

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

Date: February 19, 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 February 14, 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:

None.

STAFF:

Colt Gill, Interim Superintendent

Carmen Xiomara Urbina, Chief of Staff

Kelly McIver, Communications Director

Jen Bills, Director of School Safety and Emergency Management

Cassandra Kamens, Curriculum Administrator and Charter School Liaison

Brooke Wagner, Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services

Lisa Fjordbeck, Operations Coordinator for the Superintendent's Office

Cynthia Calletano, Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff and Board

Debbie McKim, Executive Assistant to the Interim Superintendent and Board

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:

None.

EMPLOYEE GROUPS:

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

OTHER GUESTS:

Christine Nesbit, General Counsel

Sharon Marino, Upbeat Leadership Coach (online)

Kylie Shapiro-Davis, Upbeat COO (online)
Justine Martinez, Upbeat Program Manager (online)

MEDIA:

KRVM

Register Guard (online)

I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Chair Jonak called the work session to order at 6:08 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. COMMENTS BY EMPLOYEE GROUPS

Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) President Lisa Jenkins-Easton acknowledged that the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with OSEA for transportation employees (Item 2 on the consent agenda) was completely quickly. She thanked the district on behalf of transportation department employees and added that hopefully the recruitment efforts will go well.

IV. CONSENT GROUP – ITEMS FOR ACTION

1. APPROVE THE DRAFT 2025-27 LANE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DISTRICT (ESD) LOCAL SERVICE PLAN

There was no discussion.

2. APPROVE THE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH OSEA CHAPTER 1 – TRANSPORTATION, RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, REFERRAL, AND RECOGNITION

Chair Jonak expressed appreciation to OSEA on behalf of the Board of Directors (BOD) for making the MOA possible for transportation. She said they recognize how important transportation staff are to Eugene School District 4J and its students. She said they are grateful for the agreement and the leadership that made it possible.

3. APPROVE BOND PROJECT – MULTI-SITE SECURITY VESTIBULES

There was no discussion.

4. APPROVE BOND PROJECT – MULTI-SITE SECURITY FENCING

There was no discussion.

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

V. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

1. RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE UPBEAT STAFF SURVEY

Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services Brooke Wagner, Sharon Marino, Upbeat Leadership Coach, (online), Kylie Shapiro-Davis, Upbeat COO (online), and Justine Martinez, Upbeat Program Manager (online) provided a report on the Upbeat Staff Survey via PowerPoint presentation.

Ms. Wagner provided background information, explaining that the district has been in partnership with Upbeat for the past two and a half years. Upbeat supports the district by gathering data (e.g. teacher and staff surveys) twice per year to inform goals and decision-making.

Ms. Martinez, Ms. Marino, and Ms. Shapiro-Davis introduced themselves and provided relevant personal background information.

Ms. Shapiro-Davis explained that Upbeat was informed by a team of professors who identified the key areas that impact teacher and employee retention within K-12 school districts and developed research-backed surveys. She said that Upbeat partners with school districts to administer the surveys. After the surveys are administered, they develop an action plan and provide coaching to administrators and principals. She pointed out that all their coaches are former principals or administrators. Coaches identify bright spots in the data as well as areas to be improved upon. She reported that 98% of district leaders said that meeting with an Upbeat leadership coach helped them accomplish their goals as leaders.

Ms. Shapiro-Davis outlined Upbeat improvement cycle, as follows:

1. Survey
2. Analysis
3. Dialogue
4. Support
5. Action

Ms. Shapiro-Davis introduced a table titled “Survey Domains and Retention,” highlighting that when positive perceptions of belonging and wellbeing increase by 10% at a school, individual teacher retention increases by 5.5%. In other words, as the Upbeat engagement scores increase, teacher retention rates increase. They have also identified a link between Upbeat engagement scores and higher student achievement.

Regarding Eugene School District 4J, Upbeat and the district began their partnership in Fall 2022. Surveys were administered through Fall 2024. District survey participation rates have ranged between 46% and 78%. Participation rates for teachers, as opposed to other staff, were most consistent.

Ms. Marino highlighted data revealing 4J teacher strengths. For teachers, the average engagement score is 73. The top three areas to celebrate include satisfaction and purpose, teacher voice and leadership, and equal opportunities. She noted that satisfaction and purpose is one of the top three indicators that impact teacher retention and equal opportunities is of the top five indicators.

