

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

Date: January 7, 2026

The Board of Directors (BOD) of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Eugene, Oregon, held a special meeting at 6:00 p.m. via live-stream and broadcast on KRVM. Notice of the meeting was emailed to the media and posted on the 4J website on January 2, 2026.

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Tom Di Liberto
Ericka Thessen
Maya Rabasa
Jenny Jonak
Judy Newman
Morgan Munro
Rick Hamilton

ABSENT:

None

STAFF:

Miriam Mickelson, Superintendent
Carmen Xiomara Urbina, Chief of Staff
Brooke Wagner, Human Resources Director
Matt Brown, Director of Finance
Bob Blyth, Associate Director of Finance
Oscar Loureiro, Director of Research and Planning
Jen Bills, Director of Safety and Emergency Management
Kelly McIver, Communications Director
Christine Nesbit, General Counsel
Cynthia Calletano, Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff/Board
Lisa Fjordbeck, Operations Manager for the Superintendent's Office

OTHER GUESTS:

None

EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATIONS:

Lisa Jenkins-Easton, Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) Chapter 1 President
Sarah Wofford, Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) State President

Jamie Meyers, Eugene Education Association (EEA) President
David Wines, Eugene Education Association (EEA) Vice President

MEDIA:

KRVM

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

Chair Di Liberto called the special meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. He said the names of the Board members who were present and read a land acknowledgement statement.

II. BOARD CHAIR WELCOME

Chair Di Liberto welcomed attendees and wished everyone a happy new year. He acknowledged the current budgetary challenges facing Eugene School District 4J, specifically its impact on staff. He thanked staff members for their enduring dedication to educating children.

III. AGENDA APPROVAL

The agenda was approved as presented.

IV. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Mickelson celebrated the 4J Board of Directors (BOD) during School Board Recognition Month in January. She echoed Chair Di Liberto's comments related to budgetary challenges and its impact on staff and the Board. She said the Board has shown up with steadiness and care and she highlighted their key leadership qualities.

Superintendent Mickelson read the following proclamation:

Whereas, public education is the cornerstone of a strong and vibrant community, opening doors of opportunity and possibility for every child;

Whereas, school boards provide the courageous leadership and vision that guide our schools toward excellence and ensure that every student is seen, heard, and supported;

Whereas, school boards champion high expectations for all students and believe in their limitless potential to learn, grow, and thrive;

Whereas, school boards ensure that resources, policies, and programs are directed toward student success, equity, and well-being;

Whereas, school boards model integrity, collaboration, and service, working in partnership with families, staff, and the broader community to support our schools;

Whereas, school boards devote countless volunteer hours to make decisions that shape the future of our children and our community;

Whereas, school boards engage in ongoing learning to deepen their understanding of the complex issues facing public education today and into the future;

Now, therefore, we proudly declare our deep appreciation to the members of the Eugene School District 4J Board of Education and proclaim the month of January as School Board Recognition Month.

We invite and encourage all community members to join us in honoring our school board members for their dedication, vision, and unwavering commitment to empowering today's students to create tomorrow's world.

V. ITEMS RAISED BY THE AUDIENCE

Sarah Wofford, Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) State President, provided comments. She encouraged the Board to ask questions and be courageous champions in their leadership. She advocated for holding public discussions. Ms. Wofford highlighted essential work conducted on behalf of classified employees. She urged that the Board be involved in decision-making regarding contracts and cautioned against blanketly approving them.

VI. COMMENTS BY EMPLOYEE GROUPS

Lisa Jenkins-Easton, Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) President, read a statement asserting that the district is not meeting its financial obligation under the law, citing workers' rights and HB 2016. She provided Board members with a settlement proposal for their review. Ms. Jenkins-Easton declared that it has become unsustainable for OSEA to shoulder the district's obligation. She said that she will not ethically be able to sign an agreement forcing OSEA to pay 100% of the costs. She outlined and described key components of the proposal, highlighting their offer to split the cost with the district.

Jamie Meyers, Eugene Education Association (EEA) President, provided comments. She read EEA's mission statement aloud. She acknowledged that 4J educators are experiencing anxiety, uncertainty, and frustration in light of budgetary cuts. She said every staff member will be impacted by displacements and layoffs. Ms. Meyers said EEA will remain committed to empowering educators while protecting the strength of schools. She urged that displaced members be given voice and choice in placement decisions.

