

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

Date: January 8, 2025

The Board of Directors (BOD) of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Oregon, held a work 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 January 3, 2025.

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jenny Jonak, Chair

Tom Di Liberto, Vice Chair

Maya Rabasa

Ericka Thessen

Judy Newman

Morgan Munro

Rick Hamilton

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF:

Interim Superintendent Colt Gill

Carmen Xiomara Urbina, Chief of Staff

Kelly McIver, Communications Director

Brooke Wagner, Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services

Lisa Fjordbeck, Operations Coordinator for the Superintendent's Office

Debbie McKim, Executive Assistant to the Interim Superintendent and Board

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:

None.

EMPLOYEE GROUPS:

Sabrina Gordon, Eugene Education Association (EEA)

Bobbie Willis, Eugene Education Association (EEA)

OTHER GUESTS:

Hank Harris, Human Capital Enterprises (HCE) (online)

Robyn Bean, Human Capital Enterprises (HCE)

Christy Perry, Human Capital Enterprises (HCE)

MEDIA:

KRVM

I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Chair Jonak called the work session to order at 6:01 p.m. She said the names of the board members who were present and read the land acknowledgement statement.

II. AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Jonak requested adding a revision of the Board of Director's (BOD) working agreement to be consistent with Policy BDDC. The agenda was approved as amended.

III. COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE REGARDING THE NEXT SUPERINTENDENT CRITERIA

Chair Jonak read the rules of engagement for public comment.

Alexander Aghdaei, community member and employee at the nonprofit Stand for Children, spoke virtually about the selection criteria for the next Eugene School District 4J superintendent. He was surprised that the criteria did not refer to academic achievement. He described Oregon school districts struggling to rebound academically after the pandemic; he specifically cited literacy and math. He mentioned the implementation of a number of new and effective programs supported by the State. He urged selecting a superintendent who will continue those programs and center academic achievement.

Anna Ingram, 4J parent, stated virtually that she was disappointed there was no mention of literacy in the selection criteria for the next 4J superintendent. She explained that the district has slowly been moving in the right direction regarding reading instruction. To keep the momentum going, she recommended a superintendent who will support good reading instruction based on The Science of Reading curriculum. She added that the superintendent should understand and support the role of academic coaches at the elementary level. Ms. Ingram highlighted the connection between literacy and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

IV. COMMENTS BY EMPLOYEE GROUPS

Bobbie Willis, Eugene Education Association (EEA) member and 4J educator, explained that she was part of a secondary educators focus group for the next 4J superintendent search. She offered the following criteria based on their focus group discussion: a superintendent who trusts educators, understands the ripple effects of the pandemic, possesses a clear leadership structure, stands for educators as educators stand for students, and is fun and joyful, thereby raising morale.

V. CONSENT GROUP – ITEMS FOR ACTION

1. APPROVE BOARD MEETING DRAFT MINUTES FOR: NOVEMBER 20, 2024

WORK SESSION AND DECEMBER 4, 2024 REGULAR MEETING

No discussion was held.

2. APPROVE WHOLE EARTH OUTDOOR SCHOOL CONTRACT FOR SPRING 2025

No discussion was held.

3. APPROVE BOND PROJECT – KELLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL ROOFING

No discussion was held.

4. APPROVE BOND PROJECT – ADAMS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ROOF COATINGS

No discussion was held.

5. REVISION OF WORKING AGREEMENT TO BE CONSISTENT WITH POLICY BDDC.

Ms. Munro requested more information about revision of the Board's working agreement to be consistent with Policy BDDC.

Chair Jonak responded that Policy BDDC involves the process for agenda setting. She added that the Board does not currently possess the revisions. Item 5 is to direct that revisions be made to be consistent with the policy.

Interim Superintendent Gill recommended adding Item 5 to a future agenda, so that the Board may review the revisions before approval.

Ms. Munro responded in favor of Interim Superintendent Gill's recommendation.

MOTION: Vice Chair Di Liberto moved to approve the Consent Group, minus Item 5. 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: Vice Chair Di Liberto moved to revisit Consent Group Item 5 in a future meeting. Ms. Rabasa 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.**

VI. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

None.

VII. ITEMS FOR ACTION

None.

VIII. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AT A FUTURE MEETING

1. PRESENTATION OF EUGENE SCHOOL DISTRICT 4J'S NEXT

SUPERINTENDENT CRITERIA AND CONFIDENTIAL COMMUNITY INTERVIEW PANELS

Chair Jonak introduced Ad Hoc Superintendent Search Board Subcommittee members: Vice Chair Di Liberto, Ms. Newman, and Ms. Munro; and Human Capital Enterprises (HCE) consultants: Robyn Bean, Christy Perry, and Hank Harris (online).

