

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

Date: November 4, 2024

The Board of Directors (BOD) of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Oregon, held a special 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 November 1, 2024.

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jenny Jonak, Chair

Tom Di Liberto, Vice Chair

Maya Rabasa

Ericka Thessen

Judy Newman

Rick Hamilton

Morgan Munro

STAFF:

Colt Gill, Interim Superintendent

Carmen Xiomara Urbina, Chief of Staff

Kelly McIver, Communications Director

Debbie McKim, Executive Assistant to the Interim Superintendent and Board

EMPLOYEE GROUPS:

None.

OTHER:

Hank Harris, President at Human Capital Enterprises (HCE)

Robyn Bean, Consultant at Human Capital Enterprises (HCE)

Christy Perry, Consultant at Human Capital Enterprises (HCE) (online)

MEDIA:

KRVM

I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL

Chair Jenny Jonak called the special meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. She said the names of the board members who were present.

II. AGENDA APPROVAL

The agenda was approved as presented.

III. CONSENT GROUP – ITEMS FOR ACTION

There were none.

IV. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

1. SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH PLANNING MEETING WITH HUMAN CAPITAL ENTERPRISES

Chair Jenny Jonak introduced the topic of engaging in a Eugene School District 4J superintendent search with the search firm selected by the Board of Directors (BOD), Human Capital Enterprises (HCE). She welcomed HCE President Hank Harris, Consultant Robyn Bean, and Consultant Christy Perry.

At Ms. Bean's request, members of the BOD briefly described their background, including their relationship with 4J and how long they have served on the school board.

Ms. Bean noted that communication from the search firm will typically be distributed through the 4J Board Secretary and subcommittee Chair – BOD emails will be bcc'd. If individual board members have questions for HCE consultants, they may email them directly.

Ms. Bean discussed the timeline of activities. She referenced a handout in the meeting packet. The board and community engagement period will last through December 13, 2024. There is a written survey component which may be provided in English, Spanish, and other languages at the direction of the district. HCE anticipates engaging 20 focus groups. She added that in late-November, HCE is conducting a pre-announcement email blast to their 40,000-person list serve. They anticipate opening the application period during winter break, finalizing the superintendent criteria, and presenting a draft to the BOD the week of January 1, 2025. The BOD will then adopt the superintendent criteria at their next regular board meeting on January 15, 2025. She noted that the BOD will also be responsible for determining a salary range for the incoming superintendent.

Following the engagement period there will be an approximate five-week recruitment period, Ms. Bean explained. Thereafter, preliminary interviews will initiate the selection process. HCE will then identify eight to 12 top-tier candidates.

Mr. Harris mentioned that the BOD will have access to all the applications submitted, not just those with a top-tier rating from HCE.

In Executive Session, the BOD and HCE will review all the top-tier and board-identified candidates to determine which candidates will move forward in the interview process. They recommend selecting no more than eight candidates for the first round of interviews. Following the first round, the BOD will then deliberate and decide on finalists. They recommend selecting no more than three finalists for the second and final round of interviews. The final round of interviews typically takes two days, if three finalists are selected. Ms. Bean recommended a community stakeholder panel interview

format. The 4J superintendent selection is expected to be finalized by the end of March 2025, followed by the hiring of the new superintendent on July 1, 2025.

Ms. Bean opened the floor for questions.

Ms. Newman asked if background checks are conducted for all applicants, or just the finalists.

Ms. Bean responded that reference checks are conducted for all applicants, and background checks are conducted for finalists.

Mr. Harris spoke to the process in terms of when to enlist the superintendent search committee versus the entire BOD. They recommend that the subcommittee manage the determination of the makeup of the focus groups, salary range, calendar dates and timelines, and finalist week activities.

Chair Jonak requested, regarding the focus groups, that the subcommittee engage the BOD for final approval.

Mr. Harris responded affirmatively. He added that it would need to go before the board in a timely enough manner that it does not slow down the process.

Interim Superintendent Gill recommended that over the next 24-hours board members send ideas of communities they would like to see considered to the superintendent search committee Chair, Ms. Newman.

Vice Chair Di Liberto suggested circulating previous 4J information pertaining to focus groups.

Ms. Rabasa requested, regarding finalist week activities, that the subcommittee engage the BOD for final approval.

Ms. Bean responded affirmatively.

Ms. Munro shared her perspective that ideally the subcommittee will be a month or a couple weeks ahead. The final decision is with the BOD and logistics is handled by the subcommittee.

Ms. Bean introduced the topic of planning for focus groups. She referenced an addendum listing focus group ideas and initiated a brainstorming session.

Mr. Harris mentioned that each focus group is generally limited to six participants.

Ms. Rabasa asked how the six participants are selected.

Ms. Bean responded that selection is conducted a variety of ways – lottery, cohort selection, nomination, and/or a combination.

Ms. Perry noted that there are exceptions to the six-participant recommendation when a group is already formalized, such as in an existing advisory group.

Ms. Munro asked what the search firm is hoping to learn from the focus groups.

Ms. Bean responded that they ask three open ended questions:

1. What is going well at 4J?
2. What are the challenges 4J is facing?
3. What are the characteristics, attributes, background, and experience you want to see in the next 4J superintendent?