She highlighted data revealing school-based staff strengths. For school-based staff, the average engagement score is 69. The top three areas to celebrate include belonging and wellbeing, satisfaction and purpose, and equal opportunities.

She highlighted data revealing department-based staff strengths. For department-based staff, the average engagement score is 63. The top three areas to celebrate include belonging and wellbeing, satisfaction and purpose, and equal opportunities.

Ms. Munro requested that longitudinal data be shared with the BOD in the future.

Ms. Wagner responded affirmatively.

Ms. Marino highlighted data revealing areas of opportunities for teachers, school-based staff, and department-based staff. The top two areas of opportunity are professional development and appreciation. She noted that both professional development and appreciation have less impact on teacher retention and satisfaction. She noted that 68% of teachers, 62% of school-based staff, and 49% of department-based staff agreed that when they are recognized publicly, they do outstanding work.

Ms. Marino highlighted data revealing teacher growth from Fall 2023 through Fall 2024. She brought attention to reported increases in the following areas: school safety and order, work/life balance, and belonging and wellbeing. 15 of the 18 categories improved over that time period.

Ms. Marino said that concerning district middle schools, professional development was identified as an area of opportunity. Regarding district elementary schools, appreciation was identified as an area of opportunity. As a response to the needs identified, Upbeat coaches, alongside principals, successfully developed key strategies to increase professional development opportunities and appreciation within the schools.

Ms. Martinez reported that principal and supervisor feedback revealed that 100% agree that Upbeat reports are high quality, 100% agree that Upbeat is responsive to questions and concerns, and 88% agree that Upbeat coaching is helpful.

She mentioned that district staff will be surveyed again in Spring 2025. Following that, Upbeat will share the results with the executive cabinet and meet with principals to review the results.

Ms. Marino invited questions from the BOD.

Vice Chair Di Liberto requested a fuller set of data, specifically the questions posed in surveys. He suggested sharing the data with staff members.

Ms. Wagner explained that the data is already being used by principals to create their school continuous improvement plans.

Interim Superintendent Gill pointed out that the Upbeat team supports the principals in reporting data back to staff members.

Ms. Munro asked if there was any refining feedback or frustration provided on behalf of staff as it relates to the Upbeat surveys.

Ms. Shapiro-Davis said they received feedback regarding the timing (i.e. time of year) of the surveys.

Ms. Martinez added that they are working on improving communications and clarity.

Ms. Munro asked how long it takes to fill out the survey.

Ms. Martinez responded that the survey takes ten to fifteen minutes.

Ms. Newman asked how many questions are in the survey.

Ms. Wagner responded that there are roughly 60 questions in the survey. She added that it is voluntary and anonymous.

Chair Jonak asked if they are equally focusing on areas of improvement for all teachers and departments.

Ms. Wagner confirmed that they are.

Ms. Rabasa asked if the district knows why the department-based staff tend to participate at a significantly lower rate.

Ms. Shapiro-Davis responded that it appears that typically departmental staff include transportation or cafeteria workers who may not have access to a district laptop or might not be checking their emails often. The Upbeat survey is accessible on a mobile phone.

Ms. Wagner added that it is an area of opportunity for the district.

Ms. Rabasa asked the survey includes open-ended questions.

Ms. Shapiro-Davis responded that traditionally it does not.

Ms. Rabasa asked if the district has compared engagement scores and possible increases with teacher rates and/or student success.

Ms. Wagner cited retention data included in the cover sheet, she said they have not, but can, do a cross reference with student data.

Chair Jonak thanked Ms. Wagner and the Upbeat team.

**2. CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REVIEWS FOR THE FOLLOWING:
COBURG COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL, NETWORK CHARTER
SCHOOL, RIDGELINE MONTESSORI PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL, TWIN
RIVERS CHARTER SCHOOL, VILLAGE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL**

Curriculum Administrator and Charter School Liaison Casandra Kamens presented information related to charter school sponsor responsibilities via PowerPoint presentation.

Ms. Kamens explained that the district has sponsored charter schools since the year 2000. Charter schools are operated by a group of parents, teachers, and/or community members as a semi-autonomous school of choice within a school district. It is given the opportunity to operate under a contract or “charter” between the members of the charter school community and the local board of education (sponsor).

Charter schools are subject to certain laws pertaining to school district public schools and must operate consistently with the charter agreement. She referenced ORS Chapter 338 and ORS Chapter 581. She said that charter schools have their own school board and policies and for the most part funding goes through the district.

