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

Date: April 16, 2025

The Board of Directors (BOD) of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Oregon, held a regular board 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 April 11, 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
Christine Nesbit, General Counsel
Lisa Fjordbeck, Operations Coordinator for the Superintendent's Office
Brooke Wagner, Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services
Jennifer Bills, Director of School Safety and Emergency Management
Larry Williams, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction
Mary Poppen, Willagillespie Elementary School Music Teacher and Choir Director
Cynthia Calletano, Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff
Debbie McKim, Executive Assistant to the Interim Superintendent and Board

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:
Sheridan Schilling, Churchill High School
Carmen Gonzalez Valle, Sheldon High School
Cora Ludwig, South Eugene High School
Deeya Patel, South Eugene High School
Katheryn Hehman, International High School (IHS) at South Eugene High School
Gabi Klarr, International High School (IHS) at Sheldon High School

Lane Lowd, Eugene Online Academy (EOA) (online)
Autumn Thessen, Early College and Career Options (ECCO) (online)

EMPLOYEE GROUPS:
Lisa Jenkins-Easton, Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA)
Liz Johnson, Eugene Education Association (EEA)

OTHER GUESTS:
None

MEDIA:
KRVM
Register Guard

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

Chair Jonak called the regular board meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. She said the names of the Board members present and read a land acknowledgment statement.

II. AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Jonak requested to move the Willagillespie Elementary School Choir performance to follow the agenda approval. The agenda was approved as amended.

III. WILLAGILLESPIE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHOIR PERFORMANCE

Willagillespie Elementary School Music Teacher and Choir Director Mary Poppen conducted a series of songs featuring Willagillespie choir students.

IV. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Interim Superintendent Colt Gill acknowledged that Eugene School District 4J is experiencing a difficult budget season. He said the district must reduce spending to come in closer alignment with revenue sources. This year the district is spending roughly $29 million more than the district will receive in revenue in order to operate. The district's reserves cannot maintain that level of expenditure into the future. He said reducing spending impacts students and staff, even when trying to avoid it to the greatest extent possible. Interim Superintendent Gill explained that the budget process is a dynamic one, guided by a 14-member Budget Committee. The budget will ultimately be adopted by the Board of Directors (BOD) on May 21, 2025. The district is providing an online weekly budget update every Friday at *4J.lane.edu/budget*.

V. RECEIVE REPORTS FROM HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Lane Lowd, EOA, reported that students are undergoing midterms and working toward ending the school year. He said EOA is steadily becoming more integrated with the BOD.

Cora Ludwig and Deeya Patel, South Eugene High School, announced the following upcoming events: South's Got Talent happening on May 21, Prom on April 19, and Spring Fest on April 24, 2025. They mentioned that spring sports are well underway.

Autumn Thessen, ECCO, welcomed the new 4J superintendent, Dr. Miriam Mickelson. She said that ECCO appreciated the student chats and requested participation in future chats. She announced that Prom is happening on May 17, 2025.

Sheridan Schilling, Churchill High School, spoke on the topic of the new 4J superintendent. She reported that students have expressed wanting a superintendent they can see and interact with, one who represents their best interests, and a superintendent who will be in the district for the long term. Ms. Schilling thanked Interim Superintendent Gill for his leadership. She raised concern about district budget cuts. For example, Churchill National Honor Society may not be a possibility next year due to staffing shortages. She brought attention to the relatively high number of 4J administrative level positions compared with other Oregon school districts.

Carmen Gonzalez Valle, Sheldon High School, reported on the progress of the Native garden, varsity choir qualifying for State, flag football, tennis, and track and field. She said students are currently organizing the PRIDE Festival and Pink Prom. She announced that Sheldon Prom is happening on May 10, 2025.

Katheryn Hehman and Gabi Klarr, IHS, explained that C days tend to be an inefficient use of class time and are seen as a wasted day by students and staff. They encouraged the BOD to review it further. Regarding weekly grade reports, students are reporting that the grades are often inaccurate and do not provide a complete view, resulting in damage to student welfare and mental health. They urged the BOD to remove the policy. They announced that the IHS Annual Celebration is happening on May 19, 2025.