Ms. Newman reported that on March 10, 2025, three confidential community engagement interview panels will be supporting interviews for finalists in the superintendent search. There is expected to be a total of 39 panelists. More details about panelist membership are available in the Board Book and via email. Ms. Newman requested that the Board give special attention to a proposal regarding panelist appointments versus lottery and email her their questions or suggestions. The Ad Hoc Superintendent Search Subcommittee is scheduled to meet next on January 13, 2025.

Ms. Newman invited HCE superintendent search consultants to report on the process of selecting criteria for the next 4J superintendent.

HCE consultants presented draft criteria for the next 4J superintendent via PowerPoint presentation.

Ms. Bean shared a high-level overview of the engagement period. There were 1480 total respondents, detailed below:

- Focus Groups
 - 73 staff
 - 34 students
 - 25 parents
 - 22 community members
- Survey Responses
 - 318 staff
 - 589 students
 - 367 parents
 - 52 community members

Based off the data collected, Ms. Bean noted “Pride Points” or themes within 4J:

- Dedicated and caring staff
- Inclusivity and equity efforts
- Community collaboration
- Support for Special Education (SPED)
- Innovative programs and curriculum
- Student voice and leadership opportunities

- Mental health and social-emotional learning supports
- Access to free meals and nutritional programs
- Commitment to improvement under current leadership

Based off the data collected, Ms. Bean noted the following challenges and complexities within 4J:

- Communication and transparency
- Equity gaps
- Staffing shortages and retention (specifically SPED, substitutes, and bus drivers)
- Support for SPED
- Behavior, Mental Health Supports, and Student Safety (specifically addressing mental health needs, racism and bullying, resources for trauma-informed care, and increasing safety in high school bathrooms)
- Administrative and organizational challenges including systemic trust issues
- Budget constraints
- Curriculum and instructional challenges

Ms. Bean reported that the search firm then asked each respondent to identify characteristics, background, skills, and attributes for the next 4J superintendent—resulting in a draft detailing the next superintendent criteria.

Ms. Bean presented the draft to the Board. She posed the following questions:

- Are there things in the document that should be omitted?
- Are there things that are not in the document that should be added?
- Are there changes to the document that you would like to see?

Ms. Rabasa recommended that the “student centered” bullet point be listed sooner on the draft.

Chair Jonak suggested that the “SPED” bullet point be listed sooner on the draft.

Ms. Newman said that they may consider stating at the top of the draft that there is no order of importance reflected in the document.

There was Board consensus that there are no omissions necessary in the draft.

The Board brainstormed the following potential additions to the draft:

- Sense of academic excellence
- Literacy
- Accountability
- Strong and measurable learning outcomes

- Prepare students for their futures
- Prioritizing lived experience (in SPED and across district)
- Self-advocacy
- Wellbeing
- Integrity
- Visionary, strategic, and effective leadership
- Accessibility to staff
- Trusting of staff
- Collaboration and improving working relationships with and across employee groups
- Follow-through resulting in measurable improvements
- Organizational understanding
- Fosters teamwork, partnerships, and systems
- Sets staff up for success
- English Language Development (ELD) students
- Critical thinking in a large and complex organization
- Valuing and cultivating relationships
- Valuing joyful learning
- Supporting effective SPED practices

The Board refined language to the following bullet points:

- Visionary and Strategic Leadership
- Unwavering Dedication to Equity and Inclusion
- Collaborative Leadership
- Demonstrated Problem-Solving and Decision-Making Skills
- Student-Centered
- Approachable, Visible, and Empathetic
- Special Education Knowledge and Expertise

The BOD and HCE consultants collaboratively reviewed the draft next superintendent criteria, ultimately reaching consensus by wordsmithing language, finalizing content, and determining the order of bullet points.

HCE consultants will report back to the BOD with a refined draft of the next superintendent criteria for final approval at their next meeting on January 15, 2025.

2. UNITED FRONT TRAVEL APPROVAL

Chair Jonak introduced approval of United Front Travel for the purpose of 4J representative(s) participating in an annual trip to Washington D.C. for in-person meetings with Oregon's congressional delegation, federal departments, and nonprofit

groups. Past work has resulted in favorable regulations to help schools provide nutritious, free meals; legislation to expand Career Technical Education (CTE) opportunities; access funds to enhance school safety; and dedicate funding for summer learning and academic enrichment. Typically, the Chair attends as Board representative. Due to related travel expenses, Policy BHD requires full Board approval.

Chair Jonak noted that action will be taken at a future meeting.

IX. ADJORN

Chair Jonak adjourned the work session at 7:58 p.m.



Colt Gill
District Clerk



Jenny Jonak
Board Chair

(Recorded by LCOG)
Approved on 01/22/2025