VII. CONSENT GROUP – ITEMS FOR ACTION

1. BOND PROJECT – ATA SEISMIC UPGRADES

There was no discussion.

2. BOND PROJECT – WILLAGILLESPIE AND FOX HOLLOW ROOF COATINGS

There was no discussion.

**3. APPROVE THE DRAFT MEETING MINUTES FOR:
DECEMBER 3, 2025 SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
DECEMBER 10, 2025 REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

There was no discussion.

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

VIII. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

1. RECEIVE INFORMATION ON PHASE 2 OF THE BUDGET REDUCTION PLAN

Superintendent Mickelson, Chief of Staff Carmen Xiomara Urbina, and Finance Director Matt Brown provided information related to Phase 2 of the Budget Reduction Plan via PowerPoint presentation.

Superintendent Mickelson provided a statement emphasizing the importance of their responsibility to make necessary changes without losing sight of shared humanity. She summarized that Phase 2 of the budget reduction plan includes reductions to administrators and district level programmatic services and supports. She said it is a continuation of the effort to align the system with financial realities while protecting student services to the greatest extent possible.

She highlighted the following:

(Some items contained further detail in the presentation – the following is a summary)

30% million deficit for 2026-27 school year

- Spending must align with state and federal resources to sustain services for students over time
- Caring for students today and protecting their future are not competing priorities
- Due to the scale of the reductions, the Board authorized reductions to staffing, services, and programs for 2026-27 in advance of the development of the budget document

Addressing a \$30M shortfall

- A system reset and resizing
- A strategic realignment of staffing and resources with enrollment decline and state and federal funding realities
- A path toward sustainability, stability, and long-term viability

A phased timeline

- Phase 1: December 10, 2025
- Phase 2: January 7, 2026
- Phase 3: January 21, 2026

Deep engagement

- Various community engagement with students, families, and staff

Stability and care for students – What will continue:

- Teaching and learning
- Student support and wellbeing
- Access, Belonging, and Opportunity
- Family and Support Systems

Phase 1 Reduction Estimates: \$2.3M

- Technology Subscriptions: \$0.25M
- Professional Development: \$0.50M
- School Discretionary Budget: \$0.22M
- Professional Service Contracts: \$0.03M
- Department Reductions: \$0.41M
- Staffing and Stipend Reductions: \$0.89M

She highlighted a bar graph detailing Phase 2 non-bargaining unit reductions totaling \$6.6M in estimated cost savings. 28 leadership positions have been impacted, including three assistant superintendent positions eliminated in Phase 1.

Superintendent Mickelson highlighted the following proposed Phase 2 reductions:

Staffing Adjustments (non-bargaining units; district based/initiated licensed/classified staff): \$6.6M

Credit Retrieval and Online Programs (de-implement Middle School EOA; scale back High School Extended Day and High School EOA): \$0.83M

Academic Support/Extracurricular (scale back AVID, Summer School and BEST programs, OSAA athletics reclassification): \$3.5M

CTE and CALCI (Future Build: Centralized at North Eugene; Creative Current at Sheldon; HumaniTech at South Eugene): \$1.8M

Nutrition Services GF Transfer and Catering (Reduce Nutrition Services General Fund transfers to \$1.5M from \$3.9M; Pause on production kitchen and catering services): \$2.7M

Administration Consolidation (Leverage attrition to adjust secondary administrative structures at lower enrollment sites to better align staffing with enrollment levels): \$.083M

Staff Support (Pause centrally managed mentorship and educator pathways programs, reduce instructional support capacity, and conclude conflict resolution function at the district level): \$4.4M

Total (estimate): \$18M (accounts for max unemployment benefits)

Mr. Brown presented the following Phase 2 examples of fiscal assumptions:

Salary COLA (estimate/tentative): 5.0%

Utilities inflation rate: 5.0%

Materials and supplies inflation: 3.0%

Inflation rate: 2.5%

PERS rates (%) tier ½: 26.7%

PERS rates (%) OPSRP: 23.5%

Health Ins. Annual Increase: 7.0%

Unemployment (estimate): \$22,500

Superintendent Mickelson presented the following related to Phase 2 Board action:

- November 5 Board Resolution: Authorized reductions to staffing, services, and programs
- Operational reductions in Phase 2 do not require additional Board action, however, they are shared publicly for transparency and Board oversight
- Note: CALCI, middle school Online Academy, and programmatic staffing reduction levels require separate Board approval
- December 10 Board Resolution: Approved the reduction level for non-bargaining units (Directors and MAPS), up to 32 positions (completed)
- Total reductions: 28.05 FTE, inclusive of Executive Leadership Team reductions

Superintendent Mickelson presented the following related to Phase 3 Proposed Reductions:

- January 21, February 4, 2026
 - Family School program changes
 - Middle school bell schedule changes
 - Preview of building-and classroom-based staffing reduction level recommendations

She outlined next steps:

- Communicate with clarity and care
- Support people and communities through change

- Plan responsibly

Superintendent Mickelson opened the floor to questions from the BOD.

Ms. Jonak raised concern about impacts on high school students following the scaling back of Eugene Online Academy (EOA).

Superintendent Mickelson provided reassurance, stating that the students will continue being served.

Ms. Rabasa asked if students will still be able to access the extended school day program.

Superintendent Mickelson responded affirmatively.

Following questions posed by Ms. Rabasa regarding CTE programs, Superintendent Mickelson confirmed that transportation will be provided for students and a concentrated CTE program will remain at all four comprehensive high schools. She confirmed that the EmpowerEd program will be impacted.

Responding to questions posed by Vice Chair Thessen about impacts to summer school, Superintendent Mickelson stated that they are unsure exactly how summer school will look, but the district must reduce the allocation. She confirmed that it relates to state changes to summer school funding.

At Ms. Newman's request, Mr. Brown provided further details about estimated unemployment costs to the district.

Responding to a question posed by Ms. Newman related to after-school programs, Superintendent Mickelson said the grant funded program had been subsidized with general fund dollars in past years. Now, the district will be limited to operating within the grant allocation. The Board will be provided with updates as they become available.

Ms. Urbina agreed. She added that the grant for the after-school program is \$500,000.

IX. ITEMS FOR ACTION

There were none.

X. ITEMS FOR ACTION AT A FUTURE MEETING

1. CONSIDER FOR APPROVAL BOARD RESOLUTION 2025-26-07 RELATING TO PHASE 2 PROGRAM CHANGES AND AUTHORIZING A REDUCTION IN FORCE

Superintendent Mickelson provided further context related to Phase 2 budget reductions, including that it requests Board action on reduction levels for licensed and classified staff associated with the programs impacted. Board action is scheduled for January 14, 2026.

There was no further discussion.

**2. CONSIDER FOR APPROVAL PROPOSED POLICY CEA –
SUPERINTENDENT’S EDUCATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND
CONSIDER DELETING POLICY BCFA – EDUCATIONAL EQUITY ADVISORY
COMMITTEE**

Ms. Urbina presented proposed Policy CEA – Superintendent’s Educational Advisory Committee and Consider Deleting Policy BCFA – Educational Equity Advisory Committee. She provided relevant background information and said the proposed change is based on the revised 2025 statute which, among other things, allows EEACs to function as superintendent advisory committees rather than board advisory committees. She noted that 4J was one of the first districts to have an EEAC, before it was required. The resolution will come before the Board at a future meeting.

There was no further discussion.

XI. COMMITTEE REPORTS BY INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Rabasa provided a report from the Legislative Committee. They elected a Chair and distributed representatives among their members. She said they will soon present priorities to the Board.

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

Ms. Newman stated that she wishes to provide a report related to Board elections.

Ms. Rabasa requested information about district compliance with HB 2016.

Ms. Jonak requested information about the general contours of HB 2016.

XIII. ADJOURN SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

Chair Di Liberto adjourned the special meeting at 7:32 p.m.



Miriam Mickelson, Superintendent



Tom Di Liberto, Chair

Recorded by Terah Van Dusen, LCOG