VI. ITEMS RAISED BY THE AUDIENCE

Eileen Thomas, 4J Literacy Intervention Specialist, advocated for preserving positions at district elementary schools. She said the Walk to Read program ensures strong Tier 1 teaching and targeted support and enrichment for students. She has trained 26 teachers, 2 coaches, and 18 educational assistants (EAs). She advocated for preserving EAs specifically, stating that eliminating them would negatively affect over 900 first graders. She said the long-term cost would far outweigh the short-term savings, as students behind in reading in the first grade have a 70% chance of still being behind in the fourth grade.

Angie Gee, 4J employee, voiced opposition to eliminating Family Resource Coordinator positions. She explained that the programs offered have proven to be successful. She described the type of advocacy being provided for families and students, such as assistance meeting basic needs. She said if the positions were to be removed from the schools, she does not believe that families would go to a central location for resources.

Valerie Blood, 4J parent, commented in opposition to eliminating district positions, stating that during an average school day her elementary aged child receives support from four EAs, three teachers, one healthcare provider, one secretary, one custodian, and one

food services coordinator. She said that moving employees from one school to another is not a good way to retain employees. She cited potential cuts to nutrition services, stating that hungry students will require behavioral support. She urged examining the salaries of the executive leadership team and prioritizing positions within school buildings.

Caleb Kostechka, 4J parent and former 4J educator, advocated for a districtwide ban on cellphone use throughout the entire school day. He described how cellphones have shifted from being a minor distraction to one of the biggest obstacles to teaching, learning, and student wellbeing. He said cellphones fuel bullying, spread rumors, and are used to coordinate fights. He said a ban would be a way to give students back their focus, their friendships, and their mental space. Mr. Kostechka said districts across Oregon are already making the shift and encouraged the BOD to consider implementing a policy.

Max Irving, 4J educator and Unified Coordinator, advocated for more support for Unified programming. He stated that when Unified is framed solely as a special education initiative, it unintentionally reinforces the divisions the program is designed to break down. He said Unified belongs within athletics, student leadership, and in the heart of school culture. He urged districtwide support, such as consistent district-level stipends for coordinators, coaching pay for events that take place outside of the regular school day, funding for a Unified Coordinator, access to student investment accounts, and reinstatement of the physical education (PE) specialist position.

Nancy Nelson (online), 4J parent, shared concerns about the school lottery, specifically as it relates to International High School admission. She provided a personal story for context before requesting that the BOD consider modification of the IHS lottery to better support families, address inequities, and prioritize access for IHS students who are interested in earning the IB diploma.

Roscoe Caron (online), Community Alliance for Public Education (CAPE) representative, spoke on the topic of testing in education. He provided relevant background information. Mr. Caron challenged the effectiveness of the testing and data centered system, questioning whether it negatively impacts children's emotional health, teacher job satisfaction, and narrows the breadth of the curriculum. He proposed that members of the BOD publicly take the eighth-grade math and science tests and the eleventh-grade language arts test. He pointed out that over 100 tests are required of 4J students.

Rio Annsa, 4J parent, commented in opposition to eliminating district positions. She said 261 signatures were gathered at Chavez Elementary School in opposition to the proposed decision. She said the proposal to combine the work of Family Resource Coordinators into a centralized location does not address the day-to-day on-site support for families lacking food, clothing, and shelter. She said a central office is incapable of providing that

level of relationship-based service. She urged reassessing the proposal and to preserve Family Resource Coordination positions within school buildings.

Karen Bowe, 4J parent, spoke about the existing homework policy which was implemented during the pandemic. Ms. Bowe said that the policy removes all decision-making from teachers regarding how to handle late work. She said there are multiple issues at play with the question of late work, including equity and workflow issues. She suggested that the homework policy be reexamined.

VII. COMMENTS BY EMPLOYEE GROUPS

Liz Johnson, Eugene Education Association (EEA) 4J Inclusion Advisor, spoke about inclusion in the educational system. She said progress has been made toward meaningful inclusion, including strengthening special education (SPED) services, adding behavioral support staff, providing instructional coaches, new teaching mentors, and enhancing the framework for the universal design for learning. She said in order to make inclusion truly meaningful, the district must embrace opportunities for growth, including cross-department collaboration, specifically between the instruction department, student services department, and equity and inclusion department. Ms. Johnson added that the district must prioritize the needs and wellbeing of neurodivergent students.