Ms. Thessen contributed the following community partners: Willamette Resources and Educational Network (WREN), Lane ESD, homeschool, private school, and charter school representatives, 4J Office of Student Wellbeing, 4J health center staff, and Lane County Behavioral Health.

Chair Jonak suggested the following community partners: disabled students and their parents, SPED classified staff and educators, and a private neuropsychologist. She added that they consider allowing more than six participants for the disability community focus group(s).

Ms. Munro commented that if audiences exist who historically do not fill out the survey it is imperative there is a focus group for them and a warm invitation to participate.

Ms. Perry responded that groups who generally respond less include parents who speak a second language or families that work two jobs.

Ms. Rabasa recommended including non-high school students. She suggested the following community partners: 15th Night, Connected Lane County, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Ms. Newman brought up forming topic-based focus groups based on things like student mental health or emotional wellbeing.

Ms. Bean recommended considering those types of groups in addition to stakeholder groups throughout the engagement process.

Mr. Hamilton asked how HCE engages the African American community.

Ms. Perry responded that they have engaged African American communities via phone calls from a principal or school representative, engaging with affinity spaces, and connecting with community-based organizations.

Following a short break, Mr. Harris brought up the topic of national versus regional search packages. Regional searches focus specifically on Oregon and Washington,

including those with experience who are no longer living in the Pacific Northwest. National searches cover a wider network and cost \$4,700 more than regional searches.

After a short discussion, there was consensus in favor of a national superintendent search.

Mr. Harris asked the BOD if all candidates, whether internal or external, get held to the same criteria and follow the exact same process.

There was consensus that what Mr. Harris stated is correct.

Ms. Bean stated that if candidates were to reach out to board members, to please refer them to the search firm consultants.

Interim Superintendent Gill asked how board members can welcome potential candidates to apply.

Ms. Bean responded that board members should let the search firm consultants know and they will initiate the outreach.

Mr. Harris noted that if lobbyists were to reach out to board members, to please refer them to the search firm consultants.

Mr. Harris introduced the topic of publicity, specifically whether to reveal the names of the finalists or not. He referenced a handout provided in the meeting packet stating their recommendation and opened the floor for questions.

Chair Jonak asked about the quality and number of candidates in a closed versus open search.

Mr. Harris responded that if a sitting superintendent is enjoying a good relationship with their community, there is a high risk for them applying for the open superintendent search at 4J, as their name will be made public. He cited experienced superintendents questioning if a search is going to be open or not.

Ms. Rabasa said that a closed search feels uncomfortable for her as a community member but as a board member she feels that it may serve as a reduction in barriers for the goal of diversifying the applicant pool. She recommended at least three focus groups.

Ms. Munro asked how they ensure that a confidential process receives the same benefits as an open process.

Ms. Perry responded that in one instance they asked stakeholders to be part of the announcement. They also recommend meet and greets with the interim superintendent.

Ms. Newman asked how input is taken regarding the confidential community panel.

Mr. Harris responded that typically a group of twelve starts a day with an orientation, followed by signing an affidavit, and an interview for each of the three finalists.

Following that, community members engage in a discussion with the search firm consultants about the individual finalists. He explained that the role of the panelist is to provide direct feedback to the board on each of the three finalists on their own assessment as correlated to the criteria. He added that there is a personal survey component as well.

Ms. Rabasa asked what measures are taken to protect the identity of internal candidates.

Mr. Harris responded that their firm and the BOD are bound by confidentiality. The individual candidates themselves are not.

Ms. Munro asked if they have previously included a panel of students.

Ms. Bean responded that they have always had two students on every panel, and it could be incorporated into a confidential search.

Interim Superintendent Gill brought up hybridizing the lotteries so that the three panelist groups match the demographics of the students 4J serves.

After a lengthy discussion, there was consensus in favor of a closed superintendent search.

Ms. Bean introduced the topic of residency expectations. She asked the BOD if they expect the new superintendent to reside within the boundaries of the district.

Ms. Munro responded that while she likes the idea of the new superintendent residing within the 4J community, the cost of living within district boundaries can be challenging.

Vice Chair Di Liberto agreed with Ms. Munro's statement.

Chair Jonak stated that she would strongly prefer them to live in Eugene, but commuting from somewhere like Pleasant Hill, Cottage Grove, or Veneta would not be a deal breaker for her.

Ms. Newman echoed Chair Jonak's statement.

Ms. Rabasa and Ms. Thessen both expressed a strong preference for an incoming superintendent residing within the 4J community.

Vice Chair Di Liberto suggested addressing the issue of residency expectations on a case-by-case basis.

Ms. Bean voiced support.

Ms. Bean closed the meeting by stating that the formal interview is somewhat yet to be determined except that it would be more widely impacted had the BOD selected an open search process. She added that the BOD will weigh in on the number and constitution of community panels.

V. ITEMS FOR ACTION

There were none.

VI. ITEMS FOR ACTION AT A FUTURE MEETING

There were none.

VII. ADJORN

Chair Jonak adjourned the special meeting at 8:56 p.m.



Colt Gill
District Clerk



Jenny Jonak
Board Chair

(Recorded by LCOG)

Approved on 11/20/2024