Interim Superintendent Gill added that in Oregon all charter schools are public charter schools.

Ms. Kamens reminded the BOD of 4J’s charter schools: Ridgeline Montessori, Village School, Coburg Community, Network, and Twin Rivers.

She outlined the following Administrative Rules (ARs) regarding charter schools: looking over new charter proposals, annual charter agreement review, charter school renewal and/or termination.

Charter school council includes a charter school liaison, student services department administrator, Director of Data and Research, Associate Director of Finance, Assistant Superintendent of Youth and Family Services, and a 4J BOD representative. The charter council meets quarterly with all charter schools, visit sites annually, and facilitates renewals as needed.

Ms. Kamens described the core sponsoring district oversight requirements:

1. Academic Program Oversight
2. Contract and Legal Compliance
3. Special Education Services
4. Financial Oversight
5. Annual Evaluation Process

Ms. Kamens detailed the annual charter review process, as follows: financial reporting, academic performance, annual school visit, self-reflection and SIP (school improvement plan), and self-assessment. Ms. Kamens then puts together individual annual reviews to present to the BOD. Annual reviews are typically presented near the start of the calendar year. They include the following components: SIP summary, goals for next year's SIP, state school report card, site visit summary, financial review, contractual agreements, findings, commendations, and recommendations, and data appendix.

Vice Chair Di Liberto asked if a student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that requires a self-contained classroom, is the student less likely to receive those services at a charter school?

Ms. Kamens replied that they would conduct a placement review to ensure that the charter school has/can provide what is necessary. She said it is possible that a charter school would not be a good fit. She added that there is language in the contract to ensure that students with IEPs can receive the services necessary.

Vice Chair Di Liberto asked if that is different from district non-charter schools.

Ms. Kamens said that from her experience as an administrator there is always a question of whether a school can provide services for a student in a certain location. Thus, there is always a placement review/meeting.

Chair Jonak brought attention to achievement gaps between disabled students and the general population. She asked how the district is partnering with charter schools to help.

Ms. Kamens responded that it is not her area of expertise but mentioned that the district works closely with educators and Educational Assistants (EAs).

Interim Superintendent Gill added that charter schools receive accommodations and modifications throughout the school day as prescribed in IEPs. He said there is probably room for more collaboration around special education. He mentioned that charter schools are designed to inform school districts to improve their outcomes through experimental models and reiterated that there is more space for the district to learn from and support charter schools.

Ms. Munro asked Ms. Kamens to speak to the difference between graduation rates at district charter school high schools.

Ms. Kamens responded that both district charter high schools are small. Twin Rivers has 60 students, with a senior class of typically 12 students. She said when 12 students represent 100% of the data, all it takes is one of the students to drop the graduation rate significantly. She added that higher mobility rates (i.e. students moving in and out) do impact the score.

Ms. Munro asked about credit recovery at charter schools.

Ms. Kamens responded that there is a high school extended day program for students to participate in credit recovery classes. They are currently in conversation about a summer credit recovery program in-person and/or in addition to online.

Ms. Newman asked how the number of 4J charter schools compare with other districts.

Ms. Kamens responded that she does not know.

Ms. Newman asked for clarification regarding the frequency of charter school reviews.

Ms. Kamens responded that if a charter school was not in compliance with the contract, the annual review would be an opportunity to address it. Other than the annual review, there is the five-year renewal. She added that at any point in time, terminations may be considered.

Ms. Kamens ended by stating that while charter high school data does not always look great, she has witnessed significant effort and progress over the past four years.

Ms. Munro and Ms. Thessen both commented on the positive feedback they received and the positive interactions they witnessed during site visits to district charter schools.

VI. ITEMS FOR ACTION

1. ADOPT POLICY KJG – TRIBAL CONSULTATION

Interim Superintendent Gill recommended a change in language from Native American/Alaskan Native (NAAN) to American Indians/Alaskan Natives (AIAN) in Policy KJG – Tribal Consultation.

MOTION: Vice Chair Di Liberto moved to approve Policy KJG as amended. Mr. Hamilton seconded. **Chair Jonak, Vice Chair Di Liberto, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Thessen, Ms. Newman, Ms. Munro, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor.**

2. ADOPT NEW BOARD POLICY EBCA – SAFETY THREATS

Director of School Safety and Emergency Management Jen Bills recommended one amendment (removing lockouts) and the adoption of Policy EBCA – Safety Threats.