Lisa Jenkins-Easton, Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) President, read aloud a letter addressed to 4J employees facing potential displacement due to budgetary constraints. She noted that the language used indicated that the decision was nonnegotiable. She cited 53 letters issued to employees. Ms. Jenkins-Easton stated that we are part of history with every improvement we make. She mentioned that OSEA will be honoring bus drivers on April 22, 2025, for School Bus Driver Appreciation Day.

VIII. CONSENT GROUP – ITEMS FOR ACTION

1. APPROVE THE DRAFT 4J SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES FOR:
2/19/2025 REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES DRAFT
2/25/2025 4J SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES DRAFT
3/5/2025 4J REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES DRAFT
4/2/2025 4J SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES DRAFT

2. ED CENTER ROOFTOP MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT INSTALL

3. BOND PROJECT – MULTI SITE PLAYGROUND IMPROVEMENTS

4. BOND PROJECT – COBURG COMMUNITY CHARTER ELEMETARY SCHOOL ROOFING

5. BOND PROJECT – MULTI SITE PAVING IMPROVEMENTS

6. APPROVE THE REPLACEMENT OF 4J'S CORE NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE, INCLUDING WIFI INFRASTRUCTURE

7. APPROVAL OF THE 2025 EUGENE SCHOOL DISTRICT 4J SUPPLEMENTAL BUSSING PLAN

8. APPROVE TYLER TECHNOLOGIES SCHOOL ERP (ENTERPRISE RESOURCE PLANNING) PRO CONTRACT, STATEMENT OF WORK, AND PROJECTED TIMELINE

9. APPROVE EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT FOR INCOMING SUPERINTENDENT DR. MIRIAM MICKELSON

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

IX. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

1. INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION ON SCHOOL SAFETY

Director of School Safety and Emergency Management Jen Bills and Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services Brooke Wagner presented information about school safety.

Ms. Bills explained that school safety encompasses everything from facilities safety and emergency management to Safe Routes to School.

Regarding emergency management, information was collected from September 2024 through April 2025. During that timeframe the safety team conducted numerous evacuation/fire drills, lockdown drills, and secure drills. Other successes included launching the My EOP app, rolling out new emergency guides, and the effectiveness of the Safe Routes to School program.

Ms. Bills reported 394 police responses during the school year. The calls for service, in no particular order, included property crimes, assaults, disorderly subject, sex crimes, trespassing, suicidal subjects, custodial, harassment, MIP, and child abuse.

Ms. Bills highlighted gaps and vulnerabilities, such as decentralized reporting, a lack of onsite law enforcement resulting in longer response times, and a need to update infrastructure, including vestibules and cameras. She added that the 4J safety team works in partnership with 4J mental health practitioners, Oregon Department of Human Services, and local law enforcement.

Mr. Hamilton requested suicidal subject service calls statistics from other Oregon districts.

Ms. Bills responded that she would follow up with the information.

Student Representative Ms. Hehman requested a breakdown of service calls by school.

Ms. Bills committed to following up with the information.

2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE: REPORT OUT ON COMMUNITY AND STUDENT CHATS

Chief of Staff Carmen Xiomara Urbina introduced members of the Community Engagement Committee to present information via PowerPoint presentation.

Ms. Thessen explained that community and student chats were facilitated throughout fall and winter to engage in open, respectful, and relational conversations around equity and wellbeing. From that, systemic insights emerged from the collective voices. She clarified that the chats were places for the committee to listen but not to fix or solve. The chats were not public meetings nor policy-making sessions.

Mr. Hamilton reported that 70 high school students participated in the chats. They articulated needs for inclusion, access, and partnership. The following patterns emerged:

- Belonging and Identity
- Facilities and Safety
- Mental Health
- Academic Success
- Communication
- SPED/Neurodivergent Support
- Visibility (recognition and equitable support for ECCO and EOA)

Mr. Hamilton further outlined specific requests that students named, from expanded affinity spaces to equity in honors, SAT prep, electives, and CTE.

Ms. Thessen summarized the following patterns identified by adults in the 4J community:

- Grief and postvention
- Inclusion for students with disabilities
- Staffing stability and training
- IEP/504 plan implementation
- Family communication
- Youth mental health
- Charter partnerships
- Curriculum and belonging

Ms. Rabasa provided a closing summary:

- Across diverse voices, common themes emerged
- Deep commitment to healing, inclusion, and partnership
- Gaps in support, communication, and coordination remain
- The district is rich with promise and collective will to grow

Ms. Rabasa described next steps:

- The report is a reflection tool – not a set of recommendations
- Themes will be revisited in the Summer 2025 Board retreat
- An opportunity to align around shared values and respond to both student and community voices

X. ITEMS FOR ACTION

1. INTEGRATED GUIDANCE (IG) PLAN/APPLICATION

Assistant Superintendent of Instruction Larry Williams and State and Federal Grant Manager Judy Jesiah recommended approval of the Integrated Guidance (IG) Plan/Application.

