed HB 2009, requiring cities managing enterprise zones to collaborate with school districts within the zone to establish a school support fee rate. The 4J boundary overlaps with the City of Eugene's west enterprise zone and Springfield's community enterprise zone (see attachment B in the meeting packet). Mr. Bradley noted that his intention during the current meeting is to provide information only; board action will be requested at a later date.

A school support fee will be considered local revenue for the school district. It will not increase the school's overall budget. The fee only applies to five-year extended authorizations. HB 2009 stipulates that the fee must be set to a whole percentage between 15 and 30%, or in the middle at 22.5%. Over the past 10 years Eugene has had three five-year authorizations, and Springfield has authorized four extended authorizations. He noted that each authorization is unique, the investment amounts that companies invest vary greatly and tax abatement totals also vary greatly. He provided one example, pulled from previous data, of what a school support fee might generate (at 22.5% it would likely generate \$105,000 by year five).

Mr. Bradley opened the floor to questions from the BOD.

Ms. Munro asked what percentages they have observed being selected.

Mr. Bradley said anecdotally they are observing other communities selecting 22.5%, but he can follow-up with more information.

Interim Superintendent Gill added that due to the inherent relationship with 4J, Bethel, and Springfield as it relates to enterprise zones, he is recommending a proposal authorizing the interim superintendent to connect with the respective school districts prior to negotiation.

2. LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE: FINALIZE INPUT ON 4J BOARD LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Ms. Newman thanked the BOD for sending their suggested priorities. She invited members to address any further changes to the document.

Interim Superintendent Gill highlighted the current service level model section. He noted that the language does not reflect the district's wishes to increase funding to ensure funding at an adequate level.

Chair Jonak requested adding "school nursing services" to the "increased funding and support for school-based health centers" section.

Ms. Rabasa suggested, regarding health and safety, being thoughtful about requesting statewide requirements.

Vice Chair Di Liberto suggested adding the language “sufficiently resourced” to that section.

Ms. Newman summarized that she is going to make the suggested edits and send them to the legislative subcommittee before finalizing.

3. LANE EDUCATION SERVICE DISTRICT (ESD) SCHOOL TRANSIT DOLLAR REQUEST FOR 2024/25

Finance Director Matt Brown presented information about the Lane Education Service District (ESD) school transit dollar request for 2024/25.

Mr. Brown explained that they are recommending the same option for the annual request.

Interim Superintendent Gill asked Mr. Brown to elaborate on the impact in terms of revenue for the school district.

Mr. Brown responded that it is just over \$2 million dollars of revenue received from ESD in relation to the services that the district is not receiving.

X. COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS BY INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Thessen mentioned that the Oregon School Activities Association (OSAA) has guidance about safety, tolerance, acceptance, and respect at school sporting events. She brought attention to school attendance by stating that it is important to consider student experience in relation to their attendance record. She suggested reaching out in order to better understand students’ absenteeism.

Vice Chair Di Liberto reported visiting district schools and shadowing a school nurse. He attended a virtual meeting with Oregon School-Based Health Alliance for a discussion about improving healthcare delivery within school districts.

Chair Jonak brought attention to a new invitation form, designed for inviting board members to visit district schools, departments, or transportation routes. She said that board members are grateful for opportunities to learn more about district work, appreciate the challenges, and celebrate the successes. She mentioned neurodiversity support nights, occurring the third Thursday of each month from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. at ECCO.

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

Vice Chair Di Liberto requested to reserve a time for Empower Ed (CTE class) to conduct a ten-minute presentation to the board. He suggested December 4, 2024, or February 5, 2025.

Ms. Newman requested information about the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program.

Chair Jonak requested a Friday memorandum on the SPED Advisory Council.

Chair Jonak requested a Friday memorandum on district nursing issues such as vacancies in staffing, outsourcing, and practice guidelines.

Chair Jonak suggested making the literacy resources referenced in the presentation about Division 22 available to K-5 charter schools.

XII. ADJORN

Chair Jonak adjourned the regular meeting at 9:11 p.m.



Colt Gill
District Clerk



Jenny Jonak
Board Chair

(Recorded by LCOG)
Approved on 11/06/2024