MOTION: Ms. Munro moved to approve Policy EBCA as amended. Ms. Thessen seconded. **Chair Jonak, Vice Chair Di Liberto, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Thessen, Ms. Newman, Ms. Munro, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor.**

3. APPROVE REVISIONS TO BOARD POLICY EBCB – EMERGENCY PROCEDURE DRILLS AND INSTRUCTION (SECOND READ)

Ms. Bills recommended the adoption of Policy EBCB – Emergency Procedure Drills and Instruction.

Ms. Bills noted that the only change was removing terminology related to lockouts.

Ms. Rabasa requested definitions related to the policy, particularly for parents. She said the request is based off feedback previously provided by parents.

Interim Superintendent Gill responded that he is nervous about the terms being in policy as the terms change over time. He suggested that the terms go into an AR where they can be updated quickly. He added that when a school goes into a status, district protocol is to notify the families, including providing definitions.

Ms. Munro noted that some relevant information is listed on the district website.

MOTION: Ms. Rabasa made a motion to postpone approving revisions to Policy EBCB. Ms. Thessen seconded. **The motion passed 5:2:0; Chair Jonak, Vice Chair Di Liberto, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Thessen, Ms. Newman voting in favor; Ms. Munro and Mr. Hamilton voting against.**

4. APPROVE REVISIONS TO POLICY GCDA/GDDA – CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK AND FINGERPRINTING (SECOND READ)

Ms. Bills introduced revisions to Policy GCDA/GDDA – Criminal Records Check and Fingerprinting. The revision relates to associated fees, specifically that fingerprinting fees shall be paid for by the individual and criminal records checks shall be paid for by the district.

MOTION: Ms. Munro moved to approve revisions to Policy GCDA/GDDA. Ms. Thessen seconded. **Chair Jonak, Vice Chair Di Liberto, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Thessen, Ms. Newman, Ms. Munro, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor.**

VII. ITEMS FOR ACTION AT A FUTURE MEETING

1. CONSIDER FOR APPROVAL REVISIONS TO POLICY KL—PUBLIC COMPLAINTS (FIRST READ)

Chief of Staff Carmen Xiomara Urbina and General Counsel Christine Nesbit presented revisions to Policy KL – Public Complaints via PowerPoint presentation.

Ms. Urbina explained changes to the public complaint process are being recommended not only to center students but to align with legal compliance, provide further clarity and accessibility, reflect the district’s commitment to equity, transparency, and accountability, and to ensure that the BOD, rather than the superintendent, adopts procedures for complaints against Board members or the superintendent.

Ms. Urbina said the new policy focuses on building trust, removing barriers, aligning with Division 22 standards, and strengthening oversight. She added that the new policy aligns with 4J's core values of respect and dignity, relationships and accessibility, honesty and transparency, integrity and accountability, and equity and fairness.

Ms. Nesbit spoke about the importance of making the complaint process visible on the district website. She described key changes to Policy KL, including that the former policy did not contain a values statement and placed emphasis on a "universal" complaint procedure. They are proposing explicitly stating that the district will apply unique procedures when appropriate.

She said the former policy contained outdated references to complaint types that could be appealed to the Oregon Department of Education (ODE). The new policy updates references and ensures fact-finding and timelines.

Ms. Nesbit explained that the former policy created a default 4-step complaint escalation process up to Board *unless* the procedure KL-AR specified otherwise. The new policy directs that the AR will allow consideration of complaint at the appropriate level of accountability.

She said the former policy provided that complaints against the superintendent be referred to the Board Chair on behalf of the Board. The new policy is a correction to governance.

Ms. Nesbit explained that the former policy did not contain details about processing complaints against the Board or individual members nor did it define complaint types. The new policy acknowledges that Board members are elected officials and that accountability for actions and policy positions lies with voters, including the use of legal counsel or a third-party investigator.

She said the former policy included timelines for complaint filing in AR, but not in policy. The new policy brings timelines for complaint filing into policy.

Ms. Nesbit added that they are considering an AR related to workplace complaints.

Ms. Urbina and Ms. Nesbit received policy language suggestions from the BOD.

VIII. ADJORN

Chair Jonak adjourned the work session at 9:00 p.m.



Colt Gill
District Clerk



Jenny Jonak
Board Chair

(Recorded by LCOG)
Approved on 04/16/2025