> **MOTION:** Vice Chair Di Liberto moved to approve the Integrated Guidance (IG) Plan/Application. Ms. Newman seconded. **The motion passed unanimously, 7:0:0; Chair Jonak, Vice Chair Di Liberto, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Newman, Ms. Thessen, Ms. Munro, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor.**

2. K-10 CORE MATHEMATICS CURRICULUM ADOPTION

Elementary Curriculum Administrator Erin Gaston and Secondary Curriculum Administrator Courtney Leonard recommended approval of K-10 Core Mathematics Curriculum Adoption.

> **MOTION:** Vice Chair Di Liberto moved to approve the K-10 Core Mathematics Curriculum. Ms. Munro seconded. **The motion passed unanimously, 7:0:0; Chair Jonak, Vice Chair Di Liberto, Ms. Rabasa, Ms. Newman, Ms. Thessen, Ms. Munro, and Mr. Hamilton all voting in favor.**

XI. ITEMS FOR ACTION AT A FUTURE MEETING

1. APPROVE ADOPTION OF MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE CURRICULUM

Secondary Science Context Specialist Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) Sarah Kirby (online), Ms. Gaston, and Ms. Leonard provided information about the adoption of middle and high school science curriculum via PowerPoint presentation. For middle school curriculum they are recommending Twig and for high school curriculum they are recommending Savvas. The team responded to questions from the BOD about the process for reaching consensus (for middle school curriculum specifically) and current approaches to engaging students in hands-on science curriculum.

2. READOPT ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY HEALTH CURRICULUM THROUGH 2032

Ms. Gaston and Ms. Leonard provided information about the readoption of elementary

and secondary health curriculum through 2032 via PowerPoint presentation. For elementary and middle school curriculum they are recommending readopting The Great Body Shop and for high school curriculum they are recommending readopting Live Well.

Ms. Thessen asked if they believe the curriculum to be eating disorder trauma informed.

Ms. Gaston responded yes.

Ms. Newman asked about professional development for educators.

Ms. Gaston responded that at the elementary level the curriculum is straightforward. In fifth grade they conduct the Human Growth and Development Unit, and professional learning is provided.

Ms. Leonard said that at the secondary level professional development consists of peers collaborating with peers to craft detailed scope and sequence documents that all secondary teachers can access.

Ms. Rabasa recommended looking for opportunities for health educators to collaborate with the district safety team and prevention specialists around issues like suicidality.

3. SET STUDENT TRANSFER LIMITS AS PER POLICY JECB (FIRST READ)

Ms. Urbina provided information about Student Transfer Limits as Per Policy JECB via PowerPoint presentation. She explained that the action sets enrollment limits for both incoming and outgoing interdistrict transfers. She provided relevant legal and procedural context and historical trends dating back to 2020. Ms. Urbina pointed out that currently, outgoing district transfers are higher than incoming district transfers. The district is working to determine why students are transferring and responding in ways that invite them to stay.

Ms. Urbina provided a snapshot as of March 2025:

- 464 interdistrict transfer requests
- An increase of 90 requests compared to the previous year
- Final numbers will be determined following the April 15 lottery

Ms. Urbina outlined the enrollment and transfer placement process. She described budget and resource implications and equity considerations. She presented tables revealing incoming and outgoing transfers and cited a growing interest in online options.

Ms. Urbina provided areas for reflection and review:

- The district may need to reflect on whether the current cap of 400 transfers is still appropriate
- There is an opportunity to consider whether increased flexibility within the district could better support student and family needs.

- Improving family trust and transparency should remain a key area of focus
- It is important to understand the reasons why some families are choosing to leave the district

Ms. Urbina recommended approving 400 transfers into and 400 transfers out of the district for the 2025-26 school year.

Ms. Urbina responded to inquiries from the BOD about online program transfer requests, collecting data about why and at what grade level students are transferring, and the process for collecting and reflecting student transfer data.

4. CONSIDER FOR APPROVAL REVISIONS TO POLICY KBA – PUBLIC RECORDS**

General Counsel Christine Nesbit provided information about revisions to Policy KBA – Public Records. She explained that the policy has been in place for decades and helps implement legal requirements to produce records for members of the public upon request and to archive and retain records. Ms. Nesbit is recommending the policy be aligned to be consistent with the law and language that better reflects current terms and practices. She added that Board members may be considered a public body for public records purposes such that the records that they individually create and retain may be considered public records.

5. CONSIDER FOR APPROVAL REVISIONS TO POLICY GBEA – WORKPLACE HARRASSMENT (FIRST READ)

Ms. Nesbit provided information about revisions to Policy GBEA – Workplace Harassment. She is recommending the policy be aligned to be consistent with the law. She provided details about the changes.

6. CONSIDER FOR ADOPTION POLICY JGA – CORPORAL PUNISHMENT (FIRST READ)

Mr. Williams provided information about the adoption of Policy JGA – Corporal Punishment. He stated that the use of corporal punishment in any form is strictly prohibited. He outlined a few key changes to district policy. First, that the policy includes pain or discomfort resulting from participation in athletics competitions. Second, parents or legal guardians of minor children are permitted to physically guide their child to maintain discipline or promote welfare, but the policy provides specific guidelines regarding physical force.

7. CONSIDER FOR ADOPTION POLICY EBC – EMERGENCY PLAN AND FIRST AID (FIRST READ)**

Ms. Bills recommended adoption of Policy EBC – Emergency Plan and First Aid. She is recommending the policy to further refine current practices relating to notifications for emergency management and CPR and first aid certifications.

8. APPROVE REVISIONS TO BOARD POLICY BDDH – PUBLIC COMMENTS AT BOARD MEETINGS (FIRST READ)

Interim Superintendent Gill recommended approving revisions to Policy BDDH – Public Comments at Board Meetings. He is recommending the revisions to both be consistent with the law and to best align with district values. He outlined several potential updates for the BOD to consider, including but not limited to:

- Public comment is limited to a designated place on the agenda
- Public commenters may sign up 48 hours prior to the meeting
- If more than 10 people request to speak, priority is given to those who did not provide public comment during the previous two meetings
- A person may comment on an agenda item or topic not on the published agenda
- Public commenters should state their name and whether they are a member of the district
- Chair has discretion to waive the time limits or extend the overall time allotted
- Additional time will be allocated in a fair equitable manner across all speakers

Ms. Rabasa suggested adding language stating that individuals may utilize their telephone to call in and sign up for public comment. She emphasized having multiple pathways available.

Ms. Rabasa recommended holding further discussion about the Chair's discretion to waive or extend the time limits; including the option to allow more than 10 speakers but shorten their speaking time.

Vice Chair Di Liberto agreed that the language around the Chair's discretion to waive or extend the time limits should be refined to reflect the Board's intent.

Ms. Munro pointed out some of the reasoning for the Chair's discretion to waive or extend the time limits, such as in special cases.

Interim Superintendent Gill closed with his commitment to update revisions to Policy BDDH based on BOD feedback.

XII. COMMENTS BY INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Thessen reported that she is attending her first Lane ESD board meeting on May 6, 2025. She recognized Transgender Day of Visibility on March 31, 2025 and Autism Acceptance Month in April 2025.

Vice Chair Di Liberto provided remarks regarding the district's budgetary constraints, stating that the reductions do not represent what the Board believes would be best for 4J.

He acknowledged that the budgetary decisions are difficult for parents and students to hear and said they are the last thing that any decision maker wants to do. He cited underfunding and a decline in enrollment. Vice Chair Di Liberto reaffirmed his commitment to listening to stakeholders and encouraged them to remain informed.

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

Ms. Rabasa suggested an agenda item to consider forming a Community Transition Advisory Committee to assist with integrating the incoming superintendent.

Ms. Rabasa suggested an agenda item regarding inviting student representatives to serve on committees.

Chair Jonak suggested an agenda item to consider a BOD liaison to work with district employee groups.

XIV. ADJORN

Chair Jonak adjourned the regular board meeting at 9:21 p.m.

Colt Gill
District Clerk

Jenny Jonak
Board Chair

(Recorded by LCOG)
Approved on 04/23/2025